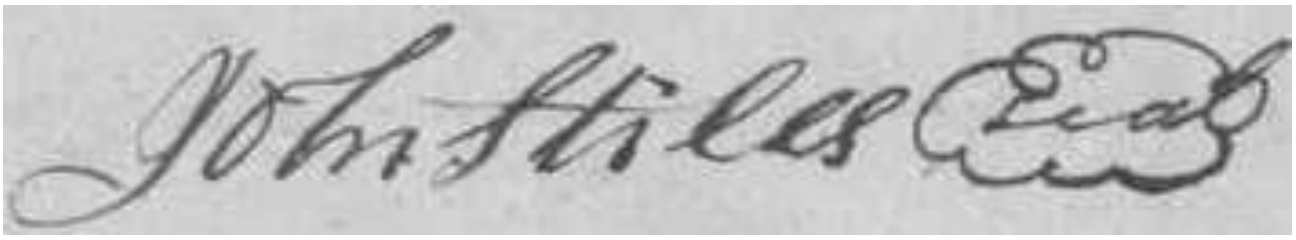
The Lives of

John Stiles Jr.

(c1784–1860s)



and his wife,

Rebecca Cooper

(c1794–1869)

of

Blackwater Swamp, Surry County, Virginia

&

Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, & Texas

by Timothy Dean Hudson

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Introduction

John Stiles Jr. and Rebecca Cooper were born into the tight-knit farming communities along the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County, part of the Tidewater region of Virginia. Both came from middling families who lived along the county's southern rim bordering the swamp. Born on farms near the modern village of Dendron, their families had lived side by side for nearly a century.

Both *"Jack"* and *"Becca,"* as they were commonly known, lost their mothers at a young age and spent their formative years cared for by their stepmothers. Jack's mother either died in childbirth or while he was still an infant or toddler. When he was four years old, his father married Becca's aunt.

Becca lost her mother when she was about three years old, and after remarrying twice, her father died when she was only eleven. The next year, Becca went before the Surry County Court and requested that they appoint her father's friend, Capt. David Sebrell, as her legal guardian. Sebrell happened to be the brother of Jack's mother. Through these close family connections, Jack and Becca must have known each other well while they were growing up, although since they were born a decade apart, he likely paid little attention to her at that time.

The Blackwater Swamp region was far removed from the hustle of tobacco warehouses and high society of Surry's wealthy tobacco plantations further north along the James River, just opposite the colonial capitals of Jamestown and Williamsburg. The Blackwater was a backwoods area populated by middle-class farmers and woodsmen, many of whom had little or no formal education and were unable to sign their names. Jack's father was an illiterate New York immigrant, but his mother and both of Becca's parents came from educated, land-owning families. Despite growing up without mothers and in less opportune circumstances than any of their parents, both Jack and Becca received sufficient formal education as young children to sign their names to documents as adults [1]. Their intertwined lives reveal how environmental decline, economic instability, and kinship networks shaped the migration patterns of ordinary Tidewater families in the early nineteenth-century South.

Jack and Becca Stiles married in December 1812, when he was about twenty-eight and she about eighteen. They spent the first dozen years of their married life in Surry County, Virginia, operating her father's old 100-acre farm, land that had been in her family for the past century [2].

Jack and Becca appeared poised to continue the century-long family tradition of farming in Tidewater Virginia, but soil depletion due to decades of problematic cultivation practices and economic factors caused a marked decline in crop production across the region during the 1810s. This combined with political issues stemming from the War of 1812 resulted in economic disaster

for many small farmers in Tidewater Virginia, including Jack and Becca. The pressures facing Tidewater farmers in the 1810s and 1820s pushed thousands westward, and Jack and Becca were no exception. By the early 1820s, their financial situation became dire, providing the impetus for their 1824 emigration from their native Surry County.

Over the next four decades, Jack Stiles and Becca Cooper migrated with their children over a vast geographical region, seemingly in search of a better life for their family. They initially joined his father and siblings in Franklin County, Tennessee, but in early 1840, they moved west of the Mississippi River to southern Union County, Arkansas, located between the Ouachita River and the Arkansas/Louisiana state line. They remained there until late 1850 or 1851, when they moved a short distance west into Columbia County, Arkansas.

In the latter 1850s, they moved across the state line in Union Parish, Louisiana, where Jack probably died in the early 1860s. Following the Civil War, Becca moved with the family of her elder daughter to Hunt County, Texas, where she died in October 1869 of heart disease. Their migrations over nearly a half-century spanned five states, revealing the shifting economic and social landscape of the nineteenth-century South.

The following sections follow Jack and Becca through each phase of their life journeys, from their early years in Surry County to the far-flung communities they called home in the Deep South.

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John Stiles Jr.: Early Life at The New Design & Dripping Springs

John Stiles Jr. (Jack) was born in late 1783 or 1784 in Surry County, Virginia [1], the son of John Stiles Sr. [2] and Mary, the daughter of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. The elder Stiles obtained a bond to marry Mary Sebrell, a *"Spinster,"* on 9 December 1782 [3]. After their marriage, John and Mary settled near her father's farm along the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County, a region known in the 1780s as the Johnchecohunk Precinct. A 1784 census of the precinct shows the John Stiles family consisting of three white people. The land on which they lived contained one dwelling house but no other buildings. This suggests that John Stiles Jr. was born early enough to have been counted on this census, probably in late 1783 or early 1784 [4].

Jack's father was a native of New York and worked as a shoemaker. He appears to have arrived in Virginia from New York about 1781 or 1782. During the Revolutionary War, the elder John Stiles apparently lived in British-occupied New York, perhaps in New York City. Even though he had married into a prominent local family in 1782 and thereafter lived amongst them, questions regarding John Stiles' political background and wartime activities lingered and appear to have caused concern among the staunchly Patriot Surry County populace. On 25 September 1787, John Stiles Sr. appeared before the Surry County Court and swore that he *"planned to become a resident of this State."* The Court administered *"the oath of fidelity"* to Stiles, and that appears to have resolved the concerns [5].

Given that the John Stiles household consisted of three people in 1784, it appears that Jack' mother, Mary Sebrell Stiles, survived his birth. However, she died by 1788, perhaps in her second childbirth. On 22 July 1788, John Stiles Sr. obtained a bond to marry Jane Cooper [6]. Jack may have had no memories of his biological mother, as Jane raised him from a young age. Jack's father and stepmother had two children to survive early childhood, Leroy Stiles, born about 1789, and Mary Elizabeth Stiles, born 11 July 1791 [7].

The available records indicate that John Stiles Sr. did not engage in farming as his primary occupation. Between 1784 and 1805, he owned no cattle or horses, a clear indication that he earned his living by another means [8]. Given that he identified himself to the Surry County Court in 1787 as *"by trade a Shoemaker,"* he probably engaged in that occupation instead of farming.

John and Jane Stiles continued to live near Nathaniel Sebrell's farm on the north side of Blackwater Swamp for two decades after their 1788 marriage. On 10 September 1792, Stiles paid Randolph Jordan £50 *"current money of Virginia"* for a 70-acre tract of land that adjoined the Sebrell farm, the lands of Capt. James Kee, and those of the late John Collier, the brother-in-law of Jane Cooper Stiles. Jane's nephew, Benjamin Collier, and Capt. Kee witnessed the transaction. John

Stiles Sr. retained possession of this 70-acre tract for the next six years, selling it on 23 October 1798 for £55 *"current money of Virginia"* [9]. John Stiles Sr. and his family probably resided on this land, and so Jack spent his early childhood living next to the farm of his maternal grandfather, Nathaniel Sebrell.

The Stiles' land was dwarfed by the vast land holdings of their neighbor, Capt. James Kee, whose parents had owned a tract of land adjoining Nathaniel Sebrell's farm since the 1770s [10]. The younger Kee became a Surry County justice of the peace in 1782, and he received a commission from the Virginia Governor as Captain of the Surry County Militia on 27 May 1783. Between 1800 and 1802, Kee served as Surry County Sheriff [11].

Between 1780 and 1808, Capt. James Kee owned more acreage than anyone in the vicinity, having 1295 acres of land in 1787, 1547 acres in 1799, and 1635 acres in 1806. He developed a successful plantation on his lands, utilizing the labor of the twenty-seven enslaved people he owned in 1787.

Kee's plantation maintained the largest concentration of buildings in southern Surry County. In 1784, seventeen white people lived in two dwelling houses at his compound. He had erected at least eleven other buildings, including one *"School House,"* two detached kitchens, one log barn, one *"Log Quarter,"* three *"Log Cribs,"* one *"Log Hen House,"* one log house *"covered with Cypress Bark,"* and one *"Camp House upon Wheels"* [12].

On 31 August 1796, Capt. James Kee paid £100 *"current money of Virginia"* for a 120-acre tract of land that adjoined his existing land [13]. Over the next eighteen months, he constructed a plantation house and other buildings on his new tract of land, naming it *"The New Design"* [14]. Kee's new plantation adjoined the 70-acre tract of land John Stiles Sr. owned between 1792 and 1798 [15]. It lay to the north of Dripping Springs Road, the modern Surry County Highway #614 and the northern boundary of Nathaniel Sebrell's plantation. Mid-twentieth century Surry County residents confirmed that locals referred to the intersection of Highways #615 (Carsley Road) and 616 (New Design Road), as *"The New Design."* Today, this location is roughly five miles northwest of the village of Dendron, a logging town formed in 1896 [16].

Capt. James Kee built The New Design on the south side of what soon became known as the *"Courthouse Road,"* running from that location northeastwardly towards Robert McIntosh's Cross Roads Plantation. Centered at the mouth of Crouch's Creek several miles inland from the James River, Cross Roads lay at the juncture of two main roads of the latter eighteenth century: the road leading from the northwestern Surry County commercial center of Cabin Point southeastwards towards Isle of Wight County, and the road leading from old Cobham on the James River due south

towards Sussex and Southampton Counties. Growing up in the shadow of Major Kee's expanding plantation and the emerging crossroads community, Jack's early world was shaped by both kinship ties and the shifting economic reality of southern Surry County.

On 24 November 1795, Virginia's General Assembly authorized Surry County to begin holding court at Cross Roads as soon as Robert McIntosh could erect a brick courthouse at his own expense [17]. McIntosh gave two acres of his Cross Roads land to the Surry Justices in March 1796 and agreed to build both a new courthouse and a brick *"Gaol and Prison"* at the site. The Surry Court began holding sessions there in April 1797, and the village soon became known as *"Surry Court House,"* now the village of Surry, Virginia [18].

The New Design lay both on the south side of *"Courthouse Road"* and on the road leading from the Birch Island Bridge to Cabin Point [19], presumably right at the roads' intersection. Kee's 1796 land purchase and construction of The New Design appears well-coordinated with McIntosh's land donation and building a new courthouse for Surry County at Cross Roads. Kee apparently anticipated the development of a village at Cross Roads that soon became Surry Court House, and he recognized that the site on which he built The New Design would make it an important public venue for southern Surry County locals living along the north side of the Blackwater Swamp.

The 1784 census shows that Capt. Kee then had a small village of sorts with numerous buildings at his plantation, and he built a similar arrangement at his new location. Soon after constructing his plantation house at The New Design, he also erected several storehouses on an adjoining one-acre lot. Since we know John Stiles Sr. owned the adjoining land and worked as a shoemaker, he may have operated his shoe shop in one of the buildings [20].

In early 1798, Capt. James Kee prepared to open an *"ordinary,"* or tavern, in one of his new buildings at The New Design. On 24 April 1798, John Stiles Sr. signed a $150 bond to the Commonwealth of Virginia to secure his successful operation of the tavern there. With Capt. Kee serving as security on the bond, the Surry County Court issued Stiles a

> *…license to keep an Ordinary at The New Design on the Lands of Ja^s^ Kee in the County of Surry, if therefore the said John Stiles doth constantly find and provide in his said Ordinary, good wholesome & cleanly lodging & diet for travellers* [sic] *& stableage* [sic], *fodder & provender or pasturage & provender as the season shall require for their horses for and during the term of one year…& shall not suffer or permit any unlawful gaming in his house, nor on the sabath* [sic] *day suffer any person to tipple & drink more than is necessary – then this obligation to be void, otherwise to remain in full force.*

On October 23rd, six months after he officially became The New Design's first tavernkeeper, John and Jane Stiles sold their land to a neighbor, Jesse Stewart. This suggests that they had established

permanent residence either in rooms adjoining the tavern or in a nearby house. John Stiles Sr. remained associated with The New Design Tavern for the next eight years [21]. Jack Stiles was about fourteen years of age when his father became the New Design tavernkeeper, and so he spent the majority of his teenage years at The New Design.

Taverns served a multitude of purposes throughout the colonial and early American periods. As carefully regulated public institutions, they provided a setting where both travelers and the local populace could buy a few drinks, eat, spend the night, and watch entertainment. They served as the venues for political meetings, sessions of the local courts and assemblies, and for local elections. In most rural regions such as southern Surry County, Virginia, taverns often formed the only local meeting place, and thus they served as the scene for countless public and private functions [22].

Virginia outlawed *"tippling houses"* or bars early in the eighteenth century, requiring that sellers of intoxicating beverages by the glass also provide accommodations to travelers and their horses. This is evident in the wording of Stiles' 1798 tavern license that required him to provide *"…lodging & diet for travellers* [sic] *& stableage* [sic]*, fodder & provender or pasturage…as the season shall require…"* This mandated melding of liquor retailers with innkeepers evolved during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the moralistic philosophy of Puritan governments in both England and the colonies moved towards government-legislated morality [23].

In this era that pre-dated prohibition movements, taverns served a variety of distilled spirits, although rum, a liquor unique to British North America, formed the drink of choice throughout the Colonial and Early American periods [24]. The Surry County Court dictated the prices tavernkeepers charged on the common types of alcoholic drinks they provided. For the year 1798, the top-quality beverages included *"Good West India Rum,"* which cost £1 per gallon, Madeira wine, a fortified wine made on Portugal's Madeira Islands off the African coast that sold for six shillings per quart, and *"Good Virginia Brandy,"* which sold for ten shillings per gallon.

For mixed drinks, taverns sold a quart of *"toddy made of good rum and white sugar"* for two shillings, whereas one made with regular rum, including *"Continental Rum"* and tafia rum, cost only one shilling. A bottle of either *"strong beer"* or porter – a 1700s dark beer popular in London – cost two shillings, six pence, while a small bottle of cider or beer sold for only nine pence. The cheapest alcoholic drinks at Surry taverns went for four pence, including either unbottled cider or beer [25].

On particularly cold winter mornings, taverns along the mid-Atlantic east coast customarily served travelers *"a hearty draught"* of eggnog to fortify them against the severe weather. This eggnog was made with *"new milk"* beat together with eggs, rum, and sugar [26].

Ordinaries served three meals per day to both hungry locals and travelers, and in 1798, The New Design Tavern charged two shillings for breakfast and supper and two shillings, six pence for dinner [27]. Since the Stiles family must have lived at The New Design, we can expect that Jane Cooper Stiles oversaw the preparation of meals for the tavern's patrons.

Although no known first-hand accounts of The New Design Tavern exist, in May 1797, Irishman Isaac Weld Jr. visited several taverns in Nansemond County, writing that, *"The accommodation at the taverns along this road I found most wretched."* The New Design Tavern opened the year after Weld's journey through southeastern Virginia, and its accommodations would have been comparable to what he experienced in the taverns of rural Nansemond County, located just south of Surry.

Weld complained bitterly of the tavern fare he was served, writing, *"nothing was to be had but rancid fish, fat salt pork, and bread made of Indian corn. For this indifferent fare also I had to wait oftentimes an hour or two."* His European tastes had clearly not fully adapted to the ubiquitous use of corn (then termed *"Indian corn"*) in southeastern Virginia. However, he did admit that,

> *Indian corn bread, if well made, is tolerably good, but very few people can relish it on the first trial; it is a coarse, strong kind of bread, which has something of the taste of that made from oats. The best way of preparing it is in cakes; the large loaves made of it are always like dough in the middle.*

Writing for a European audience, Weld also commented about another common Southern dish made with corn and served in the rural taverns across the region that stood out to him [28]:

> *There is a dish also which they make of Indian corn, very common in Virginia and Maryland, called "hominy." It consists of pounded Indian corn and beans boiled together with milk till the whole mass becomes firm. This is eat* [sic]*, either hot or cold, with bacon, or with other meat.*

Taverns also served as inns, providing nightly accommodation for visitors traveling through the region as well as their horses. Guests in need of lodging at The New Design Tavern paid one shilling per night for themselves, while either pasturage or *"stableage"* for their horses cost six pence. Fodder for horses cost only 1½ pence, but those able to afford higher-quality feed for their animals could pay six pence for a gallon of oats and bran, or splurge on a gallon of Indian corn for one shilling [29]. When his father became the tavernkeeper at The New Design, Jack was about fourteen, and his brother, Leroy, was about nine. The boys undoubtedly helped to care for the horses of tavern customers and performed other chores at their father's tavern over the next eight years.

On his journey from Norfolk to Richmond, Virginia in May 1797, Isaac Weld commented on the provisions the Nansemond County rural taverns offered to his horses, writing, *"As for my horses, they were almost starved."* Europeans typically stored hay for their animals during the winter months, whereas Southerners cut fodder, the leaves and stalks of corn plants, to feed their animals. Weld complained [30]:

> *Hay is scarcely ever made use of in this part of this part of the country, but in place of it they feed their cattle upon fodder, that is, the leaves of the Indian corn plant. Not a bit of fodder, however, was to be had on the whole road from Norfolk to Richmond, excepting at two places; and the season having been remarkably dry, the little grass that had sprung up had been eat down every where by the cattle in the country…*
>
> *Oats were not to be had on any terms; and Indian corn was so scarce, that I had to send to one or two different houses before I could get even sufficient to give one feed each to my horses. The people in the country endeavoured to account for this scarcity from the badness of the harvest the preceding year; but the fact, I believe was, that corn for exportation having been in great demand, and a most enormous price offered for it, the people had been tempted to dispose of a great deal more than they could well spare…so that they were all reduced to want.*

For Jack, these years at The New Design meant daily exposure to travelers, politics, and the rhythms of a public house – a far broader world than the small kinship farms of his early childhood.

Located at the intersection of roads leading to the county's two important villages, Cabin Point and Surry Court House, The New Design Tavern quickly became a regional landmark and the primary public gathering place for locals living along the northern rim of the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County. On 26 August 1800, Jesse Stewart, the man who bought John Stiles' 70 acres of land in 1798, and another local complained to a Surry County grand jury about the condition of *"the road leading from the new design to Mrs. Pettways."* The grand jury summoned the road surveyor to appear before the Court *"for not keeping the same in good repair"* [31].

The storehouses and tavern that Capt. Kee built on the one-acre lot gradually became the site of a small village of sorts, with increased commercial activity over the decade following its construction in about 1797 [32]. Within a few years, Richmond newspaper advertisements referred to tracts of Surry County land for sale as lying on *"the public roads leading from Surry Courthouse to Cabin Point and the New Design"* [33].

In the early 1800s, this area fell into the Birth Island Precinct, and within a few years, the Surry County Court began ordering elections for local county offices held at The New Design, undoubtedly at the tavern itself [34]. By mid-century, the *"New Design"* had become one of Surry County's political districts, along with Surry Court House, Walls Bridge, and Cabin Point [35]. The

New Design remained the primary local gathering place for southern Surry until the latter 1800s, when the explosive growth of the logging industry led to the formation of the village of Dendron.

John Stiles Sr. renewed his *"license to keep an ordinary at The New Design"* in 1799 and 1800, with Capt. James Kee serving as Stiles' security on his bond for both years [36]. In 1801 and 1802, Benjamin Cocke obtained the ordinary license at The New Design, with Capt. Kee's son, Thomas Kee, serving as Cocke's security [37]. A Surry County native, Cocke served in the Virginia Militia in 1780–1781 during the Revolutionary War, seeing action at the Battles of Petersburg and Siege of Yorktown. He had also established residence at The New Design, and in 1803, the Surry County Court appointed Cocke as a constable [38].

We have no indication why Cocke obtained the ordinary license for The New Design Tavern in 1801 and 1802 instead of John Stiles, but Stiles remained affiliated with the tavern during the two years when Cocke held the license. On Saturday, 15 May 1802, Lt. Peter Jemm, a local resident and Surry Militia officer, became drunk at The New Design Tavern. In his inebriated state, Jemm apparently became angry and pulled his pistol on Stiles. Local officials arrested Jemm, and a grand jury indicted him, but when the case came to trial on August 24th, the Surry Court dismissed the charges. Incidentally, Jemm died the following year, although the circumstances of his early demise are unknown [39].

John Stiles Sr. obtained the ordinary license for The New Design Tavern in his own name between 1803 and 1806, granting him the authority to *"keep an ordinary at the House of James Kee, at his Plantation called New Design"* [40]. Stiles continued to face occasional problems with drunkenness. On Thursday, 12 May 1803, several local residents gathered at The New Design, including William Hicks and Nathaniel Thompson. Both men apparently overconsumed alcoholic drinks, and while under the influence, they behaved in a manner that attracted attention of other patrons.

The actions of Hicks and Thompson led to an investigation, and on May 24th, a grand jury indicted Hicks *"for being drunk at the New Design"* and Thompson *"for prophane* [sic] *swearing at the New Design."* When the Surry Court heard their cases on August 23rd, Thompson appeared before the Court, pleaded guilty, and paid his fine of 83¢. Hicks pleaded not guilty and hired an attorney to argue his case, but the Court convicted him, assessing Hicks a fine of 83¢ plus court costs [41].

Jack Stiles first appears in the Surry County records in 1803, when his father paid taxes on two *"Free Male Tithes,"* identified as John Stiles and *"Jno Stiles Jr."* In 1804, John Stiles Sr. also paid taxes on two free white male tithes, identified that year as *"John Stiles"* and *"John Stiles Jr."* Beginning in

1805, the tax records ceased identification of the white male tithes like they had in previous years, but John Stiles Sr. again paid taxes on two white males. Undoubtedly, the elder Stiles again paid for himself and his eldest son, Jack [42].

Tobacco production drove Virginia's economy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In such an agrarian society, laws regulating the distribution of land and protecting its possession held paramount importance to the colonial government. In 1662, the General Assembly passed the first laws requiring land *processioning* by officials in the presence of local residents to verify boundaries, and over the next two centuries, land processioning continued to evolve. The practice of processioning was well grounded in English law going back at least to Elizabethan times.

By the early eighteenth century, Virginia required each Anglican parish to divide itself into precincts and conduct land processioning within each precinct every four years. The parish vestry appointed at least two freeholders in each precinct known as *procession masters* to supervise the processions with both the landowners and witnesses present. The parish vestries continued to regulate land processioning until October 1785, when the Anglican Church was officially disestablished in Virginia. At that point, the county courts assumed the task of ordering land processioning. Virginia governmental officials designed land processioning laws to clarify land boundaries and reduce litigation regarding boundary disputes, although the process did not eliminate them entirely [43].

On Wednesday, 11 April 1804, Miles Burgess and John Velvin, Procession Masters for the Johnchecohunk Precinct, began their work of processioning the boundary lines for the lands surrounding The New Design. They walked the boundaries between the lands of James Kee, Edwin Rogers, Robert Ellis, Jesse Stewart, John Tillott, and John Watkins, all neighbors of Jack Stiles' grandfather, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr., and his uncles, David Sebrell and the late Nathaniel Sebrell Jr.

A sizeable group of landowners and witnesses accompanied Burgess and Velvin as they processioned that day, including Nicholas Sebrell and David Sebrell, Edwin Rogers, Jesse Stewart, and John Stiles. The record fails to clearly indicate if the elder or younger John Stiles went along with the group as a witness. Jack Stiles had reached the age of twenty by this time, so either father or son could have observed the processioning that day [44].

It appears that Jack Stiles moved out of his father's home about 1805 or 1806 when he was around twenty-one or twenty-two years old and moved to his grandfather's plantation known as *"Dripping Springs"* [45]. In 1806, after paying Jack's tithe for the past three years, John Stiles Sr. only paid the tax on one white male tithe. That same year, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. began paying taxes

on three male tithes rather than the two he had paid between 1799 and 1805. Sebrell again paid for three male tithes in 1807. It appears that Nathaniel was paying taxes on himself, his son, Nicholas, and grandson, Jack Stiles. By the time he settled at Dripping Springs, Jack had moved from the public world of The New Design into the heart of his maternal family's plantation community – a shift that would shape the next phase of his life.

In 1809, John Stiles Jr. paid taxes in his own name for the first time, paying just for one white male tithe and no livestock. His father paid for two white tithes that year, undoubtedly for himself and his younger son, Leroy. In 1810, John Stiles Sr., Leroy Stiles, and Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. each paid taxes in their own names, paying for only one white male tithe each. Jack Stiles was not listed as paying taxes under his own name that year [46]. However, the 1810 Federal Census enumeration of the household of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. includes a young adult male, probably Jack Stiles. On the other hand, the household of John Stiles Sr. appears to include him and Jane Cooper Stiles, their daughter, Mary Elizabeth Stiles, and Leroy and his new wife, Anna, plus their infant son [47].

Jack Stiles had spent the bulk of his teenaged years living with his father and stepmother at The New Design, where his father kept the tavern between 1798 and 1806. Jack's relocation to Dripping Springs placed him within the protective structure of his maternal family at the very moment when The New Design, once the center of his teenage world, entered a period of legal and social strain.

The legality of *"gaming,"* or gambling on tavern games, had remained a political issue throughout the eighteenth century, and it became increasingly controversial in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Although existing laws put severe restrictions on gaming, most courts and local officials continued to ignore it with impunity.

In late 1806, a Surry County official or citizen prompted several grand jury investigations of gaming in the county's taverns, and the resulting controversy involved the tavernkeepers of the three ordinaries then operating in Surry: the Cabin Point, Surry Court House, and The New Design Taverns. It began on 25 November 1806, when a grand jury indicted John Stiles Sr. *"for suffering of unlawful gaming in his Tavern at the New Design on the night of the 19th."* The elder Stiles denied the charges and hired an attorney to represent him in court. As the legal affair evolved over the next year, it turns out that one of Stiles' associates was involved in gambling activities at The New Design Tavern one night while Stiles was absent. The Surry Court ultimately dismissed the charges against Stiles, but only after a lengthy delay in the Court's consideration of the case. To maintain operation of The New Design tavern, the owner, Capt. James Kee, had to replace Stiles as tavernkeeper [48].

It is unclear if John Stiles Sr. continued to live at The New Design after he ceased serving as tavernkeeper, but he did not remain in Surry County for long. In 1810, he paid taxes on one white male tithe and one horse or mule, and his household was enumerated on the federal census. He did not pay Surry taxes after 1810, suggesting that he left the county in late 1810 or early 1811. It is not clear if he settled in another Virginia location or moved directly to North Carolina, where he lived in 1820 [49].

In 1800, several enslaved African American men of Henrico County, Virginia concocted a plan to launch an attack on Richmond and negotiate for their freedom. A combination of a torrential rainstorm and a warning by two slaves of the plot thwarted the plans, and Virginia Governor James Monroe called out the state militia to arrest the conspirators. Known as *"Gabriel's Conspiracy"* after the most significant leader of the conspiracy, the event led to calls for an end to slave manumissions and deportation of free blacks from Virginia. In the aftermath of the planned insurrection, the Virginia Assembly passed an act that restricted the movement of free blacks by requiring them to register with their county courts. They also banned assemblies of slaves and free blacks by requiring the commanding officer of every militia battalion to maintain a monthly schedule of men

> *…to patrole* [sic] *and visit all negro quarters and other places suspected of entertaining unlawful assemblies of slaves, servants or other disorderly persons…unlawfully assembled, or any others strolling from one plantation to another without a pass from his or her master or mistress or overseer…*

The act authorized payment for privates performing militia duty of 75¢ for every twelve hours of patrol [50].

In June 1810, the Surry County Court issued payments to the men who recently performed their militia duty by patrolling as required by the General Assembly. John Stiles had spent forty-eight hours on patrol, while his brother, Leroy, had patrolled for thirty-six hours, and John's first cousin, Walter Spratley Sr., patrolled for six hours. The Court ordered payments to John Stiles of $3.00, Leroy of $2.25, and Spratley of 37½¢ [51].

By 1811, Jack Stiles had reached young adulthood, shaped by the public world of The New Design, the kinship networks of Dripping Springs, and the increasingly regulated social order of post-Gabriel Virginia.

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Rebecca Cooper: Over a Century of Blackwater Swamp Ancestry

Rebecca Cooper (Becca) was born about 1794 near the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County, Virginia [1], the only child of Frederick Cooper and Elizabeth (Betsy) Dewell to survive infancy [2]. Becca was probably born at her parents' house, on the land her great-grandfather, William Cooper, bought in 1724 and left to his son, George, who in turn left it to his own son, Frederick. In his 1781 will, George Cooper also made bequests to his daughters, Emelia Cooper Collier and Jane Cooper, and left instructions for the care of Agnes, his daughter who was apparently disabled [3]. Fred Cooper's farm lay near that of Emelia and her husband, John Collier, and it also adjoined The New Design, where Becca's aunt, Jane Cooper, lived with her husband, John Stiles Sr., and operated the tavern. Thus, Becca grew up living near all of her paternal first cousins: Benjamin, John, George Cooper, Emelia, and Lucy Collier, and Leroy and Mary Elizabeth Stiles [4].

Rebecca Cooper's ancestry tied her to a landscape shaped by kinship continuity, small-scale farming, and the long memory of early Virginia's political and social upheavals. Her paternal ancestors had lived in Surry County, Virginia for well over a century prior to her birth. Her great-grandfather, William Cooper, was the son of James Cooper, who had settled in Southwark Parish, Surry County prior to 3 November 1701, when he paid 5000 pounds of tobacco for a 100-acre tract of land in Surry. James paid his 1704 quit rents on his land [5] and lived there until his death in 1734 [6].

Becca's paternal grandmother, Mary Ellis Cooper, was the daughter of Caleb Ellis Sr. (c1700–c1762) [7]. Caleb was the son of Jeremiah Ellis Jr. (c1671–c1738) [8] and the grandson of Jeremiah Ellis Sr. (c1643–c1722) [9]. In 1687, both Jeremiah Ellis Sr. and Jeremiah Jr. served in the Surry County Militia [10], and fifteen years later, in December 1702, father and son both served in the *"Company of Foot,"* Surry County Militia commanded by Capt. William Brown. The elder Jeremiah was by then aged fifty-nine years, and on the muster roll, his commanding officer marked him as *"too old for service"* [11].

Earlier, in 1676–1677, Jeremiah Ellis Sr. appears to have sympathized with the insurgents during Bacon's Rebellion. During the reprisals that followed the collapse of the rebellion, Ellis provided a deposition before the Surry Court on 4 July 1677 regarding his visit to the house of Henry Francis, who was an associate of Maj. William Rookings, one of the leaders of the insurgents. The purpose of Ellis' deposition is unclear, but the fact that Ellis visited the Francis home suggests he sympathized with Bacon's cause [12]. Jeremiah Ellis Sr. apparently did not take an active part in the violent demonstrations against Royal authority, as he did not suffer consequences like many

of the more active supporters. A few years later, on 2 May 1682, the Surry County Court appointed Ellis as sub sheriff [13].

Jeremiah Ellis Sr.'s father, Edward Ellis, was brought to Virginia by May 1636 and appears to have repaid his passage across the Atlantic from England with a period of servitude [14]. In the early 1650s, Edward acquired land on Chippokes Creek in Surry County, located directly across the James River from Jamestown [15].

Becca's paternal grandmother, Mary Ellis Cooper, was the daughter of Amelia Shockey Ellis, known as Mildred or *"Meley Ellis,"* and Amelia's father was Richard Shockey [16]. He first appears in Surry County as a free white male tithable in 1689, which places Shockey's birth prior to 1673 [17]. In December 1702, Richard Shockey served in the company of Surry's Dragoons, or cavalry, commanded by Capt. William Brown [18]. Prior to 1717, he acquired a 300-acre tract of land in southern Surry County along the Blackwater Swamp [19]. His land adjoined the 489-acre tract that William Cooper purchased in 1724 [20]. Richard Shockey died about 1731 in Surry County at the age of around sixty years, with his estate administered by his widow, Alice [21]. She wrote her will in 1736, leaving *"to my grandaughter* [sic] *Mary Ellis my woolling Spining wheele"* [22].

Rebecca Cooper's mother, Elizabeth Dewell, was the daughter of Thomas Dewell [23]. He had married between about 1755 and 1760 to Elizabeth Barnes, daughter of Henry Barnes Sr. and his wife, Naomi [24]. Henry Barnes Sr. settled in Surry County by the latter 1720s and acquired a large tract of land on the north side of the Blackwater Swamp [25].

Details on the background of Becca Cooper's grandfather, Thomas Dewell, are more obscure. His brother, James Dewell, died single in late 1750, leaving

> …*to my Loving Brother Thomas Dewell all my Wearing Appearl* [sic] *in General, and also what New Cloath* [sic] *of mine there is at James Boyds the Taylors* [sic] *to make…*

Thomas and James presumably lived in Surry County by the 1740s, but they were not landowners [26]. Their father is not clearly identified, but they may have been sons of William Dewell Sr., who at the age of twelve arrived in Surry County, Virginia from England in May 1695 on the ship *"Hampshire"* [27].

Thomas Dewell married Elizabeth Barnes by the latter 1750s, and they had a son, Henry Dewell, born in the early 1760s. By the terms of Henry Barnes's will, with the birth of a son, Elizabeth Barnes Dewell acquired 100 acres of Barnes' land along the north side of the Blackwater Swamp [28]. On 19 November 1777, Thomas Dewell's brother-in-law, William Barnes, sold him a 225-acre tract of land in Southwark Parish, Surry County left to William in his father's will. Dewell

paid William Barnes £20 *"Current Money of Virginia"* for this tract that adjoined the 100 acres that Elizabeth had received from her father in 1759 [29].

Thomas and Elizabeth Dewell spent their married lives on their farm in southern Surry County on the north side of the Blackwater Swamp. He cultivated his 325-acre farm with the help of his son, Henry, and perhaps hired labor, but Thomas did not own any slaves. In 1782, his Surry County household consisted of six white people but no black people. In 1784, his farm included four *"white souls"* and consisted of one dwelling house and one *"Smoke House"* [30].

Becca's mother, Elizabeth Dewell, grew up in the 1780s on her parents' farm along the Blackwater Swamp. Like most women of that era, few details of her life have survived other than her name. Known as *"Betsy,"* she married on 24 February 1791 to Frederick Cooper [31].

Thomas Dewell appears to have remained in good physical health through the mid-1790s as he approached the age of seventy. He paid his land and personal property taxes for 1794, and on 1 February 1795, he witnessed a land transaction, signing his name to the document [32].

Shortly afterwards, probably in March or April 1795, Thomas Dewell died unexpectedly. Elizabeth Barnes Dewell had died before him, so his two children, Henry Dewell and Betsy Dewell Cooper, inherited his lands. By the terms of the 1759 will of Henry Barnes Sr., the 100 acres he had left Elizabeth Barnes Dewell went to her son, Henry, but the 225 acres Thomas Dewell bought in 1777 was equally divided between Thomas' children, Henry and Betsy Dewell Cooper [33]. By the time of Rebecca's birth the year before her grandfather's death, these intertwined families had created a dense kinship world along the Blackwater that would shape every aspect of her early life.

Thomas Dewell had perhaps foreseen his impending demise, for he began the legal process of establishing a boundary to divide his lands between his two children but died before completing this task. Henry Dewell and Betsy Dewell Cooper soon continued their father's effort to establish a boundary, but again fate interfered. Betsy died about 1797, leaving Thomas Dewell's 225-acre tract of land in joint possession of Henry Dewell and Betsy's only child, Rebecca Cooper, then described as *"an infant of tender years."*

On 20 January 1798, Frederick Cooper and Henry Dewell signed a legal agreement to establish a *"line of partition"* between Henry Dewell and Rebecca Cooper forever. The document stipulated that if either Henry, Frederick, or Rebecca, or any of their heirs, were to ever bring suit to nullify the current document, then the offending party would forfeit the sum of $1000. The next month, on February 27th, both Henry Dewell and Frederick Cooper appeared before the Surry Court to prove the document [34].

Rebecca Cooper's father remarried twice after her mother's death. On 20 July 1798, Frederick Cooper posted bond in Surry County to obtain a license to marry Sarah Rogers [35]. She did not live long, for on 5 December 1799, Frederick Cooper posted bond in neighboring Sussex County, Virginia to marry Elizabeth Barker, the widow of Thomas Barker who had died in 1781. Fred and Elizabeth married on December 12th [36].

By early 1805, Rebecca Cooper's father had reached the age of between forty-five and fifty-five years. The surviving records indicate Fred remained an active farmer and hunter through 1804, after which his health declined sufficiently to prompt him to make plans for his demise. Cooper wrote his will on 22 April 1805, giving his property to his wife, Elizabeth, during her lifetime. He left his gun to his nephew, Leroy Stiles, son of his sister, Jane, the wife of shoemaker and The New Design tavernkeeper, John Stiles Sr. Frederick then made this disposition of his real and personal property after his wife's death:

> *I give to my daughter Rebecca Cooper after the death of my wife all my est*[ate] *both real and personal and of what nature or kind soever which has not been herein before particularly disposed of to her and to her child or children forever if any, but in case she should die without a child I give the whole of my land and plantation to Leroy Stiles to him and his heirs forever.*

Fred Cooper named as his executors his Elizabeth Cooper, and his *"friend David Sebrell,"* his neighbor and captain of the Surry County Militia [37].

After writing his will in April 1805, Frederick Cooper remained in reasonably good health through the next seven months. On November 29th, Cooper, John Velvin, and Miles Burgess met with Justice of the Peace Beverly Booth, who administered the required oath of appraisers. The three then proceeded to make an appraisement of the property of Cooper's recently deceased neighbor, William Justiss. The following year, Velvin and Burgess appeared before the Surry County Court, and under oath, they reported to the Court:

> *Certify that Frederick Coopper* [sic] *acted with us & that a few days after & prior to the making & assigning this return h*[e] *Deceased.*

If we take the statement by Velvin and Burgess literally, then Frederick Cooper appraised the Justiss estate with them on 29 November 1805 but died a few days later. This places his death in the first few days of December 1805 [38].

On 28 January 1806, Capt. David Sebrell filed the will of Frederick Cooper with the Surry County Court and posted the required $1000 bond to serve as Cooper's executor. Elizabeth Cooper chose to leave Cooper's legal affairs to Sebrell, and so the Surry Court appointed him as Frederick's sole executor [39].

As an orphan with an interest in land and other property, the Surry County Court had to appoint a legal guardian for Rebecca Cooper, who was about eleven years old when her father died. On 27 October 1807, Rebecca appeared before the Surry County Court as they prepared to appoint a guardian to oversee her affairs. Serving on the Court that day as justices were John Hartwell Cocke, later a Brigadier-General in the War of 1812, and Nicholas Sebrell, the brother of David Sebrell and at that time Surry County's representative in the General Assembly.

Identified to the Court as the *"orphan of Frederick Cooper,"* Rebecca requested that they appoint Capt. David Sebrell as her guardian. The Court agreed, and Capt. Sebrell posted the required $1000 guardian's bond, with John Velvin, the husband of Rebecca's first cousin, Permelia Cooper, serving as Sebrell's security [40]. Rebecca's choice of Sebrell as her guardian placed her under the protection of one of the most influential men in her kinship network, a decision that would shape the next decade of her life.

The 1805 death of Frederick Cooper left his sister, Emelia Cooper Collier, and his brother-in-law, Henry Dewell, as Rebecca's closest living biological relatives. However, the only available evidence suggests that Rebecca lived with her stepmother, Elizabeth Cooper, who retained control of Fred's 100-acre farm until her death. In 1810, Elizabeth was listed as the head of a Surry County household that included her, a white female between sixteen and twenty-six years, probably Rebecca, and a young male under ten.

This suggests that after her father's death in 1805 when she was about eleven years old, Rebecca Cooper lived with her stepmother on her father's old farm along the north side of the Blackwater Swamp [41]. Thus, by 1811, Rebecca was a young adolescent living on her father's old farm, navigating a world shaped by loss, kinship, and the legal structures of early nineteenth-century Virginia.

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Married Life in Surry County, Virginia

On 22 December 1812, John Stiles Jr. posted bond in Surry County, Virginia for a license to marry Rebecca Cooper, with the actual ceremony occurring shortly thereafter. At the time of their marriage, Jack was about twenty-eight and Becca about eighteen years old. They had grown up near each other in southern Surry County near The New Design, and given their multiple family connections, they must have known each other reasonably well. In 1788, Jack's father had married Jane Cooper, Becca's aunt. In his 1805 will, Frederick Cooper described Jack's uncle, Capt. David Sebrell, as his *"friend,"* and appointed Sebrell as his executor. Shortly after her father's death, Becca appeared before the Surry Court and requested that they appoint David Sebrell as her guardian. The Court concurred, and Sebrell served as her guardian from 1807 until her marriage in 1812, for which Sebrell gave his permission [1].

Although John Stiles Jr. was the son of a shoemaker and tavernkeeper, he grew up near his grandfather's farm, Dripping Springs, and he probably lived there between about 1806 and his marriage. The records suggest that he farmed to support himself, probably working his grandfather's land as a young man. In 1811, Stiles paid taxes on one horse, mare, or mule. In 1812, he only paid taxes for his own white poll and no livestock, and Stiles was not assessed any personal taxes in 1813, the first year of his marriage to Rebecca [2].

Jack's grandfather, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr., reached the age of ninety years in 1813, having outlived two wives and eight of his ten known children. The elderly man wrote his will on Christmas Day, and after disposing of his lands to his two surviving children, he divided his remaining property into six equal portions, one for each of his children either alive or who left heirs:

> *6thly I desire that all the rest of my negroes not herein before disposed of may be divided equally into six lots…And the other lot I give to my Grand son John Stiles Jr. to him and his heirs forever.*
>
> *7thly My desire is that all the money arising from the sales of my estate, after paying all debts and legacies may be equally divided among my children and Grandchildren in the same manner and proportion as the negroes are directed to be, in the foregoing clause.*

Nathaniel Sebrell lived two years after making his will, dying in the fall of 1815 at the age of ninety-two [3].

In early 1815, the Surry County Court issued summons to a group of men to appear before the March term of court for grand jury duty. Those summoned included several residents of southern Surry County residing near The New Design, including John Stiles Jr., Jesse Stewart, Robert Ellis, William M. Davis, and Benjamin Cocke. All five plus an additional three men did not show up at

Surry Court House on 27 March 1815, and so the Surry Court fined each of them $8 for failure to appear [4].

At the next court session held on May 22nd, John Stiles and the other seven men all appeared before the Court to provide their reason for not appearing in March. The Court accepted their excuses and remitted their fines. The Court then selected the grand jury, and those selected included John Stiles Jr., William Rae, husband of Becca's first cousin, Emelia Collier, and Edwin Rogers, who would marry Becca's first cousin, Lucy Collier, two years later [5].

Upon the 1795 death of Rebecca Cooper Stiles' grandfather, Thomas Dewell, Rebecca inherited 112½ acres of the land that he purchased in 1777. During his lifetime, Fred Cooper had paid the land taxes on his daughter's land in his own name [6]. Beginning in 1806, someone paid the land taxes in Rebecca's name, presumably her guardian, Capt. David Sebrell [7]. Beginning in 1813, John Stiles Jr. paid the taxes on Rebecca's land, *"in right of"* his wife [8].

The land Rebecca Cooper Stiles inherited adjoined that of her uncle, Henry Dewell, and lay near Cypress Swamp, a few miles to the east of her father's farm and The New Design where she and Jack had grown up. It does not appear that Jack and Becca ever lived on her grandfather's land, for they disposed of the property just a few years after their marriage. On 2 September 1815, they sold 37½ acres of the tract to William Hix (Hicks) for $75 [9]. The following spring, on 4 May 1816, they sold the remaining 75 acres of her Dewell land to William Maynard for $83⅓ [10]. The sale of her Dewell inheritance marked a shift from Rebecca's natal kinship landscape to the new household she and Jack were building together.

We do not know precisely where Jack and Becca Stiles lived following their marriage in December 1812. They may have lived at Dripping Springs, the farm of his grandfather, and where Jack's uncle and Rebecca's guardian, Capt. David Sebrell, lived. Alternatively, Jack and Becca may have settled on Fred Cooper's old 100-acre farm with Becca's stepmother, Elizabeth Cooper, as she retained possession of the Cooper farm until her death.

On 11 March 1815, Jack paid John and Mary Justiss $50 for a 17⅝-acre tract of land in Surry County that adjoined the farm of Becca Stiles' father [11]. This small plot had most recently been half of the dower lands assigned to Nancy (Ann) Andrews Justiss following the 1805 death of her husband, William Justiss. After Nancy's death in 1811, her dower lands had reverted back to William Justiss' two children, and John Justiss sold Jack Stiles his half of Nancy's dower land [12]. John and Mary Justiss had sold the remainder of their interest in William Justiss' old plantation to his brother-in-law, Daniel O. Matthews, in 1807 [13]. This small tract that Jack purchased in 1815 placed he and Rebecca within a landscape shaped by generations of intertwined families.

Rebecca Cooper Stiles' family had remained closely associated with the Justiss family over the previous ninety years. John Justiss' grandfather, another John Justiss, had moved from Prince George County to southern Surry County in 1727 and bought a 200-acre tract of land on the Blackwater Swamp [14]. Justiss' land adjoined the lands of Becca's great-grandfather, William Cooper, and her great-great-grandfather, Richard Shockey [15]. On 20 October 1731, John Justiss served as an appraiser of Richard Shockey's estate [16], and from the 1730s through the 1760s, he and his son, William, were associated with Becca's great-grandfather, Caleb Ellis Sr., and Shockey's heirs [17]. The elder John Justiss and his wife, Joanna Cannon Justiss, witnessed William Cooper's 1756 will [18], and in his 1774 will, John Justiss left his lands to his younger son, William, with Becca's grandfather, George Cooper, witnessing the document [19].

Jack and Becca Stiles owned their 17⅝-acre tract of the old Justiss land adjoining her father's farm from 1815 until 1823 and presumably resided on it. The seventeen acres was a small tract, and since the records indicate that Jack farmed, he probably also cultivated a portion of Frederick Cooper's farm in addition to his own land.

The surviving records reveal very few details of Stiles' farming activities in the first dozen years after his marriage. In 1814, 1815, and 1816, he paid property taxes on just one horse, mare, or mule, but in 1817 and 1818, he paid taxes on two horses, mares, or mules. This suggests that the amount of acreage he maintained in cultivation gradually increased by 1817, since plowing required the use of horses or mules. Virginia only taxed cattle in 1815, and that year Stiles paid taxes on eleven head of adult cattle.

There is no indication that John Stiles Jr. or Rebecca Cooper owned any slaves during their lifetimes. Becca's parents and grandparents were small farmers and did not own slaves, while Jack's father was an immigrant tradesman from New York and owned no slaves. However, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. owned a small number of slaves throughout his lifetime, and at his 1815 death, his inventory listed him as the owner of fifteen enslaved people ranging in age from young children to an elderly couple. In 1816, John Stiles paid taxes on one slave over twelve years of age, and in 1817 and 1818, he paid taxes on two slaves over twelve years. These enslaved people were likely living on his farm with the Stiles family after his grandfather's death, but we have no indication that he was their legal owner.

Records in a section below detail the financial difficulties that John Stiles experienced beginning about 1817, and this is reflected in the tax records. The two enslaved people on which he paid taxes in 1817 and 1818 lived with other Sebrell relatives by 1819, for Stiles did not pay

taxes on any slaves that year. Moreover, after owning two horses or mules in 1817–1818, he only paid taxes on one in 1819 [20].

Very poor crop yields or complete failures in 1817–1819 caused a significant economic decline for many small Virginia farmers. This probably explains John Stiles' dire financial situation and debt during this period. His situation became so severe that in late 1819 or early 1820, he left his land along the north side of the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County and moved across the river into Sussex County. He did not pay 1820 property taxes in Surry County, nor was he listed on the 1820 Surry County Federal Census. When he paid his 1820 tax of 5¢ on his 17⅝-acre tract of Surry County land, and the clerk who recorded his payment listed him as a resident of Sussex County [21].

For Jack Stiles, the agricultural crisis of 1817–1819 marked the beginning of a prolonged period of financial instability that permanently reshaped his family's life. During his brief foray in Sussex County, Stiles became indebted to Nancy Birdsong, the widow of George Birdsong, a wealthy man with land holdings in both Sussex and Surry County. Mr. Birdsong wrote his will on 15 April 1818, leaving his property to Nancy and their five children. Birdsong concluded his will by appointing his executor:

> *I nominate & appoint my friend Walter Spratley (of Cabin Point) executor to this my last will and Testament.*

Spratley filed Birdsong's will with the Sussex County Court on June 4th, qualified as executor, and spent the next eleven years handling Birdsong's affairs, including serving as legal guardian for Birdsong's two underage children [22].

Walter Spratley Sr. and John Stiles Jr. were first cousins, as their mothers, Susanna and Mary, were sisters, both daughters of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. Walter was born about 1782, and his parents both died in the mid-1790s. As a result, he and his siblings grew up on the Sebrell farm, and so he and Stiles would have known each other well. Although closely related, about the same age, and growing up near each other, Spratley and Stiles' lives took starkly differing trajectories. Whereas Mary Sebrell married an immigrant from New York who worked as a shoemaker and tavernkeeper, Susanna Sebrell married Benjamin Spratley, a member of Surry County's wealthy Spratley family. Walter Spratley appears to have left home and obtained a formal education, and upon his return to Surry County about 1805, he settled near Cabin Point, a bustling village and site of a tobacco inspection station near the James River. In his late twenties, he was appointed a Surry County Justice and militia officer. Spratley operated the Cabin Point Tavern for a decade before becoming a wealthy merchant and plantation owner with extensive land holdings [23].

Walter Spratley's close association with the Birdsong family may have resulted in John Stiles moving across the Blackwater Swamp into Sussex County and working on Nancy Birdsong's land in 1820. We know that Stiles lived in Sussex in 1820, but his family was not listed on the federal census there. However, Nancy Birdsong's household had a large number of people, and the ages fit for it to have included Nancy, her three minor daughters, John and Rebecca Stiles, and their two young sons [24]. Although we have no way to know for certain if the extra people in the Birdsong household included Jack and Becca Stiles, it is certainly a possibility and would help explain how Stiles became indebted to Nancy Birdsong [25].

John Stiles only lived in Sussex County for one year, for by early 1821 he had returned to his land on the north side of the Blackwater Swamp. When he paid his 1821 land taxes, the clerk again listed him as a Surry County resident [26]. On 21 April 1821, Stiles paid his Surry County property taxes of 80¢ on two horses, mares, or mules and one slave aged twelve years or older [27]. Although by 1821 Jack and Rebecca had returned to the north side of the Blackwater, the financial pressures that drove them to Sussex would continue to shape their lives.

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Military Service During the War of 1812

Jack and Becca Stiles married six months after the United States officially declared war on Great Britain on 18 June 1812. Despite years of diplomatic turmoil, neither side was prepared for war once it arrived. Preoccupied by the Napoleonic Wars on the European continent, Great Britain only had a small contingent of troops in Canada in 1812 and moved slowly to implement offensive campaigns against the Americans. They did not use their superiority on the seas in 1812, other than to implement a naval blockade of the lower Atlantic coast that devastated American foreign trade and internal commerce. The blockade had a significant economic effect on the United States, as skyrocketing prices of goods and products resulted in a financial panic in 1813.

British naval power reached the Chesapeake region in early 1813, with a naval squadron arriving at Hampton Roads at the mouth of the James River on February 4th. The British Navy maintained a tight naval blockade of the Chesapeake Bay for the next two years. That spring, British warships moved into the upper Chesapeake, sacking towns in Maryland and plundering the surrounding countryside.

In mid-June, a larger British force prepared to launch an attack upon the vital port town of Norfolk, which then harbored the American frigate *Constellation.* The American commander assembled a large force of Virginia militia to fortify Craney Island which guarded the approach to Norfolk. The British made their assault on June 22nd, but natural obstacles and a withering artillery fire from the local militia caused them to retreat.

The British commanders next ordered a force of 2,000 troops to attack nearby Hampton. They brushed aside the 300 Virginia militiamen guarding the town, capturing Hampton early on the morning on June 25th. French mercenaries fighting for the British then spent the next two days pillaging the town, subjecting the American civilians to abuse and outrages. According to Charles Napier, a young British officer, *"every horror was committed with impunity, rape, murder, pillage: and not a man was punished!"* [1]. For Surry County residents, the violence at Hampton made the war feel suddenly and terrifyingly close.

This action at Craney Island and Hampton between June 22–26 occurred only a short distance down the James River from Surry County's Hog Island, and Surry militia units may have participated in the American response [2]. To reinforce the standing Virginia Militia at Hampton, officials formally activated nearby county militias, including the 71st Regiment that consisted of several Surry County units, including the companies of Capts. Irby Jones and George Judkins. Both companies responded to the national emergency and remained activated from June 30th until July 10th, as part of the 2nd Battalion.

John Stiles Jr. served as a private in Capt. Irby Jones' Company, while John Watkins, the future husband of Jack's first cousin, Elizabeth Faulcon Sebrell, served as the company's lieutenant [3]. William Carsley and Nathaniel Spratley, Jack's first cousins, together with John and George C. Collier, and William Rae, all first cousins of Becca, served Capt. Judkins' Company during the 1813 mobilization, with Rae holding the rank of corporal [4].

After their victory at Hampton, British warships sailed into the lower James River unopposed, as the Americans had no naval forces with which to confront the enemy. For the next several months, small British squadrons engaged in something of a cat and mouse game with the Virginia militia, plundering the James River plantations at will until a local militia unit arrived to drive them back into the river.

Several such British raids occurred in Surry County in late June and early July after the engagement at Hampton. On June 30th and July 1st, local citizens *"had the mortification of seeing the enemy passing up and down the river without having it in our power to do them any injury."* Before they could summon the militia, British troops conducted raids in Surry County, including sacking the Mount Pleasant Plantation belonging to Nicholas Faulcon, the first cousin of Jack Stiles' mother, Mary Sebrell Stiles. Guarded by a warship, a barge carrying between fifteen and twenty men landed and followed one of Faulcon's enslaved workers to his manor house. They carried off thirty-five sheep, and then ransacked the mansion, breaking all of the windows, destroying the furniture he had left in the house, defaced the building, and even broke the railings of the stairway, along with other wanton depredations [5].

Throughout 1813–1814, while the bulk of the British army remained in Europe to confront Napoleon, the British navy played a primary role in their war effort, tasked to blockade American ports and disrupt trade to damage the American economy. Although the British continued their occasional raids on James River plantations, the proximity of Surry County to the James caused officials to deactivate their militia units in the 71st Regiment after the immediate threat to Hampton and Norfolk had passed. Rather than remain constantly mobilized, squadrons from Surry County Militia companies regularly patrolled the James River to defend against the British raids.

During these patrols, the men acted under the auspices of the Surry County Court. On 27 June 1814, officials submitted records to the Court verifying recent patrols by Surry County militiamen, including Jack Stiles, who received $1.87 for thirty hours of patrol duty. Becca's first cousins also served in the patrols, including George C. Collier, paid $1.31 for twenty-one hours, and William Rae, paid $2.12 for thirty-four hours of patrol [6].

Mid-1814 brought an even greater British threat to the Chesapeake. In their August campaign, British officials sent a major attack force to the upper Chesapeake Bay towards Washington, D.C. with the ultimate goal of capturing the port city of Baltimore, Maryland. In response, Virginia mobilized militia of James River counties to reinforce standing units at Norfolk and Hampton. Several Surry County companies responded to the activation, including Capt. Irby Jones' Company, in which John Stiles Jr. served as a private.

Despite their preparations for defending Norfolk and Hampton, the mid-1814 military action remained far removed from the lower James River. On August 24th, British troops brushed aside militia units guarding Washington, D.C. and managed to torch the Capitol, White House, and other governmental buildings, but they failed in their objective to capture Baltimore, Maryland. Fort McHenry withstood their withering bombardment on September 13th–14th. After failing to reduce the citadel guarding the Baltimore harbor, the enemy withdrew their fleet from the Chesapeake.

Officials activated several Surry County Militia units during this chaotic period, including the companies commanded by Capts. George Judkins and Irby Jones. Capt. Judkins' force mobilized on July 24th at Fort Powhatan. Jack Stiles was summoned to serve, but something prevented him from serving. Instead, David Cocke Jr. served as a *"Substitute for John Stiles."* The men remained activated through August 8th, serving sixteen days [7].

Later that month, Jack Stiles served as a private in Capt. Irby Jones Company during their brief activation. Irby's Company activated at Norfolk on August 31st, and on September 11th, they returned to Cabin Point in Surry County, where they disbanded. Stiles was reported as present during this brief tour, and for this 12-day activation, John Stiles Jr. received payment of $3.20 [8].

The Surry County Militia units do not appear to have seen any significant military action during their activation in August and September 1814. After leaving the upper Chesapeake, the British force sailed back into the Atlantic to regroup before their fateful assault on New Orleans a few months later. Their departure ended the threats of British naval attacks on the eastern seaboard, and the War of 1812 ended in a stalemate a few months later. Despite the impasse, the disruptions caused by the war left lasting marks on the families of the lower James River.

Surry County's proximity to Norfolk and Hampton made it easy for their militia units to mobilize and promptly respond to British attacks along the lower James River. The need for regular militia patrols along the river prompted Virginia's military officials to primarily keep the men in the 71st Virginia Militia Regiment at their Surry County homes except during emergencies.

Although various Surry County militia units saw action at Norfolk, Hampton, and along the lower James River during their official mobilizations of 1813 and 1814, their brief periods of

official activation made the men ineligible for future bounty land and pension benefits that the Federal Government awarded to War of 1812 soldiers who belonged to regular units. Many men who enlisted in Virginia Militia units from inland counties situated farther away from the James River remained mobilized for five or six months, making them eligible for these benefits, as opposed to those in militia units of Surry and other counties along the river.

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Economic Turmoil in Southeastern Virginia

As Jack and Becca Stiles began their married life, a series of unrelated events slowly began swirling together, resulting a few years later in economic disaster for many small farmers of the Virginia Tidewater. First, by the early 1800s, two centuries of damaging agricultural practices had leached nutrients from most of the lands across the Tidewater, making them unproductive. In the early years, farmers planted tobacco seedlings in small hills interspersed with dying hardwood trees they had girded. While these mined the soil's fertility, tobacco hills caused only limited erosion. As tobacco yields declined after years of planting, farmers would cultivate crops of maize, or Indian corn, often planting a crop of corn after harvesting the tobacco. The Virginia Gourdseed variety of corn was commonly grown in the Chesapeake region, and their stalks typically reached fourteen feet in height. The deep tap root of maize extracted nutrients from a deeper layer of soil than the surface-feeding tobacco. The girded trees gradually died, and larger open fields of bare earth became common. The region's summer thundershowers on these bare fields began the cycle of land erosion.

As the maize depleted the soils further, farmers began using former maize fields for wheat, another important cash crop of the Chesapeake region. Wheat perhaps caused even greater damage to the soil, as it was not planted until August or September, when the bare land was more susceptible to erosion due to the late summer torrential thunderstorms. After a few years of wheat planting, yields began to decline to the point that cultivation of the field became impractical. Old fields abandoned to nature became common and dotted the Chesapeake landscape. After two or three decades, the old fields recovered their fertility and would again produce significant crops of tobacco.

This cycle of field rotation worked well across Tidewater Virginia and Maryland in the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries when land was cheap and abundant. However, as the population across the Tidewater grew in the mid-1700s, vacant land became scarce, and the demand for land tempted new farmers to cease leaving worn-out fields fallow for long periods to restore their fertility. This resulted in poor crop yields and lands completely depleted of vital nutrients.

Planters who remained on their Tidewater lands learned to fertilize the soils, rotate crops, continue leaving exhausted lands fallow, and they adopted agricultural practices that reduced damaging erosion in order to remain successful. While landowners gradually recognized these practices were essential for their land to retain its productivity, the percentage of landownership

declined towards the end of the eighteenth century, and land tenants had less incentive to protect and preserve the lands they merely rented by engaging in appropriate agricultural practices [1].

As Virginia farmers struggled with reduced crop yields by the early 1800s caused by centuries of these agricultural practices, the British blockade during the War of 1812 disrupted usual markets for American agricultural products. Both of these factors contributed to a general economic decline for Virginia farmers between 1810 and 1815. Compounding their distress, the Hessian fly, a significant pest of wheat, began plaguing the Chesapeake region in 1818. Wheat had become a vital cash crop of the Virginia Tidewater region in areas not particularly suitable for tobacco, and for several years, the Hessian flies decimated the local wheat fields and reduced crop yields [2]. Yet even these regional pressures paled beside the global shock that arrived in 1815.

While politicians and soldiers across the two continents of the Western world ended the Napoleonic wars in Europe and the War of 1812 in North America, on 5 April 1815, after lying dormant for centuries, Mount Tambora in southeastern Asia began erupting. Then in the Dutch East Indies but now located in Indonesia, Tambora lies on the island of Sumbawa, in the Flores Sea northwest of Australia. That moderate eruption was followed by repeated explosions that rocked the mountain for the next four days. At 7:00 p.m. local time on the 10th, the eruption intensified into a cataclysmic explosion.

Observers reported that *"columns of flame"* shot out of Tambora's summit to a great height, joined together, and soon the entire mountain *"appeared like a body of liquid fire extending itself in every direction."* Smaller detonations continued for several days, accompanied by a powerful whirlwind and tsunami. Evidence indicates that Tambora's eruption column penetrated the stratosphere, carrying finer ash particles, aerosols, and gas molecules high into the upper atmosphere. Upper-level winds dispersed the particles around the globe, where they remained for several years. This resulted in brilliantly colored sunsets and twilights the following summer in London, England, and a fog, probably a stratospheric sulfate aerosol veil, across the eastern United States that persisted for several years. The spectacular 1815 eruption of Tambora exceeds all other known volcanic eruptions of the past 10,000 years [3].

Many scientists believe that the material Tambora's eruption spewed into the atmosphere resulted in a volcanic winter across northern Europe and North America, with the reduced temperatures making 1816 known as *"the year without a summer."* The cooler temperatures appear to have caused torrential precipitation in western Europe, while repeated cold fronts left snow and ice present throughout the year in New England. These conditions, together with a drought across the eastern United States and impact of the Hessian flies, resulted in greatly

reduced harvests across both continents, leading to famine and social unrest. Grain prices then spiked, leading to an economic crisis that ultimately resulted in the Panic of 1819 [4].

The 1815 end of the Napoleonic Wars caused prices of wheat, oats, and barley to decrease across Europe, and to prevent cheap grains from mainland Europe from flooding their markets, Great Britain passed restrictive *"Corn Laws"* designed to keep British grain prices stable. These laws and the recession in Europe led to a significant drop in demand for many American products, especially for Virginian agricultural commodities. Between 1818 and 1821, Virginia's exports fell 37%, more than twice the federal decline of 15.7%. As a response to the British Corn Laws, in 1818 and 1820, in, the U. S. Congress passed acts that closed the Port of Norfolk to British shipping [5]. For Tidewater communities, the closure of Norfolk was not an abstract policy dispute but an immediate economic catastrophe.

This action decimated the southeastern Virginia economy, cutting off their primary outlet for sales of agricultural produce whose profits formed the livelihood of regional farmers. In December 1821, Norfolk officials and citizens unanimously passed a series of resolutions opposing the Congressional Acts of 1818 and 1820 that prohibited British vessels from engaging in trade at Norfolk. They described the acts as

> *…highly pernicious to this borough and district, destroying our commerce, and injuring all classes of our citizens; while, at the same time, they are contrary to the true policy of the United States, operating most unequally and partially upon different sections and portions of the Union, burdening the products of agriculture in a fruitless attempt to promote the shipping interest, diminishing the revenue, and threatening…to product many great and lasting evils to the whole nation.*

Located only a short distance up the James River from Norfolk, the closure of the port there had an almost immediate, devastating economic impact upon Surry County, plunging many of their small white and free black farmers into debt [6].

These dire economic conditions provide a backdrop that explains the difficult financial environment that John and Rebecca Stiles experienced in Surry County, Virginia during the early years of their marriage. To stay afloat, Stiles borrowed money from several men, and he jointly incurred debts with two of his first cousins, Benjamin Collier and William Carsley. Collier was the son of John Collier and Emelia Cooper, the sister of Becca's father, Frederick Cooper, while Carsley was the son of Michael Carsley III and Elizabeth Sebrell, the sister of Stiles' mother, Mary Sebrell Stiles.

In early 1821, Richard H. Edwards, executor of Thomas Blunt, deceased, filed suit in the Surry County Court to collect on a $76 debt that John Stiles and Benjamin Collier owed the Blunt estate.

Edwards also claimed damages of $20. At about the same time, Surry County Sheriff Beverly Booth filed a lawsuit against John Stiles and William Carsley to collect on their joint debt of $38.16, and he claimed $50 damages. Carsley died of unknown causes at age thirty-six years just as Sheriff Booth's suit against him and Stiles went before the Surry County Court. Neither Stiles nor Collier had the financial resources to pay the debts, and so they faced arrest as insolvent debtors [7].

Laws that imprisoned debtors dated to the reign of King Edward I, but few Virginia colonists languished in debtors' prisons as did their counterparts in England. Although the Virginia General Assembly passed statutes that created debtors' prisons, colonial courts were lax in enforcing the rights of creditors. As early as 1662, sheriffs allowed debtors to remain at home, resulting in many of the structures originally built as debtors' prisons being converted into criminal prisons. Thus, Virginia had effectively nullified British laws regarding debtor imprisonment long before the American Revolution, although the General Assembly did not technically abolish it until 1849 [8].

Lengthy imprisonment for debtors continued in other colonies, and during the post-Revolutionary era, debt and bankruptcy laws were debated and modernized. The movement towards abandoning even the threat of imprisonment for debt progressed gradually, and over the next few decades, many states passed laws to protect debtors from sudden confiscation and sale of their property. The economic pressures described above forced many small Virginia farmers into debt in the 1810–1835 era, prompting the Virginia General Assembly to pass measures to aid insolvent debtors in 1819 and 1820 [9]. Although these acts gave debtors a means to avoid lengthy prison sentences, creditors filing collection notices with the courts still resulted in the arrest and imprisonment of insolvent debtors. Even insolvent women were arrested and incarcerated in debtor's prisons until the local county court heard their cases [10].

To see what awaited Stiles and Collier, it helps to see what the Surry jail actually looked like. Virginia county jails had two separate cells for incarcerated prisoners, one for debtors and the other for those accused or convicted of criminal offences. On 23 June 1817, the Surry Court appointed commissioners to oversee repairs to the Surry jails. The Commissioners specified the required construction, clearly mentioning the *"debtors Jail"* and the *"criminals Jail"*:

> *There shall be six tough Iron cross bars in each window of the debtors Jail, of substantial size through which the upright bars shall pass being first straightened, the cross bars shall be let four Inches into the window frames or secured by strong Iron spikes let in at right angles. The cross bars shall be an inch thick & ½ inch wide at the eyes through which the upright bars pass. Glass shall be put into the window. The lock and door to be repaired In the criminals Jail, the post shall be cut and spliced with good Oak, well secured by Iron spikes or bars & bolts, the plank put on of the thickness of that on at present and secured with spikes five Inches long. The locks to the doors*

> *shall be repaired & the doors made to swing clear. The brick work at the window of the criminals Jail & at the yard shall be done & two strong bolts put through the frame at top.*

Bartholomew D. Henley submitted the lowest bid of $69, and on 28 July 1817, he signed a $138 bond to ensure his completion of the required repairs to the Surry jail [11].

In February or March 1821, in response to the suits filed by Richard H. Edwards and Sheriff Beverly Booth, the Surry Clerk of Court issued two *capias,* or writs, ordering the arrests of Stiles, Collier, and Carsley for nonpayment of their debts. Carsley's death prevented the deputy from arresting him, but he arrested and incarcerated John Stiles Jr. and Benjamin Collier in the Surry jail. On 27 March 1821, the Court ordered them brought from the county jail into the courthouse to enter a plea in the suits against them. The minutes record the statements made by the pair:

> *The defendants being in custody came into court and say, they can in no wise gainsay* [deny] *the plaintiffs action.*

The Court then issued judgement for Edwards for $76.00, plus costs of $6.66. However, the Court agreed to dismiss the judgement upon payment of $38 plus 6% interest from 1 October 1818, plus court costs. Since neither Collier nor Stiles could pay the smaller amount, Edwards' attorney *"prayed the defendants into custody and they are accordingly remanded to Jail,"* where they remained for the next two days. For small farmers like Stiles and Collier, the courtroom offered no mercy – only procedure.

On March 29th, the Surry Court heard arguments in the case of Sheriff Beverly Booth against William Carsley and John Stiles. Given Carsley's recent death, the Court dismissed the case against him and called for Stiles to testify. In regard to his debt with Carsley, Stiles said that *"he can in no wise gainsay* [deny] *the plaintiffs action,"* leading the Court to issue judgement against Stiles for the entire joint debt of $38.16, plus interest and costs. Booth's attorney did acknowledge that in March 1820, Stiles had paid $7.00 towards the debt.

Jack Stiles and Benjamin Collier then appealed for the benefit of the Virginia Assembly's recent act for the relief of insolvent debtors:

> *Benjamin Collier and John Stiles being in custody under two Capias's issued by the Clerk of this Court…The said Collier and Stiles having petitioned to be discharged out of custody pursuant to an Act of the General Assembly in such cases made and provided, was by an order of this Court brought before the Court, and confessed a Judgment to the plaintiff for the debt in the declaration mentioned…The plaintiff prayed, by Counsel, the defendant should be retaind* [sic] *in custody. Whereupon the defendants respectively subscribed their Schedules, and made oath to the same in due form of Law…*

As required by the Act, Stiles and Collier both presented a *"schedule,"* or list, of their *"property, goods, chattels, rights, credits, and interest"* to the Court for the sheriff to either collect or offer for sale to pay their debts. In accordance with the Act, both men took the oath of an insolvent debtor.

John Stiles submitted this property to the Court, giving an indication of how little he possessed:

Three Axes *two Weeding hoes*
One Hilling hoe *one Water Piggin*
Bread tray and Sifter *2 Washing tubs and "Noggin"*
2 Baskets *5 open headed Barrels*
1 Grind Stone *6 Knives*
6 Forks *2 Earthen dishes*
4 Plates *2 Earthen Bowls*
2 Tin pans *1 Coffee Pot*
My Claim upon the estate of Woodley, alias Peter Woodley for $32
all my Corn & Bacon *1 Pair Iron Wedges*
2 Earthen Pitchers *1 Butter Pot*
1 dirt pitcher *1 riving frow*
1 pair Cotton Cards *Side Saddle*
1 Coffee Mill
A claim on Archer Mariah [for] *$10.00*
[A claim] *on Archer Andrews* [for] *$8*
and one on Joseph Byrd [for] *$3*
My claim in my Grand-father Nathaniel Sebrell dec^{d} estate

Benjamin Collier submitted these few items to the Court to discharge himself from his debt:

One pen knife *two new Dagon Plow frames*
An account against the estate of William Carsley, dec^{d} amounting to six dollars.

The Court vested the items submitted by Stiles and Collier in the Surry Court Sheriff to sell at public auction to satisfy the judgments. The Court then ruled that since *"the said Benjamin Collier and John Stiles are detained in his custody for no other cause, they are discharged from their imprisonment"* [12].

That same month, the Surry Court heard another case involving a debt owed by John Stiles. Surry Court House tavernkeeper, David Price, sued John Stiles and David Sebrell for a payment of $45 plus 6% annual interest from 10 September 1818 until paid. It is not clear if Price included Sebrell as a defendant since he had signed Stiles' note as security, or if Price did so to get a legal claim established on the funds due Stiles from the Nathaniel Sebrell Estate, of which David Sebrell was executor. Sometime earlier, the Court issued a conditional judgement for Price and ordered Stiles and Sebrell arrested for the debt. Becca's first cousin, Edwin Rogers, served as common bail

for both Stiles and Sebrell. The Court heard final arguments in the case on 29 March 1821. They confirmed the conditional judgement issued earlier against Stiles and Sebrell for $45 plus interest, together with court costs of $7.12, *"and the said defendants and bail in mercy"* [13].

The following spring, on 25 March 1822, Jack Stiles paid his property taxes of 27¢ for his poll tax and two horses, asses, mares, mules, or colts. The following year, he paid his property taxes of 59¢ on 24 March 1823, this time on his poll tax, one horse, ass, mare, colt, or mule, and one slave aged above twelve years. The records do not show that Jack Stiles owned any slaves for any length of time, for if he had, the Court would undoubtedly have seized the slaves to sell and pay his debts. It seems probable that the enslaved person on which Stiles paid taxes in 1823 belonged to his grandfather's estate and merely lived in the Stiles household that year [14].

Frederick Cooper's will specified that his widow, Elizabeth, would retain possession of his 100-acre farm until her death, after which the land's ownership would pass to his daughter, Rebecca. It is not clear if Elizabeth continued to live on Cooper's old farm after 1811, when she ceased maintaining her own household. Between 1811 and 1820, someone paid the land taxes each year on Fred's farm in Elizabeth Cooper's name [15].

By 1820, Elizabeth Cooper's declining health prompted her to write her will on May 23rd. She left all of her property to her grandchildren, and requested that Capt. David Sebrell, as executor of Frederick Cooper's will, pay money towards her support to George C. Collier, Cooper's nephew who she described as *"my friend."* Elizabeth lived another year, apparently dying in the early summer of 1821 [16].

Rebecca Cooper Stiles took possession of her father's farm in 1821, when the Surry County Clerk of Court transferred the 100 acres to Rebecca with the notation: *"from Est. Fred Cooper per Will."* Jack Stiles paid the 1821 taxes of 27¢ on the 100-acre tract that then adjoined lands of Major John Velvin, Fred's first cousin, and Alexander Scarborough. Stiles also paid the land taxes on the Cooper farm in 1822 of 24¢ and in 1823 of 27¢ [17]. On 16 November 1821, Caleb Cooper bought the 88-acre tract of Alexander Scarborough's land that adjoined Fred Cooper's place. With Fred Cooper dead for two decades, his old farm gradually became known as John Stiles' land [18].

The debts that Jack Stiles owed to Sheriff Beverly Booth, the Estate of Thomas Blunt, David Price, and others were all for relatively small sums, but the large number of them made his financial situation precarious. Stiles still owed $10 due 8 September 1817 to Jesse P. Warren, a neighbor who had witnessed the will of Stiles' grandfather, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr., in 1813 and appraised Sebrell's estate in 1816 [19]. He also owed $23.40 due 13 January 1821 to Nancy Birdsong, the widow who Jack appears to have worked for when he moved across the Blackwater

Swamp into Sussex County in 1820 [20]. Although neither Warren nor Birdsong pursued legal action during their lifetimes against Stiles over the unpaid debts, both were older individuals, and in the event of their deaths, their administrator or executor would be forced to collect on the debts.

Their distressed financial standing and the continued dire economic circumstances for small farmers in southeastern Virginia appear to have caused Jack and Rebecca Stiles to decide to uproot their family and leave Surry County. On 7 March 1823, they sold their 17⅝-acre tract of the old Justiss land adjoining Fred Cooper's farm to Benjamin George for $30. Sheriff Beverly Booth and Major John Velvin, both Surry County justices, examined Rebecca to be certain she voluntarily consented to the sale along with her husband [21].

Jack and Becca remained in Surry County for another year. Later records indicate that Becca gave birth to a daughter, Jane E. Stiles, in Surry County in late 1823 or early 1824 [22]. They also needed to sell the old Cooper farm. Two centuries of damaging agricultural practices in the Tidewater region described earlier had depleted the soil, making the land less productive and undesirable. This and the lingering effects of the Panic of 1819 made times difficult, and they failed to find a buyer for Cooper's old farm.

By early 1824, the cumulative weight of lawsuits, unpaid notes, and a stagnant land market left Jack and Becca Stiles with few options. On 10 March 1824, they leased her father's farm, described as *"all that tract of land known by the name of Coopers,"* for ten years to Edwin Rogers, their neighbor and the husband of Becca's first cousin. For the use of the land, Rogers paid the Stiles $5 rent per year, for a total of $50 in advance. Rogers agreed to keep and preserve the lands and buildings in their present condition, with *"accidents by fire or the act of God excepted,"* and he also agreed to pay the annual land taxes on the land. Stiles acknowledged payment from Rogers of $50, with three of his and Becca's first cousins witnessing the transaction, including Benjamin W. and James W. Sebrell, sons of Capt. David Sebrell, and George C. Collier, son of Becca's aunt, Emelia Cooper Collier [23].

Jack had already paid the 1824 land taxes of 24¢ on the Cooper land, but he did not pay 1824 personal property taxes in Surry County. This suggests that he and Becca departed from Surry County not long after signing the lease with Rogers on March 10th [24]. Their emigration marked the end of their ties to the old Cooper and Sebrell homelands – and the beginning of a new, uncertain chapter of their lives.

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Loose Ends in the Old Dominion

It took Capt. David Sebrell a decade to administer the estate of his father, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. By 1825, David had collected most of the debts due to his father's estate, and on 1 January 1826, he made an initial allocation of the remaining proceeds to the legatees as directed by Nathaniel's will. John Stiles Jr. received one-sixth of the estate or $457.27, which David Sebrell noted in his accounting to Stiles as *"By your Legacy from your Grandfather."* In his final account, David Sebrell reported that the Sebrell estate owed Stiles interest for the past decade of $36.58, plus an additional $5.43. However, since he was unable to pay his debts, Jack's creditors had begun filing judgements for the unpaid debts with David Sebrell in order to garnish the money due Stiles from his grandfather's estate.

On 31 January 1827, David Sebrell paid Sheriff Beverly Booth $55.65 for the *"judgmt vs. you given up in your schedule,"* referring to the property schedule Stiles had submitted to the Surry Court back in March 1821. David Sebrell also listed these claims against John Stiles filed with him as executor of Nathaniel Sebrell's estate:

Statement of bonds & claims in the hands of D. Sebrell against John Stiles		*Total*
Bond to Sebrell's exor. dated 13th Dec. 1816 due 1st July 1817	*$93.76½*	
To Int. on ditto to 1st Jany 1827 is 9 yrs, 10 mo.	*55.32*	*149.08*
Note dated 4th Jany 1817 due 1st Jany 1818	*$35.00*	
Int. on ditto to 1st May 1827 is 9 yrs, 4 m	*19.60*	*54.60*
Bond dated 1st Jany 1818 due 1st Jany 1819	*$35.00*	
Int. to 1st May 1827 is 8 yrs, 4 mos.	*17.50*	*52.50*
Paid Jno Peter assignee &c. your note & Int.	*$27.16*	
Int. fro 30th October 1821 to 1st May 1827, 5 yrs, 6 m, 1 dy.	*8.96*	*36.12*
Paid execution against you favour [sic] *D. Price*	*$65.94*	
Int. fro 20th Nov 1821 to 1st May 1827 is 5 Yrs, 5 Mo, 21 dys	*21.54*	*87.48*
To balce due John Stiles after deducting the above claims	*63.02*	

David Sebrell paid each of these claims out of the balance of the Sebrell estate due to John Stiles Jr.

In David Sebrell's final account as executor of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. filed 25 September 1827, he reported allocation of the balance among all legatees, including John Stiles, but that Stiles had not yet been paid. The Commissioner verifying the final account reported,

> *The Executor laid before me sundry bonds and claims held by him vs. the said Stiles…he was unable to settle with him in consequence (as your Comr. thinks) of his absence from the State, I have therefore stated each of those claims separately in the distribution account with said Stiles marked No. 14. Your Commissioner therefore finds a balance due the said John Stiles…*

of $63.02. This sum appears to have remained in the hands of David Sebrell until after his death in 1831 [1].

About five years after John Stiles Jr. left Surry County, his two known remaining creditors both died. Jesse P. Warren wrote his will on 28 August 1829 with Jack's uncle, David Sebrell, and first cousin, James W. Sebrell, witnessing the document. Warren named another of Jack's first cousins, Dr. John N. Sebrell, as his executor. Warren died a few months later, for on November 23rd, Dr. Sebrell presented the will to the Surry Court, and on that same day, David and James W. Sebrell appeared before the Court to prove the will. Another of Jack's first cousins, Walter Spratley Sr., also appeared before the Court that day, with Spratley and David Sebrell serving as the securities on the $9000 bond of Dr. John Sebrell to serve as Warren's executor [2].

Later that same year, on 29 September 1829, across the Blackwater Swamp in Sussex County, Nancy Birdsong wrote her will. She named her son, William M. Birdsong, as her executor. Nancy died later that year, for on December 6th, William M. Birdsong presented her will to the Sussex County Court and qualified as executor [3]. Walter Spratley Sr. handled the financial affairs of Nancy Birdsong's husband and younger children throughout the 1820s, as her husband, George Birdsong, had appointed Spratley as his executor in his 1818 will. Spratley also served as the legal guardian of the two youngest Birdsong children [4].

In 1833, the executors of both Nancy Birdsong and Jesse P. Warren filed suit with the Surry County Court to collect the debts that John Stiles owed their estates. Both cases initially first appeared on the Surry Court docket on 23 September 1833. William P. Birdsong's attachment was delayed, but Dr. John N. Sebrell, executor of Jesse P. Warren, appeared before the Court that day. Sebrell's attorney had previously filed notice with the Court of the debt owed to Warren, and the Surry Court granted him an attachment or preliminary motion,

> *…against the estate of John Stiles who has removed out of this Commonwealth or absconds or conceals himself so that the ordinary process of Law cannot be served on him for debt, and the Constable having made return that there was no property found within his bailiwick and that he had summoned James W. Sebrell exor. of David Sebrell as a Garnishee…*

The Court summoned Stiles to appear that day, but since he did not, the Court issued judgement for Sebrell for the $10.70 that Stiles owed Warren, plus interest since 8 September 1817, and costs of $4.44. The Court then had James W. Sebrell, another of Jack's first cousins, sworn in, and Sebrell *"declared that he holds in his hands a sufficiency to pay said debt & costs"* from the funds owed to Stiles as heir of their grandfather, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. The Court ordered James W. Sebrell to pay Dr. John N. Sebrell the judgement against Stiles plus costs [5].

At the next session of the Surry County Court held on 28 October 1833, the Birdsong case appeared on the docket. Like the other case, the Court had issued an attachment *"…against the estate of John Stiles who hath privately removed out of this County, or absconds or conceals himself so that the ordinary process of Law cannot be served."* The sheriff summoned James W. Sebrell as a Garnishee, and since Stiles did not appear, the Court issued judgement for Birdsong for $23.41, plus interest from 13 January 1821, plus costs of $4.12. James W. Sebrell testified that *"he holds in his hands funds belonging to the defendant,"* and the Court ordered Sebrell to pay Birdsong the amount of the judgement and costs, *"if he holds a sufficiency to pay the same"* [6]. Even in his absence, the legal machinery of Surry County continued to pull at the loose threads of Jack Stiles' unfinished legal obligations.

Edwin Rogers paid the land taxes on Rebecca Cooper Stiles' land each year between 1825 and 1834 [7]. Rogers' lease on the old Cooper land ended on 10 March 1834, and he lived only a few months after the lease's expiration. On 27 October 1834, the Surry Court appointed an administrator for his estate [8].

In 1835, the Surry County Clerk of Court transferred the 100-acre tract back to John Stiles with the notation, *"from Edwin Rogers termination of the Lease."* The clerk listed Stiles' residence as *"unknown,"* and indicated that Stiles possessed the land for *"Wife's life."* Now described as adjoining the lands of Permelia Cooper Velvin, the land had increased in value, perhaps due to improved agricultural practices. The clerk now listed it as worth $300 [9].

Each year between 1835 and 1857, someone paid the taxes on the 100-acre tract of Fred Cooper's old farm in John Stiles' name [10]. The records indicate neither who paid the taxes nor who may have cultivated the land during this twenty-one-year interval. It seems unusual that Jack and Becca did not sell the land, but perhaps he had old outstanding debts that prevented a sale, even though the land technically belonged to Rebecca.

A final, unexpected twist emerged three decades after Jack and Becca Stiles left Tidewater Virginia. On 31 March 1856, Benjamin Collier and Martha Collier, both Surry County, Virginia residents, engaged in an unusual and cryptic transaction:

> *Witnesseth that the said Benjamin Collier in consideration of one hundred dollars to him in hand paid by the said Martha Collier do grant bargain and sell with general warranty all his right, title and interest in and to a certain tract of land lying in the County of Surry it being the land charged on the land book as John Stiles' land containing one hundred acres more or less and adjoining the lands of Boling Ellis, Caleb Cooper and others.*

On that same day, Benjamin Collier appeared in person before Surry County Justice Alexander P. Baird to acknowledge that the transaction was his own act and deed [11].

It seems exceedingly odd that Collier could sell a 100-acre tract of land that still legally belonged to Rebecca Cooper Stiles without her power of attorney, which the deed does not mention. It appears that this Benjamin Collier was Becca's first cousin. By 1856, he was her closest paternal relative left in Surry County and would have had the strongest legal right to sell her land. He was born about 1775–1776, and so by 1856, he would have been about eighty years of age [12]. Becca and Benjamin had a very close connection, as they grew up near each other, and Benjamin and Jack had joint debts that landed them in the Surry County debtor's jail together in 1821.

Like John Stiles, Benjamin Collier's indebtedness from the 1820s appears to have plagued him for the rest of his life. The records give no indication that he owned any property, and we have little information about his immediate family, where he lived, or when he died. Martha Collier is not identified, but she could have been Benjamin's daughter. She has not been found on any Virginia census record, either in Surry County or elsewhere.

Martha Collier paid the 1857 land taxes on Frederick Cooper's old farm, and the land taxes were paid each year in her name through 1880 [13]. In the early 1880s, the land was conveyed to Jonathan W. Cooper, the son of Caleb Cooper and Rebecca Cooper Stiles' third cousin [14]. The land that had once anchored the Cooper family along the Blackwater Swamp for a century and a half passed through many hands, but its long, tangled history remained a testament to the debts, ties, and migrations that shaped their world.

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Emigration from Tidewater Virginia

When John Stiles Jr. and Rebecca Cooper emigrated from Surry County, Virginia in 1824, they abandoned the rural Tidewater countryside in which his maternal ancestors, the Sebrells, had resided for the past century, and in which her ancestors, the Cooper, Dewell, and Ellis families, had lived since at least the 1660s. Although both Jack and Becca descended from a long line of middle and upper-middle-class Virginia farming families, the economic crises they had endured since the War of 1812 had left them a poor family, unable to pay their debts. Without any old diaries, letters, or other first-hand accounts of their life in that era, we cannot know Jack and Becca's precise reasons for leaving Virginia, but all indications are that they fled to escape the suffocating debt they had accumulated during the difficult decade following their marriage.

Leaving Tidewater Virginia meant abandoning not only land and kin, but a way of life that had defined their families for generations. Jack and Becca Stiles left many close relatives behind in Surry County, Virginia, including their uncles, Capt. David Sebrell and Henry Dewell, both of whom died in 1830–1831. They also left a plethora of first cousins and more distant cousins, and Becca owned a 100-acre tract of land there.

Despite these intimate Surry County connections, we have no indication that they ever returned when they left in early 1824. In fact, considering the great distance westward that they soon travelled and their financial situation, it seems highly unlikely they had the resources to fund a return visit to Tidewater Virginia. Whatever hopes or fears they carried with them, one thing is clear: their future, and that of their descendants, lay in the Old Southwest.

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Life in the Old Southwest

Upon leaving Surry County, Virginia in 1824, Jack and Becca Stiles ultimately headed westwards towards south/central Tennessee, but no known evidence describes their precise route towards the Volunteer State. They may have headed south to Wayne County, North Carolina, joined his father and brother, John Stiles Sr. and Leroy Stiles, and then moved westward to Tennessee as an extended family unit. Alternatively, Jack's father and brother may have immigrated from North Carolina to Tennessee in 1822–1823, and Jack and Becca may have followed them separately to the *"Old Southwest"* [1].

Jack and Becca had settled in Tennessee by about 1826, for their son, George Thomas Stiles, reported his birth there that year [2]. We have no indication precisely where in Tennessee they initially resided, but by 1830, Jack and his father and siblings all lived near one another in Franklin County, Tennessee, located in middle Tennessee on the southern border with Alabama [3].

Jack and Becca's youngest known child reported his birth in Tennessee about 1832 [4]. The Franklin County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions met for their regular session at the courthouse in Winchester on 26 November 1832. Among the ordinances passed that day:

> *Ordered by the Court that John Stiles be appointed Overseer of the road of the second class it being that part of the road that Willis Kelly was formerly Overseer of and that he keep the same in good repair according to law & that he have the same hands that worked under the former Overseer.*

The court minutes give no indication if the overseer they appointed were John Stiles Sr. or Jr., but the elder man was then in his early seventies, generally well beyond the age of a road overseer. The man appointed overseer is probably the younger man, our John Stiles Jr. [5]. No further mention of Stiles in the court minutes has been found. Moreover, no known records clearly document the precise whereabouts of Jack and Becca Stiles between about 1833 and 1839.

In 1836, the Tennessee General Assembly carved Coffee County from parts of Franklin, Bedford, and Warren Counties. The Stiles lived in the portion of Franklin that fell into Coffee County, and in 1840, Jack's siblings, Leroy Stiles and the widowed Mary E. Nevill, lived in adjoining households there. Mary's household included a white male aged between seventy and eighty years, clearly her father, John Stiles Sr. Her household did not include an older female, suggesting that Jack's stepmother and Becca's aunt, Jane Cooper Stiles, had already died [6].

The records show that neither Jack nor Leroy Stiles owned land in Tennessee. Jack and Becca probably still lived in Franklin County in 1836 upon the creation of Coffee County, and they may have remained there near his relatives until about 1839. No known records in either Tennessee or Arkansas help us to pinpoint precisely where they lived between about 1833 and 1839.

By the late 1830s, the pull of cheaper land and new opportunities drew thousands of families westward – and the Stiles were among them. At least by about late 1839 or early 1840, Jack and Rebecca Stiles left Tennessee and moved west into Arkansas. Jack was not assessed Union County taxes in 1839 or 1840 [7], and so he probably arrived there in the first few months of 1840. On 31 May 1840, Jack and Becca's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married Dennis Mires, with Jackson Township Justice of the Peace M. C. Driskill performing the ceremony [8]. Jackson Township lies in south/central Union County, with its southern boundary along the Louisiana state line and its northern boundary an east/west line south of the county seat of El Dorado, with the village constructed in the latter 1840s.

On the 1840 enumeration of Jackson Township, Union County, Arkansas, Jack Stiles' household adjoined that of his son, John N. Stiles, who had recently married, while his son-in-law, Dennis Mires, was separated from Jack by one other household. The justice of the peace who performed Elizabeth Stiles Mires' marriage lived a few households away [9]. In 1841, Jack Stiles, his two eldest sons, Frederick C. and John N. Stiles, and son-in-law all paid Union County taxes. Jack paid taxes on two horses or mules aged three years or older valued at $165 and three cattle aged three years or older valued at $30, putting his total taxable property at $195. John N. Stiles paid taxes on one horse valued at $60, while Frederick, still unmarried, only paid a poll tax. Dennis Mires paid taxes on one slave between the ages of eight and sixty years valued at $400, one horse or mule valued at $70, two cattle valued at $20 [10].

Jack's brother, Leroy Stiles, remained in Coffee County, Tennessee after Jack left for Arkansas. Although he lived there in 1840, Leroy did not remain long in the Volunteer State. He probably emigrated in the latter portion of 1841, leaving shortly before his father, John Stiles Sr., wrote his will on November 6th. The elder Stiles directed that his body be *"decently interred"* at the home of his daughter, Mary E. Stiles Nevill, and he left her the bulk of his property. John Stiles Sr. left $5.00 each to his sons, John and Leroy Stiles [11].

Leroy Stiles and his family joined his older brother in Union County, Arkansas in late 1841 or very early the next year. In 1842, Leroy paid Union County taxes along with Jack and Frederick Stiles and Dennis Mires. Leroy must have used oxen to pull his wagons from Tennessee to Arkansas, for he had no horses and only paid taxes on two cattle aged three years or older, valued at $50. Jack had one horse valued at $40 and two cattle worth $35, while Fred Stiles had one horse valued at $25 and no cattle. Mires paid taxes on one slave valued at $400, two horses valued at $150, and three cattle valued at $30 [12].

Later that same year, on 10 October 1842, the Union County Court appointed Sampson Coker as the overseer of the road leading from *"James Meek's passing Mr. Stiles to the Louisiana State Line."* Although the record did not specify which Mr. Stiles lived on the road, given that Leroy had only recently arrived in the county, the Court probably referred to Jack Stiles' house [13].

In 1842 and 1843, Baptist minister John Scarborough performed the marriage ceremonies in Jackson Township for two of Jack and Becca Stiles' children. On 16 October 1842, he married their daughter, Jane, to James Boatright, whose family lived across the state line in Union Parish, Louisiana. Elder Scarborough gave this description of their ceremony when he filed his return with the Union County Court:

> *I do hereby certify that I did Solomize* [sic] *the holy Rights of Matrimony between James Boatright aged 22 years and Jane Stiles aged 18 years by their covnanting* [sic] *in holy wedlock and Joining hands in conformation of that Covenant.*

The next spring on 1st March, Elder Scarborough married Jack and Becca's son, Frederick C. Stiles, to Nancy Stiles, presumably his first cousin, the daughter of Leroy and Mary Stiles. Scarborough described their ceremony as:

> *I Do hereby Certify that I did Solemnize the Holy Rights of Matrimony between Frederick Stiles 27 years and Nancy Stiles 16 years they being of Lawfull* [sic] *age by the conventing* [sic] *in holy wedlock and witnessing the Same in presence of God and the People Present.*

When Scarborough filed the marriage notices with the Union County Court, he described himself as *"John Scarborough P.G.,"* or *"Preacher of the Gospel"* [14].

Between 1843 and 1846, Jack and Leroy Stiles, together with Jack's sons-in-law, paid Union County taxes each year on livestock. Jack's livestock holdings gradually increased to three horses valued at $100 and four cattle aged three years or older valued at $40. Jack passed the age of sixty about 1844, and this excluded him from thereafter paying a poll tax. He paid property taxes for the final time in 1846, when he paid taxes of 42¢ on two horses valued at $60, one mule worth $40, and three cattle valued at $30 [15]. Beginning in 1848, Jack's son, George T. Stiles, paid taxes on his own white poll and the livestock that formerly belonged to his father [16].

In 1850, a federal official enumerated Jack Stiles and his son-in-law, Dennis Mires, as residents of El Dorado Township rather than Jackson Township, where Mires is documented as a justice of the peace and where Stiles' other son-in-law, James Boatright, lived. This may be a mistake due to uncertainty regarding the township boundaries, for El Dorado Township adjoined Jackson along its north side. The Stiles and Mires households adjoined, and the families probably cultivated a

contiguous tract of vacant government land. The census records listed Jack, his two younger sons, and his two sons-in-law as farmers [17].

The Stiles farm consisted of 30 acres of improved farmland valued at $300, while Mires had 100 acres of improved land worth $1000. Stiles owned $15 worth of farming implements and machinery, while that of Mires was worth $100. Nearby, Boatright worked a 15-acre tract of improved farmland valued at $150, while his farming implements and machinery were valued at only $10. This table gives their farms' 1849 farm production and 1850 livestock holdings [18]:

1850 Union County, Arkansas Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule

Farm owner	Livestock as of 1 June 1850							1849 Farm Production						
	Horses	Milch cows	Working oxen	Other cattle	Sheep	Swine	Value livestock	Bushels Indian corn	Bushels oats	Bushels of wheat	Bales, Ginned cotton	Bushels peas & beans	Bushels sweet potatoes	Pounds butter
Dennis Myers	2	4	2	5	--	50	$420	550	75	10	3	50	250	75
Jack Stiles	3	5	--	8	--	150	$600	300	75	--	--	25	200	50
Jas. Boatright	3	2	1	3	--	64	$270	200	--	--	2	20	50	--

The extended Stiles family lived in Jackson and El Dorado Townships in 1850. Jackson Township lies in south/central Union County, with its southern boundary along the Louisiana state line and its northern boundary an east/west line that is the southern boundary of El Dorado Township. Since the townships adjoined, the Stiles, Mires, and Boatright farms probably lay near one another.

On 13 July 1846, the Union County Court designated the southwestern corner of the county as Brown Township [19]. In late 1850 or 1851, the extended Stiles family all moved from El Dorado/Jackson Townships in the central portion of the county westward into Brown Township.

In early 1852, the citizens of Brown Township elected James Boatright as their constable. Prior to his taking his oath of office as constable, the law required him to post bond to secure his faithful performance of his duties. On Tuesday, 6 April 1852, Boatright appeared in court to post the required $1000 bond, with his brothers-in-law, George T. Stiles and John N. Stiles, serving as his securities. Probably because neither Boatright nor the Stiles brothers owned land or any other substantial property, the Court rejected the Stiles brothers as Boatright's securities. The justices ruled of the Stiles brothers:

> *…which securities are by the Court adjudged to be insufficient, said Bond is therefore hereby by the Court disapproved and rejected.*

To approve Boatright as constable, the Court then issued an order,

> *…requiring the said James Boatwright to come forward forthewith and inter* [sic] *into Bond, with good and sufficient security, as such Constable, according to Law."*

The court clerk later marked this entry as *"Issued,"* seemingly implying that Boatright produced sufficient security and that the Court later approved his bond, after which he began serving as constable [20].

On 17 December 1852, a narrow vertical strip of western Union County, including Brown Township, was combined with portions of other surrounding counties and designated as Columbia County [21]. The creation of Columbia and transition of Brown Township from Union to Columbia created confusion among the county tax assessors. In 1851, neither John N. Stiles, George T. Stiles, nor James Boatright were assessed taxes in Union, but Dennis Mires and Leroy Stiles were [22]. Then in 1853, after they had all technically become Columbia County residents, James Boatright was assessed taxes in both Union and Columbia Counties. In Union, he was only assessed a poll tax, but in Columbia County, he was assessed taxes on horses and cattle. John N. and George T. Stiles and Dennis Mires were also assessed 1853 Columbia County taxes on horses and cattle [23]. The administrative reshuffling reflected the rapid pace of settlement and challenges of governing a newly carved frontier county.

When the extended Stiles family moved west in late 1850 or 1851 and settled on vacant government lands in what is now Columbia County, none of them immediately acquired land. In fact, relatively few settlers purchased government lands in that location prior to 1854, when the U. S. Congress dropped the price of land from $1.25 per acre to 50¢ per acre. The lands surrounding the new county seat of Magnolia, in the new county's geographical center, attracted the most attention.

In March 1853, Dennis Mires still lived in Brown Township, for on the 25th, the Columbia County Court appointed him as one of the commissioners to *"apportion hands to the overseers of roads in and for Brown Township"* [24]. Sometime that year, Mires attempted to purchase 156.07 acres on the north side of Magnolia, but something prevented the government from selling it to him [25].

Instead, on 24 November 1853, Elizabeth and Dennis Mires' eldest son, Judge S. Mires, paid $50 for 40 acres of land in modern Magnolia. On the same day, Anson L. Mires, the second Mires son, paid the same amount for a nearby 40-acre tract [26]. In 1854, Columbia County assessed Mires

taxes on the 80 acres of land his sons had recently purchased, together with one enslaved person between the ages of five and sixty years, two horses valued at $200, and eleven cattle valued at $80 [27].

It is unclear if Elizabeth and Dennis Mires actually moved their family from Brown Township to the land their sons bought in nearby Magnolia, but if so, they lived there only briefly. Sometime in late 1854 or early 1855, the Mires family moved southeastward across the state line into Claiborne Parish, Louisiana. Neither Dennis Mires nor his sons were assessed Columbia County taxes in 1855 or 1856, either as residents or non-resident landowners. This suggests that the Mires boys disposed of their land by 1855 [28].

On 17 May 1858, Dennis Mires went to the Monroe, Louisiana Land Office and paid $119.81 for a 159.75-acre tract of land in Claiborne Parish that lay on a tributary creek of Bayou Little Corney [29]. On 17 January 1859, Mires returned to the Monroe Land Office and paid $39.95 for an adjoining 79.91 acres. He again went to the land office later that same year, on August 27th, and paid $19.98 for another adjoining 39.96 acres [30]. In 1860, Elizabeth and Dennis Mires lived with their family near the Argus Post Office in north/central Claiborne Parish [31].

For a dozen years after Jane E. Stiles married James Boatright in 1842, Jack and Becca's household consisted of themselves and their two youngest sons, George and Rufus. Both young men married in Columbia County within a two-week period in March 1854. George married Mary A. Legg on March 19th, with the ceremony performed by Justice of the Peace John Monroe Anderson. Just nine days later, Justice of the Peace James M. Barnes married Rufus A. Stiles to Mary Ann Anderson, daughter of John M. Anderson [32].

While Elizabeth Stiles and Dennis Mires appear to have left Brown Township and settled near Magnolia in 1853–1854, and then moved south into Claiborne Parish, Louisiana, Jack and Becca Stiles' other children all remained in the eastern portion of Columbia County for another year. The extended Stiles family had settled near the juncture of Big Corney and Little Corney Bayous just a few miles west of the Union County line. From there, Bayou Corney flows in a southeasterly direction across the state line into Claiborne Parish and then eastward into Union Parish, Louisiana.

On 9 January 1854, the Columbia County Court officially recreated Brown Township with the same boundaries that it had earlier in Union County [33]. In 1854, James Boatright paid Columbia County taxes on one horse or mare valued at $100, while George T. Stiles owned two horses valued at $200 and three cattle worth $28. John N. Stiles owned one horse or mare worth $100, one cow valued at $12, gold watches or jewelry valued at $50, and he had loaned $400 on interest [34]. In

1855, all three owned one horse each, with Boatright's valued at $80, George T. Stiles' at $100, and John N. Stiles' at only $65. Only James and George paid taxes on cattle that year, and Columbia County did not assess John N. Stiles taxes on either gold watches or jewelry nor on loaned money as in 1853 and 1854 [35].

On Monday, 8 January 1855, the Columbia County Court met at the courthouse in Magnolia and made many appointments, including:

> *It is ordered by the Court that James Boatwright* [sic] *be and he is hereby appointed overseer on the Camden & Minden road to work & keep up said road through Brown Township for & during the time prescribed by law.*

and also

> *It is ordered by the Court that John Styles* [sic] *be & he is hereby appointed overseer on the Calhoun & Eldorado* [sic] *road from the Magnolia & Brown Township line to where said road intersects the Minden & Camden road to work & keep up said road for & during the time prescribed by law.*

Since Jack Stiles was then aged seventy-one years, the Columbia Court undoubtedly appointed his son, John N. Stiles, as road overseer rather than Jack [36].

When they moved west from Jackson to Brown Township in late 1850 or 1851, James and Jane Boatright settled on a 160-acre tract of vacant land that lay along a prong of Big Corney Bayou about two miles west of its juncture with Little Corney Bayou, near modern Tally, Arkansas. They probably made improvements to the vacant land, including clearing a few acres to plant crops and building a cabin. James did not initially buy the government land, possibly since it sold for $1.25 per acre until 1854 [37].

By the latter portion of 1855, something prompted Jane Stiles Boatright and her family to leave Columbia like her sister had the previous year. The improvements that the Boatrights had made on public land gave them the right of *"Preemption,"* allowing them to purchase the tract from the government before anyone else [38].

On 15 November 1855, James Boatright made the trip to the regional government land office at Champagnolle, Arkansas, an important port town located on the Ouachita River in Union County. He paid $80 in cash for his 160 acres of land, a price of 50¢ per acre. The transaction listed him as a resident of Columbia County [39]. He and Jane had clearly already decided to leave Columbia County before the trip to the land office, for just four days later, James and Jane E. Boatright, still Columbia County residents, sold their 160 acres to their neighbor, Stephen Williams, for $140, earning them $60 profit for their improvements to the tract. They made the transaction before

Justice of the Peace Thomas Malock, who examined Jane separately from James, as required by law. Malock wrote that Jane acknowledged that she signed the transaction *"as her voluntarily* [sic] *act and deed freely without any threats or compelcion* [sic] *from her said husband"* [40].

Jane E. Stiles and James Boatright left Columbia County soon after this transaction. While her brothers remained in Columbia County and paid 1856 and 1857 taxes there, Columbia County did not assess Boatright 1856 taxes [41]. Instead, the Boatrights returned to Union County for 1856 and probably early 1857. Although we do not know precisely where in Union County they lived for this year, presumably they returned to their previous home in Jackson Township. In 1857, the Union County tax assessor charged James Boatright for one while poll and one horse or mare valued at $100 [42].

James Boatright did not pay his 1857 Union County tax assessment. On 7 April 1858, the Union County Sheriff filed the county's 1857 delinquent tax list with the County Court. It listed James Boatright as delinquent in payment of his assessment of 18¢ state tax and 62¢ county tax [43]. Boatright probably never paid his Arkansas taxes because he and Jane had already left the state and returned to his father's farm across the state line near Farmerville, Louisiana. The birth of their son, William Pinckney Boatright, occurred in Louisiana on 10 November 1857 [44].

While Jack and Becca's daughters, Elizabeth Mires and Jane Boatright, both left Columbia County, Arkansas and moved with their families across the state line into northern Louisiana between 1854 and 1856, the three Stiles sons, John, George, and Rufus, initially all remained in Columbia County. On 18 February 1856, three months after Jane and her husband sold their land, George T. Stiles went to the Champagnolle Land Office and paid $40 in cash for an 80-acre tract of land about two miles west of Jane's former farm [45]. The government moved the regional land office from Champagnolle to Washington, Arkansas, and on 28 January 1858, Rufus A. Stiles went there and paid $60 for a 120-acre tract of land located in modern Emerson, Arkansas [46]. George soon decided to follow Rufus to his new location. On 26 December 1857, George and his wife sold the land he had purchased the previous year, and on 2 August 1859, he also went to the new Washington Land Office and bought government land near Rufus' [47]. Although there are no records showing him purchasing land in Columbia County, John N. Stiles paid Columbia County taxes on livestock each year between 1853 and 1859, documenting his residence there during that period [48].

It is not clear what caused the gradual breakup of the extended Stiles family unit that had left Jackson Township and moved west to Brown Township in late 1850 or early 1851. It is also not entirely clear with whom Jack and Becca lived between 1851–1860. They probably continued to

maintain their own household until their youngest sons married in 1854, but by the mid-1850s, Jack and Becca Stiles had become elderly by the standards of the era, with Jack aged about seventy and Becca about sixty years. It appears that after their sons married, they spent their final years residing with the families of their daughters, Elizabeth and Jane. Jack and Becca may have left Brown Township with Jane and James Boatright and moved back to Union County for 1856–1857, and then across the county line to the Boatright farm on Bayou Corney, a few miles northwest of Farmerville, in Union Parish, Louisiana. In July 1860, Jack and Becca lived there in Jane's household, with Jack still listed as a farmer at the age of seventy-six [49].

Jack and Becca are only documented as residing with Jane Stiles Boatright's family along Bayou Corney in Union Parish, but Elizabeth Stiles Mires and her family lived merely a short distance up the bayou in adjoining Claiborne Parish. In the 1860s, steamboats could only navigate the narrow channel of Bayou Corney above the Boatright's farm towards the Mires' farm during brief periods of exceptionally high-water levels in the channel. However, keelboats regularly carried cargo and passengers up Bayou Corney from Farmerville through Claiborne Parish towards the Arkansas state line. Thus, Jack and Becca had a relatively easy means of travel between the homes of their two daughters and may have alternated living with both Jane and Elizabeth.

The events of 1861–1862 brought significant change for Jane Stiles Boatright, as service in the Confederate military decimated the male members of the extended Boatright family. Her husband, James Boatright, died of pneumonia in November 1862, and four of his brothers also perished while in the service, mostly from disease. Although Jane's eldest son, John Nolan Boatright, served from 1861 through 1865 and survived the conflict, her second son, Sidney, enlisted as soon as he turned eighteen in February 1863 and died shortly after the Siege of Vicksburg. Besides the enormous personal toll, these events left Jane in precarious financial circumstances, as she had a house full of young children to finish raising besides having to manage her farm [50].

The Civil War also caused tremendous heartache for Elizabeth Stiles and her husband, Dennis Mires. Their eldest son, Judge Stricklin Mires, died on 26 June 1862 while serving in the Confederate Army, and it appears that their second son, Ansel L. Mires, also died while in the service [51]. Their loss and the political situation in north Louisiana towards the end of the War may have prompted the Mires to emigrate from Louisiana. In 1865, presumably after the close of the War, they moved to Texas. It is not known where they initially lived in Texas, but in 1866, they settled in Hunt County, located in northeastern Texas due west of Texarkana. Dennis Mires registered to vote there in 1867 and 1869 and began paying Hunt County taxes in 1868 [52].

When Elizabeth and Dennis Mires emigrated from Louisiana in 1865, it is unclear if Rebecca Cooper Stiles accompanied them or if she remained in Union Parish, Louisiana with Jane. Becca may have stayed in Louisiana until Elizabeth's family became settled in Texas. After his marriage about 1866, Jane's eldest son, John Nolan Boatright, moved to Texas briefly. His eldest son was born in 1866 or 1867 in Johnson County, Texas, where the children of Becca's youngest son, Rufus A. Stiles, lived in 1870. John N. Boatright and his wife may have taken his grandmother with them to Texas and left her with Elizabeth in Hunt County [53].

Rebecca Cooper Stiles died in October 1869 while residing in her daughter's household in Hunt County, Texas. A federal official listed her cause of death as heart palpitations or heart disease and described her as a widow at the time of her death [54]. This indicates that Jack Stiles predeceased her, placing his death sometime between July 1860 and October 1869.

Given that he was about seventy-six years of age in 1860, Jack Stiles may have died in the early 1860s. If so, his death probably occurred on the Boatright farm on Bayou Corney near the Zion Hill Baptist Church northwest of Farmerville, Union Parish, Louisiana. However, given the longevity of both his father, John Stiles Sr., and maternal grandfather, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr., Jack Stiles may have survived into his eighties and moved with Becca and their elder daughter to Texas. In that case, he died between 1866 and October 1869 in Hunt County, Texas.

By the close of the 1860s, the family that had once clustered along the Blackwater Swamp in southeastern Virginia was scattered across Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas – a testament to the migrations, hardships, and reinventions that shaped their world.

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Epilogue

Despite the numerous primary source documents that detail certain aspects of his life, John Stiles Jr. remains something of an enigma. The records contemporary to his lifetime fail to provide us with much meaningful information on his primary occupation or help to explain why he appears to have struggled financially throughout his adult life. Although his father's work as a shoemaker and tavernkeeper makes us wonder if Jack Stiles engaged in one of those or a similar profession, the only available records indicate that he primarily farmed for a living. If so, the evidence available to us today suggests that he was not a particularly successful farmer.

The agricultural depression of the 1810s and early 1820s that severely affected Virginia farmers leading up to the 1815–1824 period certainly explain the debt he faced in Tidewater Virginia in the early 1820s. Those same factors led to financial problems for many of Jack's contemporaries, including his first cousin, William Carsley, and Rebecca Cooper's first cousins, Benjamin, John, and George C. Collier [1]. Although the Colliers all remained Surry County residents, Jack's mounting debt prompted him to emigrate from Virginia. These same issues prompted numerous other residents of Tidewater Virginia and the Carolinas to leave their homes along the eastern seaboard for the greener pastures of the *"Old Southwest,"* the region that constituted the southwestern frontier of the United States between about 1780 and 1800. Here, land was cheap and abundant, and with moderate effort and a few successful harvests, most families managed to save enough cash to acquire at least several hundred acres of land.

We have no evidence that Jack Stiles ever owned land after leaving Surry County, Virginia in 1824. Upon first glance, given the availability of land throughout this region, it seems quite unusual that Jack never managed to acquire possession of his own farm. This might make one wonder if his financial problems of the 1820s in Virginia continued to plague him throughout his life. However, that may be a hasty conclusion, as we have very limited evidence regarding his precise occupation and can only make inferences regarding his financial situation after he left Virginia. While we surmise that Jack Stiles farmed after arriving in Tennessee and Arkansas, the only evidence we have comes from 1849–1850.

In 1849, even though his two young adult sons, George and Rufus, lived in his household, the Stiles farm produced no cotton, the primary cash crop throughout the lower Mississippi River Valley. Jack did own an extraordinarily large number of swine that year, suggesting that he may have focused on raising and selling hogs rather than the typical cultivation of cotton. Jack worked vacant government land or a rented farm, and his land adjoined that of his son-in-law, Dennis

Mires, whose farm produced three bales of cotton in 1849. It is possible that Jack's sons helped Mires cultivate his land, while Jack himself focused on his large swine holdings [2].

Additional factors may explain Jack Stiles' lack of landownership after leaving Virginia. The Stiles were latecomers to south/central Tennessee, for the state government had granted much of the land in south/central Tennessee to settlers in the two decades before their 1825 arrival. It is possible that desirable farmland in Franklin County, Tennessee was difficult to obtain by the latter 1820s. Jack and his brother, Leroy Stiles, probably worked the lands belonging to their sister's husband, Benjamin Nevill, who had acquired substantial land holdings there in the 1810s.

John Stiles Jr. arrived in Jackson Township, Union County, Arkansas in 1840 at the age of fifty-six. Although the United States had acquired the lands in modern Arkansas in 1803 via the Louisiana Purchase, it took decades for government officials to survey and catalog the lands in this vast region before offering it for sale to citizens. The lands of southern Arkansas were among the last offered for sale, and at the time Jack Stiles arrived in Arkansas, the government still owned the majority of the lands in that region. In fact, it had offered very few tracts in Union County for sale to citizens prior to 1850.

Beginning in the early 1850s, the government finally made the lands in southern Arkansas available for sale to the public, and thousands of settlers purchased tracts of land in Union County at the regional government land office at Champagnolle, Arkansas. These purchases required cash payments at $1.25 per acre until the government dropped the price in 1855. Most settlers who had lived there for several years managed to save sufficient funds for such payments. In particular, in 1854, Jack's brother, Leroy Stiles, bought a total of 200 acres of land in Union County [3]. Leroy Stiles bought land in southern Jackson Township, near where Jack had settled in 1840, possibly even buying the precise lands on which Jack had lived and cultivated during the 1840s.

However, Jack and Becca and their children had all left Jackson Township in late 1850 or 1851 and moved west, settling in the region that became Columbia County in December 1852. Thus, it is possible that the land on which Jack Stiles settled in Union County upon his arrival in 1840 was not available for him to purchase until after he had moved away. By the time he arrived in Columbia County, he had reached an advanced age, and thereafter, he and Becca then lived with their children.

Like her husband, Rebecca Cooper spent her later years moving among the households of her children, her life shaped by the same migrations, uncertainties, and shifting family economies that defined the Stiles family's westward journey. Together, Jack and Becca's lives reflect the uncertainties, opportunities, and dislocations that shaped frontier settlement across the American

South. Their story, though fragmentary, offers a window into the lived experience of ordinary families navigating the shifting landscapes of the nineteenth-century South – a world defined as much by movement and adaptation as by place.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Children of John Stiles Jr. & Rebecca Cooper

No known records have survived to conclusively document the identities of all children of John Stiles Jr. and Rebecca Cooper. Instead, various pieces of evidence individually indicate that the following are their children who survived infancy:

1. **Frederick Cooper Stiles** (1815/1816–aft. 1843) married Nancy Stiles, his first cousin [1].
2. **John N. Stiles** (c1818–aft. 1880) married Sarah A. ? [2].
3. **Elizabeth Stiles** (9 Nov 1822–28 Feb 1888) married Dennis Mires [3].
4. [male] **Stiles** (1820/1825–aft. 1830) apparently died young [4].
5. **Jane E. Stiles** (c1824–Aug 1896) married James Boatright [5].
6. **George Thomas Stiles Sr.** (c1826–12 Feb 1881) married Mary Ann Legg [6].
7. [male] **Stiles** (1825/1830–1830/1840) apparently died young [7].
8. **Rufus A. Stiles** (c1832–18 Jan 1863) married Mary Ann Anderson [8].

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Brief Biographical Sketches of the Children of John Stiles Jr. & Rebecca Cooper

1. Frederick Cooper Stiles

Frederick Cooper Stiles was born about 1815 or 1816 in Surry County, Virginia. He married on 1 March 1843 in Jackson Township, Union County, Arkansas to Nancy Stiles, believed to have been Fred's first cousin, the daughter of Leroy Stiles and Mary Gibson [9].

The Biography of Frederick Cooper Stiles gives what few details are known about his life.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

2. John N. Stiles

John N. Stiles was born about 1818 in Surry County, Virginia. By 1870, he was married to Sarah A., born about 1822 in Tennessee [10]. The Biography of John N. Stiles gives details on what is known of his life.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

3. Elizabeth Stiles Mires

Elizabeth Stiles (9 Nov 1822–28 Feb 1888) is the eldest known daughter of Jack Stiles and Becca Cooper [11]. She was born in Surry County, Virginia, several years before they immigrated to Tennessee. Soon after their arrival in Union County, Arkansas, she married on 3 May 1840 [12] to Dennis Mires (5 Feb 1803–12 Nov 1883), a farmer and justice of the peace [13].

The Biography of Elizabeth Stiles Mires gives complete details on her life and children.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

4. [male] **Stiles**

John Stiles Jr. and Rebecca Cooper appear to have had a male child born between 1820 and 1825, presumably while they still lived in Surry County, Virginia. This young male appears in the household of John Stiles Jr. on the 1830 Franklin County, Tennessee Federal Census, but there is no further record of him [14]. He does not appear to have lived in their household in 1840 [15]. If this young boy was indeed one of Jack and Becca's sons, he must have died young.

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5. Jane E. Stiles Boatright

Jane E. Stiles (c1824–Aug 1896) was born in late 1823 or the first half of 1824, just before her parents left Surry County, Virginia for Tennessee. Thus, Jane's earliest memories would have been of her early childhood in the Volunteer State [16]. Jane E. Stiles married James Boatright (c1820–29 Nov 1862) on 16 October 1842 in Jackson Township, Union County, Arkansas. At the time of their marriage, Jane was eighteen, while James was twenty-two years old [17]. Over the course of their twenty-year marriage, they lived in Union and Columbia Counties, Arkansas, and across the state line in northern Union Parish, Louisiana.

The Biography of Jane E. Stiles Boatright gives complete details on her life and children.

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6. George Thomas Stiles Sr.

George Thomas Stiles Sr. (c1826–12 Feb 1881) was the first child of Jack and Becca Stiles born after their emigration from Surry County, Virginia [18]. George and his younger brother, Rufus, both married in Columbia County within a two-week period in March 1854. George married on 19 March 1854 to Mary Ann Legg the daughter of Albert Legg (27 Sep 1812–31 Jan 1886) and Ankey Thomas (23 May 1814–18 Dec 1888) [19].

The Biography of George Thomas Stiles gives complete details on his life and children.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

7. [male] **Stiles**

John Stiles Jr. and Rebecca Cooper appear to have had a male child born between 1825 and 1830, presumably born in Franklin County, Tennessee. This young boy appears in the household of John Stiles Jr. on the 1830 Franklin County, Tennessee Federal Census [20]. If he were indeed one of Jack and Becca's sons, it appears that he died as a youth in the 1830s, as he does not appear in their 1840 household [21].

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

8. Rufus A. Stiles

Rufus A. Stiles (c1832–18 Jan 1863), the youngest known child of Jack and Becca Stiles [22], was probably born while his parents still resided in Franklin County. He married on 28 March 1854 in Columbia County, Arkansas to Mary Ann Anderson (2 Aug 1839–4 Oct 1917) [23], the daughter of John Monroe Anderson (7 Nov 1817–1 Sep 1903) and Malinda Ann Bryant (22 May 1818–29 Dec 1891).

The Biography of Rufus A. Stiles gives complete details on his life and children.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

1798 Division of Thomas Dewell's Land Among his Heirs

Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 597–598

Articles and agreement made and entered into this twentieth day of January ADomini one thousand seven hundred and ninety eight between Henry Dewell of the one part and Frederick Cooper on the other part, both of the county of Surry. Witnesseth, that whereas Thomas Dewell deceased late of the said county by his particular request and desire made partition of that part of his land which he purchased of William Barnes, containing by estimation two hundred and twenty five acres by equal moities [sic–moieties] *to the said Henry Dewell and Elizabeth Cooper, which said land has since been laid off and divided by William Bailey and Benjamin Ellis, referees appointed by the parties but no conveyance made and recorded before the death of the said Elizabeth, so that her part of the said land has now become the property of Rebecca Cooper the only Child of her, the said Elizabeth, this writing, therefore is intended by the said Henry Dewell and Frederick Cooper on behalf of his daughter Rebecca (who is an infant of tender years) to establish the said line of partition between the said Henry Dewell and Rebecca Cooper forever, in fee simple, which said line begins at a red oak on Mack's line and runing* [sic] *through the Land by a line of marked trees to a Post oak on Henry Dewell's line, so the part lying south of the said line shall hereafter be the property of the said Rebecca Cooper to her and her heirs for ever and the remainder of the said land to Henry Dewell his heirs for ever* [sic], *and the said parties do further covenant and agree that should either the said Henry Dewell or the said Frederick Cooper, or the said Rebecca Cooper, or either of their heirs ever hereafter bring a suit to make this present writing null and void that then the party offending shall forfeit one thousand dollars current money of Virginia and if the said Rebecca Cooper or any other person for her, or her heirs, become the offenders herein, that then the said Frederick Cooper, his heirs, executors, and administrators shall be subjected to pay to the said Henry Dewell his heirs, executors and administrators the said penalty. In witness whereof the parties have set their hands and Seals the date above written.*

Henry Dewell
Frederick Cooper

Signed, sealed & delivered
in the presence of
Thomas Kee
James Milby
James Kee

At a Court held for Surry County, February 27th 1798.

The within written Agreement between Henry Dewell and Frederick Cooper was presented in Court and being proved by the oath of James Kee Gentleman, a witness thereto the same is ordered to be continued for farther [sic] *proof. And at a Court held for the said county the 26th day of June following, the same was farther* [sic] *proved by the oath of Thomas Kee, another witness thereto and by the Court ordered to be recorded.*

Teste,
Jacob Faulcon, C.S.C.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Surry County, Virginia Personal Property & Land Tax Data

The charts in this section give transcriptions of Surry County, Virginia tax records for John Stiles Jr., Rebecca Cooper Stiles, and their immediate relatives.

Surry County, Virginia Personal Property Tax Records

Year	Taxpayer	Free Male Tithes	Slaves		Horses, Mares, Colts, and Mules	Riding Carriages with Two Wheels	Tax
			Aged over 16 Yrs	Aged over 12 Yrs			
1800	Fedrick Cooper [sic]	1	--	--	2	--	24¢
	John Stiles	1	--	--	--	--	$12.50
		1 Ordinary License					
	Nathaniel Sebrell	2	8	2	3	--	$4.76
		Free male tithes: *"Nathˡ Sebrell Sʳ; Nichˢ Sebrell"*					
1801	Fedrick Cooper [sic]	1	--	--	2	--	24¢
	John Stiles	1	--	--	--	--	--
	Nathaniel Sebrell Senʳ	2	9	1	3	--	$4.76
		Free male tithes: *"Nathˡ Sebrell Sʳ; Nichˢ Sebrell"*					
1802	Fedrick Cooper [sic]	1	--	--	2		21¢
	John Stiles	1	--	--	--	--	--
	Nathaniel Sebrell	2	9	1	3	--	$4.76
		Free male tithes: *"N. Sebrell; Nichˢ Sebrell"*					
1803	Fedrick Cooper [sic]	1	1	--	2	--	68¢
	John Stiles	2	--	--	--	--	$12.50
		1 Ordinary License Free male tithes: *"J. Stiles; Jnᵒ Stiles Jr."*					
	Nathaniel Sebrell Senʳ	2	9	--	4	--	$4.44
		Free male tithes: *"N. Sebrell; Nˢ Sebrell"*					
1804	Fedrick Cooper [sic]	1	1	--	3		80¢
	John Stiles	2	--	--	--	--	$12.50
		1 Ordinary License Free male tithes: *"John Stiles; John Stiles Jr."*					
	Nathaniel Sebrell	2	10	--	4	--	$4.88
		Free male tithes: *"Nathˡ Sebrell; Nˢ Sebrell"*					
1805	Frederick Cooper	1	1	1	2	--	68¢
	Nathaniel Sebrell	2	10	10	5	--	$5.00
	John Stiles Sen.	2	--	--	--	--	--
		1 Ordinary License					

Surry County, Virginia Personal Property Tax Records						
Year	Taxpayer	Free Male Tithes	Slaves		Horses, Mares, Colts, and Mules	Riding Carriages with Two Wheels
			Aged over 16 Yrs	Aged over 12 Yrs		
1806	*"The Estate of Fred Cooper"*	0	--	--	1	--
	Nathaniel Sebrell	3	10	10	4	2
	John Stiles	1	--	--	1	--
1807	Elizabeth Cooper	0	1	1	1	--
	Nath. Sebrell	3	11	11	5	2
	[John Stiles Sr. omitted this year]					
1809	Elizabeth Cooper	0	1	1	2	--
	Nathaniel Sebrell	1	8	8	2	--
	John Stiles Jun.	1	--	--	--	--
	John Stiles Sen.	2	--	--	1	--
1810	Elizabeth Cooper	0	--	--	1	--
	Nathaniel Sebrell	1	6	6	2	2
	Leroy Stiles	1	--	--	--	--
	John Stiles Sen.	1	--	--	1	--
	[John Stiles Jr. omitted this year]					
1811	Leroy Stiles	1	--	--	1	--
	John Stiles Jr.	1	--	--	1	--
	Nath[l] Sebrell	1	8	8	2	2
1812	John Stiles Jun.	1	--	--	--	--
	Nathaniel Sebrell	1	8	8	3	2
1813	Nathaniel Sebrell	1	9	8	4	1
		1 Grist or Sawmill valued under $100				
	[John Stiles Jr. omitted this year]					
1814	John Stiles	1	--	--	1	--
	Nathaniel Sebrell	1	9	8	4	1
		1 Grist or Sawmill valued under $100				

Surry County, Virginia Personal Property Tax Records						
Year	Taxpayer	Free Male Tithes	Slaves		Horses, Asses, Mules, Mares, &	Two Wheeled Riding Carriages
			Aged 9–12 Yrs	Aged over 12 Yrs		
1815	Nathaniel Sebrell	1	1	9	5	1
		15 cattle; 1 mill				
		Furniture: 1 walnut chest of drawers w/desk; 1 pine clothes press				
	John Stiles	1	--	--	1	--
		11 cattle				
1816	Nath. Sebrell	1	--	10	4	1
	John Stiles	1	--	1	1	--
1817	John Stiles	1	--	2	2	--
1818	John Stiles	2	--	2	2	--
1819	John Stiles	1	--	--	1	--
1820	No Stiles listed					
1821	John Stiles	1	--	--	2	--
1822	John Stiles	1	--	--	2	--
1823	John Stiles	1	--	1	1	--
1824	No Stiles Listed					

Surry County, Virginia Land Tax Records

Year	Taxpayer	Acres	Value	Description of Land
1804	*"Fedrick Cooper"*	100	$137.50	--
		112½	$83.16	--
1805	Frederick Cooper	100	--	--
		112½	--	--
1806	Elizabeth Cooper	100	--	Previous owner: Fred Cooper
	Rebecca Cooper	112½	--	Previous owner: Fred Cooper
1807	Elizabeth Cooper	100	--	--
	Rebecca Cooper	112½	--	--
1809	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	--
	Rebecca Cooper	112½	$83.16	--
1810	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	--
	Rebecca Cooper	112½	$83.16	--
1811	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	--
	Rebecca Cooper	112½	$83.16	--
1812	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	--
	Rebecca Cooper	112½	$83.16	--
1813	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	Adjoining N. Jones's Quarter
	John Stiles jun.	112½	$83.16	Adj. Dewell's Quarter
1814	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	Owned: *"For Life."* Adjoining Nathan Jones's quarter.
	John Stiles *"in right of wife"*	112½	$83.16	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adj. Henry Dewell's Quarter.
1815	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	Owned: *"For Life."* Adjoining Capt. Nathan Jones's quarter.
	John Stiles *"in right of wife"*	112½	$83.16	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Henry Dewell's quarter.
	Nath. Sebrell	223½	$875.38	Owned: *"Fee simple."* On Blackwater Swamp adj. R. Ellis.
1816	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	Owned: *"For Life."* Adjoining Irby Jones Trustee for N. Jones
	John Stiles *"in right of wife"*	75	$55.21	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Henry Dewell's quarter.
	Est. of Nath. Sebrell dec[d]	223½	$875.38	Owned: *"Fee simple."* On Blackwater Swamp adj. R. Ellis.
1817	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	Owned: *"For Life."* Adjoining Alexander Scarborough.
	John Stiles	17.5	$19.09	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Daniel O. Matthews.
		"75 [acres] *to W[m] Maynard pr. deed of record"*		
1819	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$137.50	Owned: *"For Life."* Adjoining Alex. Scarborough.
	John Stiles	17.5	$19.09	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Daniel O. Matthews.
1820	Elizabeth Cooper	100	$300	Owned: *"For Life."* Adjoining Alex. Scarborough.
	John Styles	17.5	$35.25	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Daniel O. Matthews.
		of Sussex County		

Surry County, Virginia Land Tax Records				
Year	**Taxpayer**	**Acres**	**Value**	**Description of Land**
1821	John Styles	17.5	$35.25	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Daniel O. Matthews.
		100	$300	Owned: *"wife life."* Adjoining Alex. Scarborough & John Velvin
				"from Est. Fred Cooper per Will"
1822	Caleb Cooper	88	$264	Adjoining John Stiles et al.
	John Stiles	17.5	$35.25	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Daniel O. Matthews.
		100	$300	Owned: *"wife life."* Adjoining Alex. Scarborough
1823	John Stiles	17.5	$35.25	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Daniel O. Matthews.
		100	$300	Owned: *"wife life."* Adjoining Alex. Scarborough
1824	Caleb Cooper	88	$264	Adjoining John Stiles et al.
	"Ben George F.N."	17.5	$35.25	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Daniel O. Matthews.
				"from John Stiles pr. deed"
	John Stiles	100	$300	Owned: *"wife life."* Adjoining Alex. Scarborough
1825	Edwin Rogers	137 ½	$560.31	Owned: *"Fee simple."* Adjoining Jesse Stewart.
		100	$300	Owned: *"for Years."* Adjoining John Velvin.
				"from Jno. Stiles pr. deed for ten years"
1835	John Stiles Residence: Unknown	100	$300	Owned: *"Wife's life."* Adjoining Pamala Velvin.
				"from Edwin Rogers termination of the Lease"

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Arkansas Tax Records

The tables below give tax records from Union and Columbia Counties, Arkansas for Jack Stiles, his brother, Leroy, and Jack's and sons, sons-in-law, and nephews.

Union County, Arkansas Tax Lists
1841–1845

Year	Taxpayer	# Poll taxes	Horses/Mares 3 yrs & older		Cattle 3 yrs & older		Total Taxable Property	Poll Tax	County Tax	State Tax
			Number	Value	Number	Value				
1841	Frederic Stiles	1	--	--	--	--	--	1.00	--	--
	Jno Stiles Sen.	1	2	$165	3	$30	$195	1.00	24¢	24¢
	Jno Stiles Jr.	1	1	$60	--	--	$60	1.00	8¢	8¢
	Dennis Myers	1	1	$70	2	$20	$490	1.00	61¢	61¢
		1 slave aged between 8 and 60 years valued at $400								
1842	Leroy Stiles	1	--	--	2	$50	$50	1.00	6¢	6¢
	John Stiles Senr.	1	1	$40	2	$35	$75	1.00	9¢	9¢
	Frederick Stiles	1	1	$25	--	--	$25	1.00	3¢	3¢
	Dennis Myers	1	2	$150	3	$30	$580	1.00	72¢	72¢
		1 slave aged between 8 and 60 years valued at $400								
1843	F. C. Stiles	1	1	$25	2	$20	$45	1	5½¢	5½¢
	Leroy Stiles	1	--	--	4	$56	$56	1	7¢	7¢
	Jno. Stiles Snr	1	1	$40	1	$15	$55	1	7¢	7¢
	Dennis Myers	1	2	$150	3	$30	$530	1	66¼¢	66¼¢
		1 slave aged between 8 and 60 years valued at $350								
1844	John Stiles	1	2	$60	4	$45	$105	50¢	13¢	13¢
	Leroy Stiles	1	--	--	3	$24	$24	50¢	5¢	5¢
	Dennis Myers	1	1	$150	1	$20	$570	50¢	71½¢	71½¢
		1 slave aged 8 years and upwards valued @ $400								
1845	Jas. Boatright	1	2	$20	--	--	$20	$1	4¢	2½¢
	Dennis Myers	1	2	$125	3	$28	$413	$1	81½¢	51½¢
		1 slave aged 8 and under 60 years valued @ $250								
	Leroy Stiles	1	2	$50	2	$16	$66	--	--	--
	John Stiles	0	3	$100	4	$40	$140	--	--	--

Union County, Arkansas Tax Lists
1846–1857

Year	Taxpayer	# Poll taxes	Horses/Mares 2 yrs & older		Cattle 2 yrs & older		Total Taxable Property	Poll Tax	County Tax	State Tax
			Number	Value	Number	Value				
1846	James Boatwright	1	1	$60	2	$20	$80	1.00	16¢	10¢
	Dennis Myers	1	2	$225	4	$40	$565	1.00	$1.13	70¢
		1 slave over 8 and under 60 years valued @ $300								
	[no first name] Stiles (John Stiles)	0	2	$60	3	$30	$130	--	26¢	16¢
		1 mule aged 2 years or older valued @ $40								
	Leroy Stiles	1	2	$50	3	$30	$80	1.00	16¢	10¢
1848	Jas. Boatwright	1	2	$80	2	$20	$100	50¢	20¢	25¢
	"Dennus Mirers"	1	1	$35	5	$35	$370	50¢	74¢	92¢
		1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ $300								
	G. F. Stiles [sic]	1	2	$100	2	$20	$120	50¢	24¢	30¢
1849	Ja^{s} Boatwright	1	2	$100	2	$20	$120	--	75¢	30¢
	Dennis Myers	1	3	$150	7	$55	$505	--	$1.51	$1.26
		1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ $300								
	G. T. Styles	1	2	$100	3	$28	$128	--	75¢	32¢
	Leroy Styles	1	2	$30	3	$24	$54	--	60¢	13¢
1851	Dinnis Myers	1	1	$75	9	$60	$610	--	$1.26	$1.22
		1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ $400 1 mule over two years valued @ $75								
	Leroy Stiles	1	3	$120	5	$40	$160	--	70¢	32¢
1853	James Boatright	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	50¢	
	LeRoy Stiles	1	2	$120	6	$48	$168	--	78¢	42¢
1857	James Boatright	1	1	$100	--	--	$100	--	--	17¢
	William Stiles	1	1	$100	2	$20	$520	--	--	87¢
		1 mule aged 2 years or older valued @ $400								
	Leroy Stiles	1	1	$50	8	$48	$698	--	--	$1.17
		200 acres land valued @ $600								

Columbia County, Arkansas Tax Lists
1853–1863

Year	Taxpayer	# Poll taxes	Horses/Mares 2 yrs & older		Cattle 2 yrs & older		Total Taxable Property	State Tax	County Tax
			Number	Value	Number	Value			
1853	Jas Boatright	1	1	$75	1	$10	$85	21¼¢	$1. 21¼
	Denis Myres	1	2	$150	7	$56	$606	$1.51½	$2.51½
		1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 years valued @ $400							
	John N. Stiles	1	1	$80	6	$110	$400	$1.00	$2,00
		Money loaned at interest: $150; Value of gold watches & jewelry: $60							
	George Stiles	1	2	$300	4	$30	$330	82½¢	$1.82½
1854	James Boatwright	1	1	$100	--	--	$100	25¢	95¢
	Dennis Mires	1	2	$200	11	$80	$920	$2.32	$2.60
		80 acres @ $240 (NE¼ of SW¼ & NE¼ of SE¼, Sec. 1, Twp. 17, Rng. 21) 1 slave aged over 5 and under 60 valued @ $400							
	George Stiles	1	2	$200	3	$28	$228	56¼¢	$1.20
	J. N. Stiles	1	1	$100	1	$12	$562	$1.40½	$1.87
		$400 loaned at interest; $50 – value of gold watches and jewelry							
1855	James Boatright	1	1	$80	2	$20	$100	--	--
	George T. Stiles	1	1	$100	3	$24	$124	--	--
	John N. Stiles	1	1	$65	--	--	$65	--	--
1856	George Styles	1	--	--	4	$55	$295	--	--
		W½ of SE¼ S1 T18S R20W, 80 acres valued @ $240							
	John N. Stiles	1	--	--	1	$12	$12	3¢	$1.03
1857	George Styles	1	--	--	4	$55	$295	49¢	$1.49
		W½ of SE¼ of Sec. 1, T18S, R20W – 80 acres; $240							
	J. N. Styles	1	--	--	--	--	--	--	$1.00
1858	J. N. Styles	1	1	$75	--	--	$75	--	--
	R. A. Styles	1	1	$50	--	--	$50	--	--
1859	J. N. Stiles	1	1	$75	1	$15	$90	15¢	$1.18
1860	No Stiles listed								
1861	G. T. Stiles	1	1	$75	4	$40	$325		
		160 acres @ $480-N½ of SE¼, NE¼ of SW¼, SW¼ of SE¼, S1 T19S R21W							
1863	G. T. Stiles	1	1	$75	1	$10	325	40¢	80¢
		120 acres @ $240 – SW¼ of SE¼, SE¼ of NE¼, NW¼ of NE¼, S1 T19S R21W							

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Notes

Introduction

1. 1812 Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, LDS Film #4129172, Images #4–5 (John Stiles to Rebecca Cooper, 22 December 1812). Surry County VA Deed Book 5 (1815–1818), pp. 243–245 (John and *"Rebecka"* Stiles to William Maynard, 4 May 1816; John Velvin and *"Arch[d] Davis,"* Justices of the Peace, examined *"Rebeckah"* Stiles). Surry County VA Deed Book 7 (1823–1826), pp. 8–9 (John and Rebecca Stiles to Benjamin George, 7 March 1823; Beverly Booth and John Velvin, Justices of the Peace, examined Rebecca Stiles for her consent to the sale); pp. 186–187 (John and Rebecca Stiles lease to Edwin Rogers, 10 March 1824; witnesses: B. W. Sebrell, Geo. C. Collier, James W. Sebrell). The 1812 marriage bond contains a sample of Jack Stiles' original signature. The three deeds from 1816, 1823, and 1824 show that both signed their names to the documents.
2. These documents show that Becca's great-grandfather, William Cooper, purchased the land containing her father's farm in 1724, leaving 130 acres of it to her grandfather, George, who left it to his son and Becca's father, Frederick:
   a. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 7, Part 2 (1715–1730), pp. 588–589 (Gregory and Hannah Rawlings lease and release to William Cooper, 15–16 September 1724; 489 acres adjoining lands of Richard Shockey).
   b. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1754–1768), pp. 215–216 (Will of William Cooper, written 4 April 1756, filed in court 26 November 1759);
   c. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 11 (1778–1783), pp. 229–230 (Will of George Cooper, written 14 October 1781, filed in court 26 March 1782).

   William Cooper made this bequest: *"I Give and Bequeath to my Son George Cooper the Plantation whereon he now Lives to a new Line Containing one Hundred & thirty Acres…"* George Cooper made this bequest: *"I give and bequeath to my son Frederick Cooper all the remainder of my Estate and what was lent to my Wife at her discease"* [decease]…

John Stiles Jr.: Early Life at The New Design & Dripping Springs

1. 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #419, line #31: J---[illegible name beginning with *"J"*] Stiles (age: 66; Farmer; born: Virginia). 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule, El Dorado Township, pp. 480–481/29, line #24: Jack Stiles, farm owner, agent, or manager. 1860 Union Parish LA Federal Census, P. O. Farmerville, p. 587/82, Dwelling #528, line #23: James Boatrite [sic] (age: 38; Farmer; born: Arkansas); #24: J. E. Boatrite [sic] (age: 36; female, Housekeeper; born: Tennessee); #32: John Stiles (age: 76; Farmer; born: Virginia); #33: Becca Stiles (age: 66; *"House Keeper;"* born: Virginia). These census records place the birth of John Stiles Jr. in late 1783 or early 1784 in Virginia. He was undoubtedly born in Surry County, where his parents are documented as residing at the time of his birth.
2. Coffee County TN Will and Probate Records, LDS Film #4727878, Images 73–74. Coffee County TN Will Book 1 (1833–1859), pp. 40–41, LDS Film #4776229, Image #37 [original]. Coffee County TN Will Book 1 (1833–1860) [typed], pp. 34–35, LDS Film #4769001, Images 622–623 (Will of John Stiles, written 6 November 1841, proved 4 March 1844). In his will, John Stiles identified three children: Mary E. Nevill, John Stiles, and Leroy Stiles. The 1803 Surry County, Virginia Personal Property Tax record also identifies John Stiles Jr. as a son of John Stiles Sr.
3. Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1782, LDS Film #4129125, Images #40–41; Surry County VA Marriage Register (1763–1853), p. 11, LDS Film #7579167, Image 133 (John Stiles to Mary Sebrell, *"Spinster;"* 9 December 1782). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 140–142 (Will of Nathaniel Sebrell, written 25 December 1813, filed 22 April 1816); Book 4 (1822–1827), pp. 613–619 (Nathaniel Sebrell Estate Account, filed 26 October 1826); Book 5 (1827–1830), pp. 208–214 (Nathaniel Sebrell Estate Account, filed 22 October 1827). Surry County VA Wills & Inventories (1797–1879), LDS Film #4124856, Images 1146–1147, 1323–1324 (Will of Nathaniel Sebrell, written 25 December 1813, filed 22 April 1816). In his will written on Christmas Day 1813, Nathaniel Sebrell divided his slaves not specifically given to his two surviving children into six equal lots, leaving the lots to his two living children and the heirs of his deceased children, including this bequest: *"And the other lot I give to my Grand son John Stiles Jr. to him and his heirs forever."* On 1 January 1826, Sebrell's executor, his son, David Sebrell, finalized his accounting of the Nathaniel Sebrell Estate, with John Stiles' share consisting of $457.52, described as *"By your Legacy from your Grandfather & Int. to this day."* On 1 May 1827, David Sebrell reported a balance due to John Stiles of $63.02 from the estate of Nathaniel Sebrell. This proves that Sebrell was the father of Mary Sebrell who married John Stiles in 1782.
4. Surry County VA Census of Persons and Buildings (1772–1785), LDS Film #4131664, Image #34: *"A List of white Persons and Buildings in Johnchecohunk Precinct in Surry County, taken by James Kee, 1784,"* #11: Nath. Sebrell, #32: John Stiles.
5. Surry County VA Order Book (1786–1789), pp. 292 (Court session of 25 September 1787), 294 (John Stiles, *"a native of the State of New York (by trade a Shoemaker),"* took the *"oath of fidelity"*).
6. Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1788, LDS Film #4129138, Images #28–29; Surry County VA Marriage Register (1763–1853), p. 23, LDS Film #7579167, Image 145 (John Stiles to Jane Cooper *"of full age,"* 22 July 1788).

7. Coffee County TN Will and Probate Records, LDS Film #4727878, Images 73–74. Coffee County TN Will Book 1 (1833–1859), pp. 40–41, LDS Film #4776229, Image #37 [original]. Coffee County TN Will Book 1 (1833–1860) [typed], pp. 34–35, LDS Film #4769001, Images 622–623 (Will of John Stiles, written 6 November 1841, proved 4 March 1844). In his will, John Stiles identified three children: Mary E. Nevill, John Stiles, and Leroy Stiles.
8. 1784–1805 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books, LDS Films #8574973, #8458765, #8188299.
9. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 21–23 (Randolph Jordan to John Stiles, 10 September 1792; witnesses: J. Kee, Nathaniel Stewart, Benjamin Collier); pp. 627–628 (John and Jane Stiles to Jesse Stewart, 23 October 1798). The 1792 deed states that the land Stiles purchased lay *"adjoining the lands of John Collier deceased, the land of John Tillott, of Nathaniel Sebrell, of William Lamb and William Rose."* In his 1781 will, George Cooper names his daughters Emelia Collier and Jane Cooper, while John Collier's 1791 inventory identifies Emelia Collier as his administrator; see Surry County VA Wills, Deeds, Etc. Book 11 (1778–1783), pp. 229–230 (Will of George Cooper, written October 14th [1781], proved in Court 26 March 1782); Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 92–94 (Inventory of John Collier Estate, Emelia Collier, administrator, taken 8 February 1791, filed in court 28 April 1795). The 1798 deed states that Stiles' land also adjoined that of James Kee.
10. Surry County VA Deed Book 10 (1769–1778), pp. 504–505 (Executors of Michael Nicholson to Doiley Kea, 1 March 1777; witnesses: *"J. Watkins junr,"* *"Nathl Sebrell,"* and Jesse Sheffield [his mark]). Surry County VA Indentures (1699–1796), LDS Film #4123079, Images 541–542 (Executors of Michael Nicholson to Doiley Kea/Key, 1 March 1777). Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 11 (1778–1783), pp. 40–41 (Rebekah Kee Widow of Doiley Kee Dower Lands, 6 March 1779). 1780 Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, LDS Film #4129123, Image #8 (Jesse Cocks to *"Rebecca Kee (Widow),"* 26 December 1780). Surry County VA Will Book 12 (1783–1792), pp. 146–147 (Inventory of Estate of Jesse Cocks, made 13 December 1786, filed in court on 23 January 1787; Rebecca Cocks, executrix). The LDS filmed the original 1777 document in the *"Indentures,"* and it is the identical item recorded in Deed Book 10. These documents show that Doiley and Rebecca Kee were the parents of Capt. James Kee. Doiley Kee died about 1778, and in 1780, Rebecca married Jesse Cocks.
11. Surry County VA Order Book (1775–1785), p. 144 (Court session 28 May 1782); p. 149 (James Kee *"took the oath of fidelity and the oath of Justice of the Peace for this County"*); p. 296 (Court session 27 April 1784); p. 299 (*"James Kee Gentl"* commissioned as *"Captain in the Militia of this County,"* 27 May 1783); Order Book (1795–1800), p. 544 (Court session 22 July 1800); p. 545 (*"James Kee Gent."* commissioned as Sheriff); Order Book (1801–1804), p. 99 (Court session 22 September 1801); p. 101 (*"James Kee Gt* [gentleman] *Sheriff being recommissioned Sheriff of the County"* entered into bond and made oath). Surry County VA Deed Book 2 (1799–1804), pp. 37–41 (James Kee Sheriffs Bonds, 22 July 1800; securities included Thomas Kee, John Justiss, and John Tillott); pp. 174–178 (James Kee Sheriffs Bonds, 22 September 1801; securities included Thomas Kee and John Tillott). James Kee reportedly served in the Virginia Militia during the Revolutionary War, with some sources claiming he held the rank of lieutenant. Although no specific documentation of his military service during the Revolutionary War has been located, he must have served in order to have achieved the rank of captain in 1783.
12. Surry County VA Census of Persons and Buildings (1772–1785), LDS Film #4131664, Image #34 (*"A List of white Persons and Buildings in Johnchecohunk Precinct in Surry County, taken by James Kee, 1784"*); Image #35, line #16: James Kee. Surry County VA Land Tax Books (1782–1800), LDS Film #8742699, Image #37 (James Kee, 1787); Image #286 (James Kee, 1799). 1806 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS #4121832, Image #10: James Kee. 1787 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS #8458765, Image #82: James Kee.
13. Surry County VA Deed Book 12 (1783–1787), pp. 217–218 (Bonds of Benjamin Rose and John Rose for £500 each, 26 September 1786); pp. 235–236 (William Rose to John Rose, 26 September 1786); pp. 236–237 (William Rose to Benjamin Rose, 26 September 1786); Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 320–322 (John and Celia Rose and Benjamin and Lucy Rose to William Ellis, 26 October 1795); pp. 393–394 (William and Patty Ellis to James Kee, 31 August 1796). The 120 acres James Kee purchased in 1796 came from land owned by William Rose Jr. prior to 1786. That year, Rose sold 60 acres of his land to his son, John, and another 60 acres to his son, Benjamin, requiring them to post bonds agreeing to allow he and his wife, Elizabeth Rose, *"to remain on the land…unmolested in the full enjoyment as well of the houses, Orchards, and every thing thereon, as of the land during their natural lines."*
14. Surry County VA Deed Book 3 (1804–1811), p. 450 (James and Jane Kee to Thomas Bailey Jr., 26 December 1808); Deed Book 6 (1818–1823), pp. 67–68 (Thomas Bailey Jr. mortgage to Thomas B. Ellis to secure debt to Peter Booth, executor of John H. Washington, deceased, 23 June 1818). 1813 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121840, Image #08: Thomas Bailey Jr. 1816 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124801, Image #07: *"Thomas Bailey jun."* 1817 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124808, Image #07: Thomas Bailey Jr. The Kees sold their son-in-law, Thomas Bailey Jr., a 130-acre tract of land that constituted the heart of The New Design, although the Kees did not refer to it by that name in this document. The land tax records all described the 130-acre tract as *"New Design"* adjoining the lands of John Collier and Rebecca Cypress. In 1818, Bailey mortgaged *"a certain tract or tracts or parcels of Land or Lands known by the name of the New Design,"* describing it as 283

acres. The land tax records show this as the total of the 130-acre tract identified as *"New Design,"* plus a 183-acre tract described as adjoining The New Design.

15. The following records show that the 70 acres John Stiles bought in 1792 and sold in 1798 adjoined the 120 acres that James Kee purchased in 1796 and on which he then built *"The New Design."* One key is the reference to the *"land commonly called Rogers,"* which was the tract bought in 1787 by William Lamb, administrator of Thomas Rogers, and sold in 1795 to Edwin Rogers, Thomas' son:
    a. Sussex County VA Will Book D (1782–1789), pp. 164–166 (Account of Estate of Thomas Rogers, deceased; William Lamb, administrator, made 9 December 1778, filed with Sussex County on 19 June 1783).
    b. Surry County VA Deed Book 12 (1783–1787), pp. 241–242 (Samuel Rose to William Lamb, 8 January 1787).
    c. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 21–23 (Randolph Jordan to John Stiles, 10 September 1792)
    d. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 320–322 (John and Celia Rose and Benjamin and Lucy Rose to William Ellis, 26 October 1795).
    e. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 403–404 (William Lamb to Edwin Rogers *"(surviving heir of Thomas Rogers),"* 25 November 1795).
    f. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 627–628 (John and Jane Stiles to Jesse Stewart, 23 October 1798).

    This is a chronology of the owners of the land that adjoined the 120-acre tract that James Kee purchased in 1796 on which he built The New Design:
    1778: William Lamb began serving as the administrator of the estate of Thomas Rogers.
    1786: William Rose sold 120 acres of his land to his sons, Benjamin and John Rose, described as adjoining the lands of James Kee, John Collier, *"Randal Jordan,"* and *"the line of Rogers."*
    1787: William Lamb purchased 75 acres from Samuel Rose, *"Heir at law to his Brother William Rose,"* described as lying along Collier's line, *"on Jordans line,"* and adjoining Nathaniel Sebrell.
    1792: John Stiles purchased 70 acres from Randolph Jordan, described as adjoining the lands of the late John Collier, Nathaniel Sebrell, William Lamb, and William Rose.
    1795: John and Benjamin Rose sold their 120 acres obtained from their father, William Rose, to William Ellis, describing it as bounded by the lands of James Kee and the *"land commonly called Rogers."*
    1795: William Lamb sells the 75 acres he bought from Samuel Rose to Edwin Rogers, *"surviving heir of Thomas Rogers,"* with the land described as adjoining Collier's line, Jordan's line, and Nathaniel Sebrell.
    1798: John and Jane Stiles sell their 70-acre tract, describing it as bounded by Edwin Rogers, James Kee, Nathaniel Sebrell, and *"the road leading from Birch Island bridge to Cabin Point."*
16. Surry County, Virginia Historical Society Newsletter, December 2004 and March 2005. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 140–142 (Will of Nathaniel Sebrell, written 25 December 1813, filed 22 April 1816); Wills, Etc. Book 6 (1830–1834), pp. 193–194 (Will of David Sebrell, written 16 June 1830, filed 24 October 1831). Nathaniel Sebrell left *"to my son David Sebrell all my lands except the Mill tract where on I now live,"* leaving it to his daughter, Mary Ann Sebrell. After Mary Ann's death, he left it to his son, David. In his will, David Sebrell left to his eldest son *"the Tract of land on which my father, Nathaniel Sebrell, died, known by the name of the Dripping Spring."* Sebrell's land lay on the north side of the Blackwater Swamp, and modern topographic maps show that the only high ground along this region lay just to the south of the modern Dripping Springs Road.
17. Shepherd, Samuel, ed. *The Statutes at Large of Virginia, from October Session 1792, to December Session 1806, Inclusive.* Vol. I. Richmond: Samuel Shepherd, 1835, p. 378 (*"An ACT to alter the place of holding courts in the county of Surry,"* passed 24 November 1795).
18. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 350–351 (Robert and Martha McIntosh to Surry Justices, 23 March 1796). Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 69 (Court session 26 January 1796); p. 71 (Robert McIntosh authorized *"the building a Court house at the Cross Roads for the use of this County"*); p. 89 (Court session 28 June 1796); p. 92 (James Kee and other commissioners appointed to let bids for *"the building of a Gaol and Prison (under one roof) at the Cross roads on the log of ground conveyed by Robert McIntosh to the Justices of this County"*); p. 139 (Court session 28 March 1797); pp. 140–141 (*"It appearing to the satisfaction of this court that the Court house built by Robert McIntosh at the Cross Roads…is ready for the reception of the court in April next…"*). In March 1796, the McIntoshes sold two acres of land *"being a part of a tract of land known by the name of the Cross Roads…on the west side of the road, and near the granary."* The court minutes in June 1796 gave a detailed description of the *"Gaol and Prison"* that McIntosh was to build, specifying that he construct the walls of brick.
19. Surry County VA Deed Book 3 (1804–1811), p. 450 (James and Jane Kee to Thomas Bailey Jr., 26 December 1808); pp. 474–476 (James and Jane Kee to Thomas Ellis Jr., 22 July 1809); Deed Book 4 (1811–1815), pp. 223–224 (John G. and Elizabeth Sharp to Joe Ellis, 2 March 1813). The 1808 deed in which James and Jane Kee sell Thomas Bailey Jr. the New Design described 130-acre tract as

…lying and being in the county of Surry to the south of the Courthouse road…near a branch to a pine on the Birch Island road…thence by a line of new marked trees near said path to the Courthouse road to a pine…

In 1809, the Kees sold Thomas Ellis Jr. an adjoining 388-acre tract of land described as lying *"on the road from the New Design to Birch Island."* In 1813, John G. and Elizabeth Sharp sold a 47½-acre tract of land lying *"on the road leading from the New Design to Birch Island Bridge."*

20. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), pp. 486–488 (Will of James Kee, written 1 February 1812, codicil added 27 April 1812, filed in court on 25 August 1812). In his will, James Kee left to his son-in-law, Thomas Bailey Jr., *"The store houses at the New Design and one acre lot."*
21. Surry County VA Business Licenses (1783–1856), LDS Film #4131659, Image #192 (Bond of John Stiles for license to *"keep an Ordinary at The New Design on the Lands of Jas^{s} Kee,"* 24 April 1798). Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 236 (Court grants John Stiles a license *"to keep an Ordinary at the New Design on the lands of James Gentleman,"* 24 April 1798). Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 627–628 (John and Jane Stiles to Jesse Stewart, 23 October 1798).
22. Struzinski, Steven. "The Tavern in Colonial America." *The Gettysburg Historical Journal*, Vol. 1, Article 7, 2002, pp. 29–32. Thorp, Daniel B. "Taverns and Tavern Culture on the Southern Colonial Frontier: Rowan County, North Carolina, 1753–1776." *The Journal of Southern History,* Vol. 62, No. 4, 1996, pp. 661–663.
23. Yoder, Paton. "Tavern Regulation in Virginia: Rationale and Reality." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* Vol. 87, No. 3, 1979, pp. 263–264, 266, 273–274.
24. Struzinski, p. 33.
25. Surry County VA Order Book (1775–1785), p. 296 (Court session 27 April 1784), p. 298 (*"Rates of Liquors, Diet &c for the present year"*); Order Book (1795–1800), pp. 183–184 (*"Ordered that the rates of Liquors, Diet, Lodging, Pasturage and so forth, stand rated as follows,"* 24 August 1797); p. 251 (Court session 20 June 1798), p. 253 (*"Ordered that the rates of Liquors, Diet, Lodging &c &c be rated as follows"*). All items and prices given come from the 1798 court order, although the prices were almost identical in 1797. Both the 1784 and 1798 rates described the top-quality alcohol as *"Good West India Rum,"* but the 1797 and 1798 rates only identified the lower-quality versions as *"All other Rum."* The 1784 rates identified the lower quality rums as *"Tafia and Continental Rum."*
26. Weld, Isaac Jr. *Travels Through the States of North America and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, During the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797.* Vol. I, 2nd ed. London: John Stockdale, 1799, p. 98. On his journey from Baltimore, Maryland to Philadelphia, Weld described the customary eggnog that American travelers consumed before they left on cold winter mornings.
27. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 251 (Court session 20 June 1798), p. 253 (*"Ordered that the rates of Liquors, Diet, Lodging &c &c be rated as follows"*). *"Dinner"* referred to the midday meal for Southerners of that era, and it constituted the largest meal of the day. Even in modern times, rural Southerners still refer to the midday man as *"dinner,"* with the evening one known as *"supper."*
28. Weld, pp. 178, 182–184.
29. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 251 (Court session 20 June 1798), p. 253 (*"Ordered that the rates of Liquors, Diet, Lodging &c &c be rated as follows"*).
30. Weld, p. 184.
31. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 549 (*"We of the grand jury do present the Surveyor of the road leading from the new design to Mrs. Pettways for not keeping the same in good repair,"* 26 August 1800).
32. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), pp. 486–488 (Will of James Kee, written 1 February 1812, codicil added 27 April 1812, filed in court on 25 August 1812); Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 9–10 *("Appraisement of the unadministered part of the estate of John Watkins dec^{d} at the new Design,"* made 7 January 1815; appraisers: *"Arch^{d} Davis,"* David Sebrell, Edwin Rogers). In his will, Capt. Kee left to his son-in-law, Thomas Bailey Jr., *"The store houses at the New Design and one acre lot."* In January 1815, David Sebrell and the other appraisers went to The New Design to appraise the eleven slaves belonging to the estate of Capt. John Watkins following the death of his wife, Elizabeth, in 1813. This suggests that the Watkins heirs had rented the slaves to someone there.
33. *"Richmond Enquirer"* (Richmond, VA), 21 March 1823, p. 1, column 2.
34. Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804), p. 621 (Court session 29 February 1804); p. 625 (*"Ordered that James Smith Lane do superintend the election of three discreet and fit persons being free holders of, and resident within Birth island precinct, to act within the said precinct as Overseers of the Poor…that he hold the said election at the New Design on the third Monday in March next"*); pp. 625–626 (*"Ordered that Josiah Wilson Gentleman Sheriff…advertise at the New design that an election of the Overseers of the Poor, of Birch island precinct…"*); Order Book (1807–1811), p. 321 (Court session 27 March 1810); p. 327 (*"Ordered that Archibald Cocks do superintend the election of Overseers of the Poor in Birch Island Precinct at the New Design on Saturday the 21st Inst…*).
35. *"Richmond Enquirer,"* 13 October 1848, p. 2, column 6.

36. Surry County VA Business License (1783–1856), LDS Film #4131659, Images #48–49 (John Stiles, *"license to keep an Ordinary at the New design…,"* James Kee, security, 22 April 1800); Images #50–51 (John Stiles, *"license to keep an ordinary at The New Design…,"* James Kee, security, 23 April 1799).
37. Surry County VA Business License (1783–1856), LDS Film #4131659, Images #172–173 (*"Benj[a]* Cocks," *"license to keep an Ordinary at his house at the New Design…,"* Thomas Kee, security, 27 April 1802); Images #180–181 (Benjamin Cocks, *"license to keep an Ordinary at his house called the New design,"* Thomas Kee, security, 28 April 1801). Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804), p. 35 (Court session 28 April 1801); p. 39 (*"Leave is given Benjamin Cockes to keep an Ordinary at the house of James Kee G[t] Known by the name of the New design"*); p. 224 (Court session 27 April 1802), p. 227 (*"On the motion of Benjamin Cocks a license is granted him to keep an ordinary at his house"*);
38. Revolutionary War Pension Application #S39351, Benjamin Cocks, Virginia. Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804), p. 482 (Court session 28 June 1803); p. 487 (Benjamin Cockes appointed constable; summoned to appear in July); p. 508 (Court session of 26 July 1803); p. 514 (Benjamin *"Cocks"* appointed constable, *"Thomas Cocks jun."* security). Surry County VA Deed Book 2 (1799–1804), p. 416 (Bond of Benjamin Cocke as Constable, 26 July 1803; securities: *"Tho[s] Cockes,"* Moreland James).
39. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 172 (Court session 28 June 1797), p. 175 (Peter Jemm recommended as *"Lieutenant in Captain David Cockes company"*); Order Book (1801–1804), p. 289 (Court session 24 August 1802); p. 291 (*"The Commonwealth against Peter Jemm, deft. Upon a presentment of the Grand Jury for getting drunk and presenting a Pistol against John Stiles, at the New design on the 15th day of May 1802. This prosecution for reasons appearing to the Court is dismissed"*). Surry County VA Administrators Bonds (1797–1815), p. 38 (James Stewart, bond as Administrator of the estate of Peter Jemm, 22 November 1803).
40. Surry County VA Business License (1783–1856), LDS Film #4131659, Images #142–143 (John Stiles *"a license to keep an ordinary at the House of James Kee at his Plantation called New Design,"* 23 April 1805); Images #144–145 (John Stiles *"a license to keep an ordinary at the New Design,"* 24 April 1804); Images #174–175 (John Stiles *"a license to keep an Ordinary at the New Design,"* 26 April 1803); Image #473 (*"Rec[d] of Mr. John Stiles"* $12.50 *"in full for permission to obtain a Tavern license from the above date to 1807,"* 22 April 1806); Image #566 (*"Received from Mr. John Stiles"* $12.*50 "in full of his Tavern License for the year 1805,"* 23 April 1805).
41. Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804), p. 394 (Grand jury indictments of Nathaniel Thompson and William Hicks, 24 May 1803); p. 516 (Court session 23 August 1803); p. 519 (*"The Commonwealth against Nathaniel Thompson, Upon a Presentment of the Grand Jury for profane swearing,"* appeared in court and fined 83¢); p. 520 (*"The Commonwealth against William Hicks, upon a Presentment of the Grand Jury for getting drunk,"* after attorney arguments, fined 83¢ plus costs; Nicholas Hite and Benjamin Bilbo testified as witnesses against Hicks, each paid 53¢).
42. 1803–1805 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books, LDS Film #8188299, Images #562 (1803), #594 (1804), #619 (1805).
43. Seiler, William H. "Land Processioning in Colonial Virginia." *The William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol. 6, No. 3, 1949, pp. 416–436.
44. Surry County VA Processioners Returns (1796–1828), LDS Film #8191627, Images #24–25, pp. 23–24 (Miles Burgess and John Velvin, processioning of Johnchecohunk Precinct, second Wednesday in April 1804).
45. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 140–142 (Will of Nathaniel Sebrell, written 25 December 1813, filed in court 22 April 1816); Wills, Etc. Book 6 (1830–1834), pp. 193–194 (Will of David Sebrell, written 16 June 1830, filed in court 24 October 1831). In his 1813 will, Nathaniel left his lands to his only surviving son, David, and the latter's 1830 will left Nathaniel's lands to David's eldest surviving son, Dr. John Nicholas Sebrell: *"I give to my Son John Nicholas Sebrell, to him & his heirs forever the Tract of land on which my father (Nathaniel Sebrell) died known by the name of the Dripping Spring."*
46. 1799–1810 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books, LDS Film #8188299, Images #405 (1799), #445 (1800), #483 (1801), #520 (1802), #563 (1803), #594 (1804), #619 (1805), #636 (1806), #657 (1807), #677 (1809), #695–696 (1810). Between 1799 and 1804, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. paid taxes on two white male tithes, identified each year as Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. and Nicholas Sebrell, his son. Beginning in 1805, the tax records ceased identifying each white male tithe by name, and only recorded the number of white tithes paid for by each taxpayer. In 1805, Nathaniel Sebrell again paid for two, but in 1806 and 1807, he paid for three white male tithes.
47. 1810 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 615, line #13: *"Nath[l] Sebrell;"* p. 616, line #20: *"John Stiles Sen."* Nathaniel Sebrell's household included two males, one aged 16–26 (probably John Stiles Jr.) and one aged 45 or older (Nathaniel). The Stiles household included an older male/female couple, both aged 45 or older (probably John Sr. and Jane Stiles), one male 16–26, one female 26–45, one female 16–26, and one male under 10. The young male is unidentified, but he is probably an infant son of Leroy and Anna Stiles, who had married the previous year. These three young adults fit as Leroy Stiles, his wife, Anna, and sister, Mary Elizabeth Stiles. These identifications given are mere presumptions, as the original document only gives the age brackets and gender.

48. Surry County VA Order Book (1804–1807), p. 452 (Court session 25 November 1806, present Nicholas Sebrell, *"Gentleman Justices"*); p. 455 (Grand jury indictments: John Stiles for *"unlawful gaming in his Tavern at the New Design"* and Benjamin Cocke for *"unlawful Gaming at the New Design,"* both *"on the night of"* 19 November 1806); Order Book (1807–1811), p. 28 (Court session of 25 August 1807; *"Present: William Boyce, Nicholas Sebrell, Beverly Booth, & William Scammell, Gentlemen Justices"*); p. 30 (*"The Commonwealth against John Stiles: Summons for Gambling. For reasons appearing to the court this cause is dismissed"*). Nicholas Sebrell was the son of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr., making him the uncle of Jack Stiles and brother-in-law of John Stiles Sr. In addition to serving as a Surry Justice, Nicholas Sebrell also represented Surry County in the General Assembly. These records show that Nicholas Sebrell was a sitting judge on the Surry Court during the sessions in which it considered the legal case against his brother-in-law, John Stiles Sr.
49. 1810 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #8188299, Images #695–696 (1810). 1810 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 616, line #20: *"John Stiles Sen."*
50. Shepherd, Samuel, ed. *The Statutes at Large of Virginia, from October Session 1792, to December Session 1806, Inclusive.* Vol. II. Richmond: Samuel Shepherd, 1835, pp. 417–418 (*"An ACT more effectually to restrain the practice of negroes going at large,"* passed 25 January 1803). Shepherd, Vol. III, 1836, pp. 3, 17 (Chap. 1, Section 46 – *"An ACT to amend and reduce into one the several acts of the general assembly, for regulating the militia of this commonwealth,"* passed 28 January 1804).
51. Surry County VA Order Book (1807–1811), p. 386 (Court session of 26 June 1810); p. 389 (Surry County payments to John Velvin, Edwin Rogers, and Leroy Stiles of $2.25 each *"for 36 hours patrole"* [sic]); p. 390 (Surry County payments to John Stiles of $3.00 *"for 48 hours patrole"* [sic]); p. 391 (Surry County payments to Walter Spratley of 37½¢ *"for 6 hours patrole"* [sic]).

Rebecca Cooper: Over a Century of Blackwater Swamp Ancestry

1. 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #419, line #31: J[illegible name] Stiles (age: 66; Farmer; born: *"Va"*); line #32: Rebecca Stiles (age: 56; born: *"Va"*). 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule, El Dorado Township, pp. 480–481/29, line #24: Jack Stiles, farm owner, agent, or manager. 1860 Union Parish LA Federal Census, P. O. Farmerville, p. 587/82, Dwelling #528, line #23: James Boatrite [sic] (age: 38; Farmer; born: Arkansas); #24: J. E. Boatrite [sic] (age: 36; female, Housekeeper; born: Tennessee); #32: John Stiles (age: 76; Farmer; born: born: *"Va"*); #33: Becca Stiles (age: 66; *"House Keeper;"* born: *"Va"*). These census records place the birth of Rebecca Cooper Stiles about 1794 in Virginia. She was undoubtedly born in southern Surry County, where her parents are documented as residing at the time of her birth.
2. Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1791, Frederick Cooper to Betsy Dewell, 11 February 1791 (Thomas Dewell, security). Surry County VA Marriage Returns (1785–1854), p. 3 (Frederick Cooper to Betsy Dewell, 24 February 1791). Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 597–598 (Frederick Cooper and Henry Dewell, boundary agreement, 20 January 1798). The 1798 agreement between Frederick Cooper and Henry Dewell proves that Rebecca Cooper was the only child of Elizabeth Dewell and Frederick Cooper.
3. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 7, Part 2 (1715–1730), pp. 588–589 (Gregory and Hannah Rawlings lease and release to William Cooper, 15–16 September 1724; 489 acres adjoining lands of Richard Shockey). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1754–1768), pp. 215–216 (Will of William Cooper, written 4 April 1756, filed in court 26 November 1759). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 11 (1778–1783), pp. 229–230 (Will of George Cooper, written 14 October 1781, filed in court 26 March 1782). William Cooper made this bequest: *"I Give and Bequeath to my Son George Cooper the Plantation whereon he now Lives to a new Line Containing one Hundred & thirty Acres…"* George Cooper made this bequest: *"I give and bequeath to my son Frederick Cooper all the remainder of my Estate and what was lent to my Wife at her discease* [decease]*…maintaining my Daughter Agnes Cooper during her life."* George's last phrase implies that Agnes had some type of disability that left her requiring care. He also named his daughters, Emelia Collier and Jane Cooper.
4. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 90–91 (Will of Emelia Collier, written 19 July 1815, filed in court 22 January 1816). Emelia left her property to her children, including sons Benjamin, John, and George C. Collier, and daughters Emelia Rae and Lucy Collier. The biography of John Stiles Sr. gives a detailed description of The New Design, and how Jane Cooper Stiles and her children, Leroy and Mary Elizabeth, lived there between 1798 and 1807.
5. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 5, Part 2 (1694–1709), p. 228 (William Hunt to James Cooper, both of Southwark Parish, Surry County, 3 November 1701); Surry County VA Orders (1691–1713), LDS Film #8153306, Image #196 (4 November 1701), #197 (*"William Hunt appearing in Court and acknowledging a deed of sale of a parcel of land to James Cooper"*). Smith, Annie Laurie Wright. *The Quit Rents of Virginia, 1704.* Genealogical Publishing Co.: Baltimore, MD., 1980, p. 21.
6. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 8, Part 1 (1730–1738), pp. 425–426 (Will of James Cooper, written 28 February 1729/30, filed in court 20 November 1734).

7. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1754–1768), p. 285 (Will of Caleb Ellis, written 10 August 1760, filed in court 17 May 1762). In his 1762 will, Caleb Ellis named *"Mary Cooper"* as one of his five children.
8. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 7, Part 1 (1715–1730), pp. 993–995 (Caleb Ellis and his wife, *"Emelia,"* lease and release to Benjamin Reeks, 15–16 December 1729). Caleb Ellis sold a 110-acre tract of land *"it being a Parsell* [sic] *or Tract of Land Purchased by the said Caleb Elis of his father Jeremiah Elis."*
9. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 5, Part 1 (1694–1709), p. 34 (Jeremiah Ellis Sr. to Edward Ellis, 2 March 1694/95). Jeremiah Ellis Sr. sold his son, Edward Ellis, a 170-acre tract of land on the Johnchecohunk Swamp,
   "beginning at the Mouth of the branch that runneth betwixt the sd. Edwd & his Brother Jeremiah their plantations & so up ye branch…"
   This proves that Jeremiah Ellis Jr. was the son of Jeremiah Ellis Sr.
10. "Extracts From the Records of Surry County." *William and Mary College Quarterly,* Series I, Vol. XI, 1902, p. 81 (Militia in 1687), p. 84 (Jeremiah Ellis Jr.), p. 85 (Jeremiah Ellis Sr.).
11. Bockstruck, Lloyd DeWitt. *Virginia's Colonial Soldiers.* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1998, pp. 215, 220–221. The militia list comes from the Public Records Office in London, C.O.5/1312.
12. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 2, (1671–1684), p. 131 (Deposition of *"Jeremiah Ellis aged 34 yrs or there abouts,"* 4 July 1677). Boddie, John B. *Colonial Surry.* Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1974, p. 126. McCrary, pp. 6–7.
13. Surry County VA Order Book (1671–1691), Part 1, p. 373; LDS Film #8153305, Image #291 (Jeremiah Ellis appointed *"SubSheriff for the County having taken the Oaths,"* 2 May 1682). McCrary, p. 7.
14. Virginia Patents Books 1 & 2 (1623–1643), pp. 356–357 (Virginia to Nathan Martin, 500 acres in Henrico County called *"the great field,"* 31 May 1636; transportation of Nathan Martin, Edward Ellis, and six others).
15. McCrary, Dixie L. *The Ellis Line From Surry–Sussex in Virginia.* Privately printed, 1978, pp. 1–9, 25–31 (LDS Film #1321141, Item #8). Sheek, Ann Ellis. *History of Twelve Generations of the Ellis Family: 1636 to 1974.* Privately printed, 1974, pp. 5–7, 10–11 (LDS Film #7941119, Images #486–519). These works give references showing that Jeremiah Ellis Sr. was the only known son of Edward Ellis, the immigrant.
16. Surry County VA Deed Book 8 (1760–1769), pp. 217–219 (Heirs of *"Richard Shock"* [Shockey] to Richard Ellis, 5 May 1764); pp. 219–220 (Memorandum of agreement between heirs of *"Richard Shock"* [Shockey], including Mildred, wife of Caleb Ellis, 10 February 1764). These two records identify *"Mildred"* as the daughter of Richard Shockey, stating that she *"intermarried with Caleb Ellis,"* who had already died, leaving Richard Ellis as their heir. In that era, the given names *"Mildred"* and *"Amelia"* were interchangeable, and as both were used in the surviving records, it is unclear which, if either, was her actual given name.
17. MacDonald, Edgar and Richard Slatten. *Surry County [Virginia] Tithables, 1668–1703.* Baltimore, MD: Clearfield, 2007, pp. 92, 96. McCrary, Dixie L. *The Ellis Line From Surry–Sussex in Virginia.* Privately printed, 1978, pp. 30–31 (LDS Film #1321141, Item #8).
18. Bockstruck, pp. 215, 220–222.
19. Virginia Patents No. 11 (1710–1719), p. 350 (Patent to Robert Webb of Surry County, 175 acres in Southwark Parish adjoining lands of Richard Washington and *"Richard Shocks land,"* 22 January 1717).
20. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 7, Part 2 (1715–1730), pp. 588–589 (Gregory and Hannah Rawlings lease and release to William Cooper, 15–16 September 1724; 489 acres adjoining lands of Richard Shockey and Richard Washington).
21. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 8, Part 1 (1730–1738), pp. 138–140 (Inventory of the Estate of Richard Shockey, filed by Alice Shockey, Administrator, 20 October 1731).
22. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 9 (1738–1754), pp. 35–36 (Will of *"Alce"* Shockey, written 17 February 1735/36, filed in court 21 March 1738). In her 1736 will, the widowed Alice Shockey divided her *"wareing cloths"* among her four daughters, including *"Meley Ellis."*
23. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 597–598 (Frederick Cooper and Henry Dewell, boundary agreement, 20 January 1798). The 1798 boundary agreement proves Rebecca was the daughter of Elizabeth Dewell Cooper and granddaughter of Thomas Dewell.
24. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1754–1768), pp. 221–222 (Will of Henry Barnes Sr., written 16 April 1759, filed in court 15 April 1760); p. 237 (Inventory of Estate of Henry Barnes, 16 December 1760); pp. 230–231 (Account of Henry Barnes Estate, filed 19 July 1763 by *"Neomy Barnes,"* executrix). In his will, Henry Barnes Sr. left to *"my Daughter Elizabeth One Feather Bed & the Furniture to it belonging,"* and he left another bed and furniture to his son, Henry Barnes Jr. The inventory of Barnes' estate included one bed and furniture *"a Legacy to Henry"* and another bed and furniture valued at of £2 10s *"a Legacie to Thomas."* The account of Barnes' estate filed by his widow in 1763 included payments to Thomas Dewell of 12s 1d, and charges of £2 10s to the estate *"To Thos. Dewell a bed Given him by Will."* This proves that Thomas Dewell had married Elizabeth Barnes, daughter of Henry Barnes Sr. and his wife, Naomi.

25. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 7 Part 3 (1715–1730), pp. 796–797 (Will of Thomas Collier, written 15 February 1728, filed in court 20 March 1728; witness: Henry Barnes). Virginia Patent Book 26 (1747–1748), Vols. 1–2, pp. 409–411 (Henry Barnes, Surry County, 350 acres, 5 April 1748).
26. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 9 (1738–1754), pp. 667–668 (Will of James Dewell, written 27 October 1750, filed in Surry County Court 20 November 1750); 675–676 (Inventory of James Dewell Estate, appraised on December 1st, filed 18 December 1750).
27. Surry County VA Order Book (1691–1713), p. 127 (Court session of 28 May 1695), p. 129 (*"Wm Dewell who came into the Colony this present shipping in the Ship Hampshire and is Servant to John Hancock is adjudged twelve years* [sic] *old"*). Dewell, Gene. *Beside the Waters: The Virginia Dewell/Deuell Family.* Cary, NC: Dewell Publishing (blurb.com), 2011, pp. 23–25, 27, 29–31, 33–34.
28. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1754–1768), pp. 221–222 (Will of Henry Barnes Sr., written 16 April 1759, filed in court 15 April 1760).
29. Surry County VA Wills, Deeds, Etc. Book 11 (1778–1783), pp. 12–13; Surry County VA Indentures (1699–1796), LDS Film #4123079, Images #699–700 (William Barnes of Brunswick County to Thomas Dewell (*"Dwell"*) of Surry County, 19 November 1777).
30. *"Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States in the Year 1790: Records of the State Enumerations: 1782 to 1785, Virginia."* Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1908, pp. 43, 78. Surry County VA Census of Persons and Buildings (1772–1785), LDS Film #4131664, Image #22 (*"List of Souls in Capt. Lucas's District 1782: Thomas Dewell,"* 6 white, 0 black); Image #34, *"A List of white Persons and Buildings in Johnchocohunk Precinct in Surry County, taken by James Kee, 1784…Tho. Dewell;* 4 white people, 1 dwelling house, *"1 Smoke House"*).
31. Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1791, Frederick Cooper to Betsy Dewell, 11 February 1791 (Thomas Dewell, security). Surry County VA Marriage Returns (1785–1854), p. 3 (Frederick Cooper to Betsy Dewell, 24 February 1791).
32. 1794 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #8742699, Image #165: column 1, #2: Thomas Dewell, 325 acres; tax: £0 3s 7d. 1794 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #8458765, Image #437 (*"List of Taxable Property March 10th 1794, Cabin Point District, Surry County"*); Image #446: Thomas Dewell, one *"Free Tyth,"* one horse, tax: 4 pence. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 296–297 (Sampson and Scella Walden to Matthew Banks, 21 February 1795; witnesses: Thomas Bailey, Sampson Grantham, Thomas Dewell).
33. 1795 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #8742699, Image #182 (column 1, #1, Frederick Cooper, 100 acres; tax: £0 2s 1d; 112½ acres; tax: £0 1s 3d); Image #183 (column 1, #25: Henry Dewell, 212½ acres; tax: £0 2s 4d); Image #190 (*"Alienations and Alterations of Landed property in Surry County for the year 1795;"* #9: *"Frederick Cooper Dr To Thomas Dewell Decd"*; 112½ acres; land value: £24 18s 11d; land tax; £0 1s 3d; fees: 42¢); Image #191 (column 1, #2: *"Henry Dewell Dr To Thomas Dewell Decd"*; 212½ acres; land value: £46 16s 6d; land tax; £0 2s 4d; fees: 42¢). This shows that Thomas Dewell had died in 1795, with Henry Dewell and Frederick each paying the land taxes on their portion of the Dewell lands.
34. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 597–598 (Frederick Cooper and Henry Dewell, boundary agreement, 20 January 1798).
35. 1798 Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, LDS Film #4129143, Images #10–11 (Frederick Cooper to Sarah Rogers, 20 July 1798). Surry County VA Marriage Returns (1785–1854), p. 12 (Frederick Cooper to Sarah Rogers, 1798). James Warren stated to county clerk Jacob Faulcon that he married Frederick Cooper and Sarah Rogers in the year 1798.
36. Sussex County VA Marriage Register (1754–1853), p. 95 (*"Frederic"* [sic] Cooper to Elizabeth Barker, 5 December 1799); p. 274 (Marriage date: 12 December 1799: *"Fredric"* [sic] Cooper to Elizabeth Barker). Surry County VA Wills, Deeds, Etc. Book 11 (1778–1783), pp. 222–223 (Will of Thomas Barker, 28 September 1781, filed in court on 26 March 1782).
37. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), p. 80; Surry County VA Wills, Inventories & Estate Accounts (1770–1873), LDS Film #4124979, Images 1000–1001 (Will of Frederick Cooper, dated 22 April 1805, filed in court 28 January 1806).
38. Surry County VA Order Book (1804–1807), p. 273 (Court session of 24 September 1805); p. 274 (*"Ordered that John Velvin, Robert Booth, Frederick Cooper, and Miles Burgess or any three of them being first sworn as the law directs do appraise in current month the personal estate of William Justiss deceased and that they return an account of the appraisement to this court at the next term"*). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), pp. 104–105; Surry County VA Wills, Inventories & Estate Inventories (1770–1825), LDS Film #4124947, Images #610–611 (Estate Appraisement of William Justiss, made 29 November 1805, filed with Surry County Court 24 June 1806; appraisers: Frederick Cooper, John Velvin, Miles Burgess). William Justiss owned a 113-acre tract of land that adjoined Frederick Cooper's. See Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 11 (1778–1783), pp. 227–228; Surry County VA Indentures (1699–1796), LDS Film#4123079, Images #657–658 (Frederick Cooper to John Tillott, 26 March 1782); 1802 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121823, Image #14: William Justiss.

39. Surry County VA Executors Bonds (1798–1816), p. 68 (Bond of David Sebrell as executor of Frederick Cooper, 28 January 1806; security: Robert Ellis).
40. Surry County VA Order Book (1807–1811), p. 51 (Rebecca Cooper requested David Sebrell as guardian, 27 October 1807). Surry County VA Guardian Bonds (1797–1814), p. 82 (David Sebrell bond as guardian of Rebecca Cooper, 27 October 1807).
41. 1810 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 603, line #8: Emelia Collier; #26: Elizabeth Cooper; p. 604, line #28: Henry Dewell; p. 615, line #17: David Sebrell. There are no females that fit Rebecca's age bracket in the households of either Emelia Collier or Henry Dewell. There is a female in David Sebrell's household aged between ten and sixteen years, but this is probably Sebrell's daughter, Elizabeth Faulcon Sebrell, born in 1794.

Married Life in Surry County, Virginia

1. 1812 Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, LDS Film #4129172, Images #4–5 (John Stiles to Rebecca Cooper, 22 December 1812). Surry County VA Marriage Register (1768–1853), LDS Film #7579167, Image #213, p. 90 (John Stiles to Rebecca Cooper, 22 December 1812; guardian: David Sebrell).
2. Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books, LDS Film #8188299, Image #716 (1811), column 1, #17 *"John Stiles Jr;"* Image #734 (1812), column 1, #7: *"John Stiles jun;"* Image #811 (1814), #25: John Stiles.
3. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 140–141; Surry County VA Wills & Inventories (1797–1879), LDS Film #4124856, Images 1146–1147, 1323–1324 (Will of Nathaniel Sebrell, written 25 December 1813, filed 22 April 1816). "*The American Beacon and Commercial Diary*" (Norfolk, VA), 1 November 1816, p. 3, column 1. "*The New–York Herald*" (New York, NY), 9 November 1816, p. 3, column 1. An article titled *"Longevity"* gave several recent deaths in Surry County, Virginia, including *"Nat. Sebrel* [sic] *died in the fall of 1815–92"* [years old].
4. Surry County VA Order Book (1811–1815), p. 399 (Court session of 27 March 1815); p. 400 (*"Ordered that Jesse Stewart, Robert Ellis, John Stiles, William M. Davis, Benjamin Cocke, Lemuel Hargrave, John Holt and Thomas Sharp, be severally fined, the sum of eight dollars for failing to appear here this day as Grand Jurors agreeably to the Summons of the sheriff, unless they being served with a copy of this order appear here, at the next court of quarter sessions and shew cause to the contrary"*). Several of these men had connections to John Stiles Sr., with Jesse Stewart having purchased the elder Stiles' farm in 1798, Benjamin Cocke served as The New Design tavernkeeper in 1801–1802 and was convicted of gaming in the 1806 incident that ended the employment of John Stiles Sr. at the tavern, and William M. Davis served as the tavernkeeper who followed Stiles.
5. Surry County VA Order Book (1815–1820), p. 11 (Court session of 22 May 1815); p. 12 (*"A Jury of Grand Inquest for the body of this county sworn to wit,… Wm M. Davis, John Stiles,…William Rae, John G. Sharp, Edwin Rogers,…who being charged withdrew to consult on their duties…"*); p. 13 (*"Jesse Stewart, Robert Ellis, John Stiles, William M. Davis, Benjamin Cocke, Lemuel Hargrave, John Holt and Thomas Sharp, having been summoned to appear before the court this day to shew cause why the fine entered up against them at the last court of quarter sessions should not stand against them, severally appeared before the court and offered their excuses – It is considered by the Court that they be severally excused and their respective fines remitted them"*). 1799 Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, LDS Film #4129144, Images #56–57 (William Rae to Emelia Collier, 19 December 1799). 1817 Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, LDS Film #4129182, Images #65–66 (Edwin Rogers to Lucy Collier, 24 November 1817).
6. Upon Thomas Dewell's 1795 death, the Surry County Land Tax Books show that Frederick Cooper began paying taxes on half of the land. Other records show that his daughter, Rebecca, inherited half of his land in right of her mother, Elizabeth Dewell Cooper:
    - 1795–1800 Surry County VA Land Tax Books, LDS Film #8742699, Image #182 (1795; column 1, #1, Frederick Cooper, 100 acres; tax: £0 2s 1d; 112½ acres; tax: £0 1s 3d); Image #190 (1795; *"Alienations and Alterations of Landed property in Surry County for the year 1795;"* #9: *"Frederick Cooper D^{r} To Thomas Dewell Dec^{d}"*; 112½ acres; land value: £24 18s 11d; land tax; £0 1s 3d; fees: 42¢); Image #199 (1796; Frederick Cooper); #227 (1797; Frederick Cooper); Image #254 (1798; Frederick Cooper); Image #280 (1799; *"Fedrick Cooper"*); #306 (1800; *"Fedrick Cooper"*).
    - 1801 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121819, Image #8, *"Federick Cooper."*
    - 1802 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121823, Image #8, *"Federick Cooper."*
    - 1803 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121824, Image #8, Frederick Cooper.
    - 1804 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121826, Image #8, *"Fedrick Cooper."*
    - 1805 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121830, Image #8, Frederick Cooper.
7. Following Frederick Cooper's death in December 1805, taxes were paid on the land each year between 1806 and 1812 in the name of Rebecca Cooper. Undoubtedly, her guardian, David Sebrell, ensured payment of these taxes:
    - 1806 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121832, Image #7, Rebecca Cooper.
    - 1807 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121833, Image #9, Rebecca Cooper.
    - 1809 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121834, Image #8, Rebecca Cooper.
    - 1810 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121835, Image #7, Rebecca Cooper.

- 1811 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121838, Image #7, Rebecca Cooper.
- 1812 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121839, Image #9, Rebecca Cooper.

8. Between 1813 and 1816, John Stiles paid the land taxes on the land that Rebecca inherited from her grandfather until they sold the tract in 1816. The land was described as adjoining *"Henry Dewells quarter:"*
    - 1813 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121840, Image #27, *"John Stiles jun."*
    - 1814 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124779, Image #25, *"John Stiles in right of wife."*
    - 1815 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124791, Image #24, *"John Stiles in right of wife."*
    - 1816 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124801, Image #25, *"John Stiles in right of wife."*
9. Surry County VA Deed Book 5 (1815–1818), pp. 68–70 (John and Rebecca Stiles to William Hix, 2 September 1815; John Velvin and *"Arch^{d} Davis,"* magistrates and Justices, examined *"Rebeckah"* Stiles privately).
10. Surry County VA Deed Book 5 (1815–1818), pp. 243–245 (John and *"Rebecka"* Stiles to William Maynard, 4 May 1816; John Velvin and *"Arch^{d} Davis,"* Justices of the Peace, examined *"Rebeckah"* Stiles).
11. Surry County VA Deed Book 5 (1815–1818), pp. 89–90 (John and Mary Justiss to John Stiles, 11 March 1815; witnesses: *"Arch:^{d} Davis,"* John Velvin, Miles Burgess). The 1815 deed described the adjoining landowners as John Velvin, *"the estate of John Watkins School Master,"* and David O. Matthews. However, when the Stiles sold the land in 1823, the document listed the tract as adjoining those three, together with John Stiles. The only other land Stiles owned in 1823 was the 100-acre old farm of Frederick Cooper.
12. These various records show the evolution of the land John Stiles purchased in 1815 from John Justiss, son of William Justiss, as half of the 35¼-acre dower lands of William's widow, Nancy (Ann) Andrews Justiss, that reverted to William Justiss' two heirs, John Justiss and Rebecca Justiss Matthews, after Nancy's 1811 death:
    - 1792 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #8458765, Image #341: William *"Justice,"* John *"Justice,"* 2 *"white & other free tyths."*
    - 1806 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121832, Image #10: *"Est. of William Justiss,"* 113 acres.
    - 1809 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121834, Image #13, column 1: Ann Justiss, 35¼ acres; #14, column 2: Daniel O. Matthews, 90¾ acres; #21: *"Alienations and alterations in Landed property in Surry County from 1st March 1807 till 1st March 1809;"* #23: 90¾ acres: from *"Est. Wm Justiss"* to Daniel O. Matthews; 35¼ acres: from *"Est. Wm Justiss"* to Ann Justiss; 13 acres: from *"for Surplus in Survey"* to *"Est. Wm Justiss."*
    - 1812 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121839, Image #17: Ann Justiss, 35¼ acres; #18: John Justiss, 150 acres; #20: Daniel O. Matthews, 90¾ acres.
    - 1813 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121840, Image #18: John Justiss, 150 acres *"Adjoining Eliza Watkins;"* 17⅝ acres *"Adjoining Daniel O. Matthews;"* #21: Daniel O. Matthews, 90¾ acres, 17⅝ acres *"Adjg. Capt. John Velvin."*
    - Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1796, LDS Film #4129794, Image #80 (Daniel Matthews to Rebecca Justiss, 16 January 1796).
    - Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1802, LDS Film #4129148, Image #16 (William Justiss to Nancy Andrews, 29 November 1802; security: Daniel O. Matthews).
    - Surry County VA Administrators Bonds (1797–1815), p. 46 (John Justiss, Administrator of Estate of William Justiss, 24 September 1805; securities: John Velvin, Robert Booth).
    - Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), p. 408 (Will of Nancy Justiss, written 14 March 1811, filed in court 25 June 1811; witnesses: John Velvin, Daniel Matthews).
13. Surry County VA Deed Book 3 (1804–1811), pp. 313–314 (John and Mary Justiss of Surry County to Daniel O. Matthews of Sussex County, 26 September 1807). John and Mary Justiss sold *"all their right, claim challenge and demand to a certain tract or parcel of land,"* 90¾ acres, *"it being lain off for two thirds of the plantation whereon William Justiss lately died,"* bounded by lands of John Velvin, Thomas G. Tillott, *"Mrs. Justisses dower"* land.
14. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 7, Part 3 (1715–1730), pp. 726–727 (Robert Partin of Southwark Parish, Surry County to John Justice, of Martins Brandon Parish, Prince George County, 13 March 1727; 200 acres on Blackwater Swamp adjoining the lands of Richard Washington).
15. These deeds show that the land that John Justiss (Justice) purchased in 1727 adjoined the lands of William Cooper and Richard Shockey:
    - Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 7, Part 2 (1715–1730), pp. 588–589 (Gregory and Hannah Rawlings to William Cooper, 15–16 September 1724; 489 acres adjoining Richard Washington and Richard Shockey).
    - Surry County VA Deed Book 7 (1753–1760), pp. 128–130 (John and Henry Person of Southampton County to Richard Wiggins Jr. of Surry County, 13 February 1754; 213 acres granted in 1752 to John Person, deceased, adjoining lands of William Cooper, John Justice, John Nicholson, and Benjamin Ricker).
    - Surry County VA Deed Book 7 (1753–1760), pp. 187–188 (Richard Wiggins Jr. and Tabitha Wiggins to Michael Carsley, 13 March 1755; 213 acres adjoining William Cooper, John Justice, Benjamin Rickes, and John Nicholson).

- Surry County VA Deed Book 7 (1753–1760), pp. 354–355 (John Justice Sr. to John Justice Jr., 1757; 75 acres on the Spring Branch adjoining the lands of Richard Ellis and William Cooper).

16. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 8, Part 1 (1730–1738), pp. 138–140 (Inventory of Richard Shockey Estate, filed by wife and administrator, Alice Shockey, 20 October 1731; appraisers: Thomas Washington, Sampson Lanier, John Justice).
17. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 9 (1738–1754), pp. 59–60 (Jane Owyn and Thomas Collier to Anthony *"Attkinson,"* 7 April 1739; 180 acres *"on the Boling* [sic] *Alley;"* witnesses: Caleb Ellis, John Justiss). Surry County VA Deed Book 8 (1760–1769), pp. 219–220 (Memorandum of agreement among heirs of Richard *"Shock"* [Shockey] regarding his land boundary; heirs included Richard Ellis, representative of Mildred Shockey who married Caleb Ellis, deceased, Elizabeth Shockey who married Richard Bulloch, deceased, Agnes Shockey, who married with William Peebles, Mary Shockey who married John Cooper, and Thea Shockey, who died unmarried and underage, 10 February 1764; witnesses: William Justice, John Cooper, John Justice, Robert Rae).
18. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1754–1768), pp. 215–216 (Will of William Cooper, written 4 April 1756, filed in court 26 November 1759; witnesses: John Justiss, Robert Rae, Joanna Justiss).
19. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10a (1768–1779), pp. 401–402 (Will of John Justiss, written 11 April 1774, filed in court 25 April 1775; witness: George Cooper).
20. Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books, LDS Film #8188299, Image #811 (1814), #25: *"John Stiles;"* Image #849 (1815), #8: *"John Stiles;"* Image #888 (1816), #11: *"John Stiles;"* LDS Film #8248743, Image #35 (1817), #25: *"John Stiles;"* Image #64 (1818), #27: *"John Stiles;"* Image #96 (1819), #32: *"John Stiles."* Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 4 (1822–1827), pp. 203–205 (Inventory of the Estate of Nathaniel Sebrell, made 10 December 1816, filed in court 27 October 1823, David Sebrell, executor).
21. 1819 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124817, Image #40, #9: *"John Stiles;"* Residence: Surry [county]; acres: 17⅝; owned: *"fee simple;"* adjoining: Daniel O. Matthews, etc.; tax: 15¢. 1820 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124822, Image #19, #23: *"John Styles;"* Residence: Sussex [county]; acres: 17⅝; owned: *"fee simple;"* adjoining: Daniel O. Matthews, etc.; tax: 5¢.
22. Sussex County VA Will Book H (1813–1818), pp. 466–467 (Will of George Birdsong, written 15 April 1818, filed in court by executor Walter Spratley on 4 June 1818); Will Book K (1822–1827), pp. 230–233 (Account of George Birdsong, *"with Walter Spratley the executor,"* filed 15 February 1825); Will Book L (1827–1833), pp. 153–154 (Account of George Birdsong, *"Walter Spratley, the Executor,"* filed 21 April 1829).
23. For more details and documentation, see the biography of Walter Spratley Sr.
24. 1820 Sussex County VA Federal Census, p. 95, #31: Nancy Birdsong; #32: William Birdsong. The wills of both George and Nancy Birdsong identify William Birdsong as their son. Nancy's household included two white males aged under ten years, one white male aged 16–26, 3 females under 10, 1 female 10–16, 2 females 16–26, and one female 26–45. George's will identified three daughters, one younger son, plus his older son, William. Records show that Jack and Becca had only two young sons in 1820.
25. George Birdsong also knew Jack's father, John Stiles Sr. Birdsong was among the men arrested in 1806 for gaming at The New Design Tavern. The Surry Court eventually dismissed the charges against Birdsong. See the biography of John Stiles Sr. for details.
26. 1821 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124833, Image #15, #8: *"John Styles;"* Residence: Surry [county]; acres: 17⅝; owned: *"fee simple;"* adjoining: Daniel O. Matthews; tax: 4¢; acres: 100; owned: *"wife life;"* adjoining: *"Alex. Scarborough & John Velvin;"* tax: 27¢; explanation of change: *"from Est. Fred Cooper per Will."* This is the first year that Stiles paid the land taxes on Fred Cooper's old 100-acre farm, an indication that his widow, Elizabeth, had become incapacitated or already died.
27. 1821 Surry County Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #8248743, Image #145, #22: *"John Stiles."* It is not clear who owned the slave on which John Stiles paid taxes this year, but from the records below outlining his debt in 1821, it was certainly not Stiles. The enslaved person probably belonged to the estate of Jack's grandfather, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr.

Military Service During the War of 1812

1. Hickey, Donald R. *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict.* Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989, pp. 151–154. Butler, Stuart. *A Guide to Virginia Militia Units in the War of 1812.* 2nd ed. Athens, GA: New Papyrus, 2011, pp. 11–13, 192–193. "Operations at and near Hampton during War of 1812." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* Vol. 37, 1929, pp. 2–4.
2. It is unclear if the Virginia Militia units that confronted the British troops at Craney Island and Hampton between June 22–26 were standing militia units or mobilized county militias from the surrounding region.
3. *Muster Rolls of the Virginia Militia in the War of 1812.* Richmond, VA: William F. Ritchie, 1852, pp. 494–495 (Capt. Irby Jones' Company, 71st Regiment Virginia Militia, commanded by Lt. Col. William Allen, June 30th to July 10th, 1813, and August 31st to September 11th, 1814; John Watkins, lieutenant; John Stiles, private).

4. Compiled Military Service Records, William Rae (sergeant), Capt. Judkins' Company; William Casely [sic] (private), George C. Collier (private); John Collier (private); William Rae (corporal); Nathaniel Spratley (private), 71 Regiment (Allen's); Virginia Militia, War of 1812. *Muster Rolls of the Virginia Militia in the War of 1812.* Richmond, VA: William F. Ritchie, 1852, pp. 513–514 (Muster Roll of Capt. George Judkins' Company, 71st Regiment, Virginia Militia, commanded by Lt. Col. William Allen, June 30th to July 10th, 1813; William Rae, corporal; George C. Coller, John Collier, and Nathaniel Spratley, privates). Their service records indicate that Carsley and Spratley were paid for 11 days service at the rate of $8/month, making their pay $2.93⅓.
5. *"The Enquirer"* (Richmond, VA), 6 July 1813, p. 3, column 4.
6. Surry County VA Order Book (1811–1815), p. 349 (Court session of 27 June 1814); p. 354 (*"A return of patrole* [sic] *made and sworn to by"* Moody Emery and Joel Lane); p. 355 (Payments to George Collier, $1.31, *"for 21 hours patrole;"* William Rae, $2.12, *"for 34 hours patrole"*); p. 356 (Payment to John Stiles, $1.87, *"for 30 hours patrole"*).
7. Compiled Military Service Record, David Cocke Jr. (private), Captain Judkins' Company, Virginia Militia [71 Regiment (Allen's)], War of 1812. David Cocke Jr. was listed as present and described as a *"Substitute for John Stiles."* Cocke served from July 24th through August 8th, a period of 16 days. At the pay rate of $8 per month, he received $4.12 payment.
8. Compiled Military Service Record, John Stiles (private), 71 Regiment (Allen's); Virginia Militia, War of 1812. Stiles served in Capt. Irby Jones' Company of Infantry from August 31st until September 11th, 1814. He was listed as present, and on September 11th, the company was stationed at Cabin Point, Virginia. Stiles was paid $3.20 for his service.

Economic Turmoil in Southeastern Virginia

1. Percy, David O. "Ax or Plow? Significant Colonial Landscape Alteration Rates in the Maryland and Virginia Tidewater." *Agricultural History*, Vol. 66, pp. 68–69, 71–73.
2. Bruce, Kathleen. "Virginia Agricultural Decline to 1860: A Fallacy." *Agricultural History,* 1932, Vol. 6, pp. 3–4. Turner, Charles W. "Virginia Agriculture Reform, 1815–1860." *Agricultural History,* Vol. 26, 1952, pp. 82–83. Walsh, Lorena S. "Plantation Management in the Chesapeake, 1620–1820." *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 49, 1989, p. 404.
3. Boers, Bernice de Jong. "Mount Tambora in 1815: A Volcanic Eruption in Indonesia and its Aftermath." *Indonesia,* Vol. 60, pp. 40–43. Stothers, Richard B. "The Great Tambora Eruption in 1815 and its Aftermath." *Science,* Vol. 224, 1984, pp. 1191–1198.
4. Post, John D. "The Economic Crisis of 1816–1817 and Its Social and Political Consequences." *Journal of Economic History,* Vol. 30, 1970, pp. 248–250. Post, John D. "A Study in Meteorological and Trade Cycle History: The Economic Crisis Following the Napoleonic Wars." *Journal of Economic History,* Vol. 34, 1974, pp. 321–323, 325, 328. Skeen, C. Edward. "'The Year without a Summer': A Historical View." *Journal of the Early Republic,* Vol. 1, pp. 51–67. Boers, pp. 51–53. Stothers, pp. 1196–1197.
5. Haulman, Clyde. "Virginia Commodity Prices during the Panic of 1819." *Journal of the Early Republic,* Vol. 22, 2002, pp. 676–677.
6. United States Congressional Records. American State Papers, Class IV, Commerce and Navigation, Vol. II, pp. 521–525. House of Representatives Document No. 21, 17th Congress, 1st Session, 1822.
7. Surry County VA Debtor's (1804–1832), LDS Film #4131795, Images #59–60 (Benjamin Collier and John Stiles, insolvent debtors, 29 March 1821). Surry County VA Administrators Bonds (1815–1826), p. 118 (Beverly Booth, bond as Administrator of the Estate of William Carsley, deceased, 23 April 1821). For verification that Beverly Booth served as Surry County Sheriff, see Surry County VA Deed Book 4 (1811–1815), pp. 389–391 (Beverly Booth Sheriff's Bonds, 4 July 1814).
8. [Harrison, Fairfax]. "Imprisonment for Debt in Colonial Virginia." *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* 1927, Vol. 35, pp. 1–6. Randall, Edwin T. "Imprisonment for Debt in America: Fact and Fiction." *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* Vol. 39, 1952, pp. 93–94.
9. Virginia General Assembly. *Acts Passed at a General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, begun and held at the Capitol, in the City of Richmond.* Richmond, VA: Thomas Ritchie, 1820, p. 17 (Chapter XIX – *An act to amend the act, entitled, "An act to reduce into one act the several acts concerning executions, and for the relief of insolvent debtors,"* passed 24 February 1820).
10. Surry County VA Debtor's (1804–1832), LDS Film #4131795, Images #179–180 (Lucy Warren, insolvent debtor, 2 June 1833). Lucy Warren was arrested and imprisoned in the Surry County Debtor's Prison, as she owed a debt of $28.50, plus interest from 1 January 1831 and costs of $6.39. She spent over two weeks in the Surry jail, presenting her schedule of property to be sold to the Surry Court on June 17th. The property she listed was *"all my right, title & interest in the Land whereof my decd. Father died seized possessed & also my right & in the lands belonging to my husband."*

11. Surry County VA Order Book (1815–1820), p. 326 (Court session of 23 June 1817); p. 330 (*"Ordered that James D. Edwards, Charles H. Graves, and William Jones or any two of them do let to the lowest undertaker* [bidder] *the necessary repairs of the Jail of this County and that they make report thereof to this court"*). Surry County VA Miscellaneous Records–1 (1784–1942), LDS #4126722, Image #605 (*"The necessary repairs to Surry Jail was ordered to be let to the lowest undertaker by the undersigned Commissioners appointed for the purpose by Surry Court…Bond & security to be given to perform the work in a workmanlike manner by Sep[t] Court;"* commissioners: Charles H. Graves, James D. Edwards); #606 (Bond of Bartholomew D. Henley for Surry Jail Repair, 28 July 1817; security: Charles H. Graves; witness: James D. Edwards).
12. Surry County VA Order Book (1820–1822), p. 124 (Court session 27 March 1821); pp. 131–132 (Richard H. Edwards, executor of *"Thomas Blunt dec[d]"* vs. Benjamin Collier and John Stiles, *"In debt"*); p. 138 (Court session 29 March 1821); pp. 142–143 (Beverly Booth vs. William Carsley & John Stiles; *"The defendant Carsley being dead, this suit is abated as to him;"* John Stiles owed $38.16 plus interest from 27 February 1819, plus costs of $8.46, with credit of $7.00 paid March 1820; Booth's attorney *"prayed the said defendant into custody"*); pp. 143–144 (Benjamin Collier and John Stiles *"charged in execution for two Judgements,"* one by Richard H. Edwards, executor of Thomas Blunt for $38 plus interest from 1 October 1818, plus costs of $6.66, and the execution against William Carsley and John Stiles of $38.16 plus costs of $8.46). Surry County VA Debtor's (1804–1832), LDS Film #4131795, Images #59–60 (Benjamin Collier and John Stiles, insolvent debtors, 29 March 1821).
13. Surry County VA Order Book (1820–1822), p. 151 (Court session 29 March 1821); p. 155 (David Price against John Stiles and David Sebrell, *"In debt."*).
14. Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #8248743, Image #171 (1822): John Stiles; Image #202 (1823): John Stiles.
15. 1811–1820 Surry County VA Land Tax Books. In each year, land taxes were paid on Elizabeth Cooper's 100 acres that she owned *"for life."* Most years taxes were paid in the name of *"Elizabeth Cooper,"* but the 1820 land taxes were paid in the name of *"Elizabeth Cowper,"* probably a phonetic spelling that shows the southeastern Virginia pronunciation of the surname *"Cooper"* in that era. See 1820 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS #4124822, Image #26.
16. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), p. 512 (Will of Elizabeth Cooper, written 23 May 1820, filed in court 23 July 1821). When he presented Elizabeth's will to the Surry County Court on 23 July 1821, George C. Collier *"refused to take upon himself the burthen of the Execution"* of her estate.
17. 1821 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS #4124833, Image #15, #8: *"John Styles."* 1822 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS #4124836, Image #16, #34: John Stiles. 1823 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS #4124838, Image #16, #23: John Stiles. Fred and Permelia Cooper were children of brothers George and John Cooper, respectively, with the latter two sons of William Cooper. On 23 December 1800, John Velvin married Permelia Cooper. John Velvin commanded a company of Surry County Militia during the War of 1812, he in 1817, he was commissioned as a major in the Surry Militia. See Surry County VA Order Book (1815–1820), p. 336 (John Velvin recommended as Major in the 71st Regiment Virginia Militia of Surry County, 28 July 1817); p. 357 (John Velvin qualified as Major in the 71st Regiment Virginia Militia, 24 November 1817).
18. Surry County VA Deed Book 6 (1818–1823), pp. 347–348 (Alexander and Rebecca Scarborough to Caleb Cooper, 16 November 1821; Caleb Cooper bought 88-acres *"purchased by said Scarborough of Cap[t] Nathan Jones…beginning at a maple in a branch adjoining John Stileses land…to a pine in the head of a branch in John Velvins line…"* Caleb Cooper (c1780–1829/1830) was the son of Richard Cooper (1740/1745–1791) and grandson of John Cooper (1709/1710–1768) and Mary Shockey (1705/1715–1764/1768). Thus, Caleb was a double second cousin of Fred Cooper, through both of Fred's parents.
19. Surry County VA Order Book (1833–1838), p. 26 (Court session 23 September 1833); p. 28 (John N. Sebrell, executor of Jesse P. Warren decd. vs. John Stiles; $10 debt plus $4.44 costs and interest). Surry County VA Deed Book 4 (1811–1815), pp. 161–162 (Thomas Ellis Jr. and wife and Sarah Ellis to Jesse P. Warren, 12 October 1812). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 140–141; Surry County VA Wills & Inventories (1797–1879), LDS Film #4124856, Images 1146–1147, 1323–1324 (Will of Nathaniel Sebrell, written 25 December 1813, filed 22 April 1816; witness: John Velvin, John Watkins, Jesse P. Warren). In 1812, Warren purchased the 388-acre tract that adjoined Nathaniel Sebrell's land.
20. Surry County VA Order Book (1833–1838), p. 32 (Court session 28 October 1833); p. 38 (William M. Birdsong, executor of *"Nancy Birdsong dec[d]"* vs. John Stiles; $23.40 plus interest from 13 January 1821, plus costs).
21. Surry County VA Deed Book 7 (1823–1826), pp. 8–9 (John and Rebecca Stiles to Benjamin George, 7 March 1823; Beverly Booth and John Velvin, Justices of the Peace, examined Rebecca Stiles for her consent to the sale).
22. Union County AR Deed Book A, p. 215 (James Boatright to Jane Stiles, 16 October 1842). 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 279a, Dwelling #191, line #24: James Boatright (age: 28; Farmer; born: Ark); #25: Jane E. Boatright (age: 24; born: Tenn). 1860 Union Parish LA Federal Census, P.O. Farmerville, p. 587, Dwelling #528, line #23: *"James Boatrite"* (age: 38; Farmer; born: Ark); #24: *"J. E. Boatrite"* (age: 36; female;

Housekeeper; born: *"Tenn"*); #32: *"John Stiles"* (age: 76; Farmer; born: Va); #33: *"Becca Stiles"* (age: 66; *"HouseKeeper;"* born: Va). 1870 Union Parish LA Federal Census, Ward No. 3, p. 66a/34, Dwelling #229, line #27: *"Jane Boatwright"* (age: 40; Keeping House; born: Virginia). 1880 Union Parish LA Federal Census, Ward No. 3, ED #87, p. 471b/35, Dwelling #311, line #48: Jane E. Boatright (age: 50; widowed; Keeping house; born: *"(Arks);"* father born: *"(Ga);"* mother born: *"(Miss)"*). 1900 Union Parish LA Federal Census, Ward 1, Precinct 2, ED #116, p. 20a, Dwelling #25, line #23: Fannie Albritton (born: Apr 1861; age: 39; wife; born: Louisiana; father born: Louisiana; mother born: Virginia). Documentation showing that Jane was the daughter of Jack and Becca Stiles comes from her 1842 marriage record and the 1860 enumeration of the Boatright family showing the Stiles in their household. While the 1850 and 1860 enumerators recorded Jane's birth in Tennessee, the 1870 enumerator gave Virginia as her birthplace. The 1880 enumerator clearly did not have the correct information, listing the births of Jane, her father, and mother in birth in Arkansas, Georgia, and Mississippi, respectively. However, the 1900 enumerator listed the birth of Fannie's mother as occurring in Virginia. Given that census information is notoriously faulty, these records plus the records of John and Rebecca Stiles in Surry County through March 1824 indicate that Jane's birth occurred there.

23. Surry County VA Deed Book 7 (1823–1826), pp. 186–187 (John and Rebecca Stiles lease to Edwin Rogers, 10 March 1824; witnesses: B. W. Sebrell, Geo. C. Collier, James W. Sebrell). The lease ran from that date through 10 March 1834. The deed stated: *"and if he the said Edwin Rogers should find it to his interest to reclaim a certain pond lying on the west side of the house and also that slip of woodland lying north of the said pond he will doe* [sic] *it and cultivate the same according to the custom of tilling such lands so as not to injure or tire it."*
24. 1824 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124841, Image #17: John Stiles. He paid the 1824 land taxes on 100 acres of land that Stiles was described as owning for *"wife's life."* John Stiles did not pay 1824 personal property taxes like he had in 1823.

Loose Ends in the Old Dominion

1. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 4 (1822–1827), pp. 613–619 (Nathaniel Sebrell Estate Account, filed 26 October 1826); Book 5 (1827–1830), pp. 208–214 (Nathaniel Sebrell Estate Account, filed with Surry County Commissioner on 25 September 1827, confirmed by the Surry County Court on 28 January1828). The accounting shows the debts filed with David Sebrell against John Stiles, and the payment to Beverly Booth from the Sebrell estate indicates that the sheriff probably did not sell any of the property John Stiles submitted to the Surry Court back in 1821. It appears that David Sebrell paid the judgements against Stiles from the funds due him from his grandfather's estate.
2. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 5 (1827–1830), pp. 506–507 (Will of Jesse P. Warren, signed 28 August 1829, filed in court 23 November 1829; witness: David Sebrell, Jas. W. Sebrell; executor: *"my friend John N. Sebrell;"* securities on executor's bond: David Sebrell, Walter Spratley). Surry County VA Executors Bonds (1816–1831), p. 164 (Bond of John N. Sebrell, executor of Jesse P. Warren, 23 November 1829; securities: David Sebrell, Walter Spratley).
3. Sussex County VA Will Book L (1827–1833), p. 469 (Will of Nancy Birdsong, written 16 September 1829, filed in court 6 December 1832; executor: *"my beloved son William M. Birdsong"*).
4. Sussex County VA Will Book H (1813–1818), pp. 466–467 (Will of George Birdsong, written 15 April 1818, filed in court 4 June 1818; executor: *"my friend Walter Spratley (of Cabin Point)"*); Will Book K (1822–1827), pp. 230–233 (Account of George Birdsong Estate, Walter Spratley, executor, filed 15 February 1825); Will Book L (1827–1833), pp. 153–154 (Account of George Birdsong Estate, Walter Spratley, executor, filed 7 May 1829; Walter Spratley, guardian of George T. and Martha Birdsong).
5. Surry County VA Order Book (1833–1838), p. 26 (Court session 23 September 1833); p. 28 (William M. Birdsong, executor of Nancy Birdsong, vs. John Stiles, *"Attachment granted by a Justice…the plaintiff by his attorney…on motion the same is continued till the next Court;"* John N. Sebrell executor of Jesse P. Warren decd. *"having obtained an attachment against the Estate of John Stiles;"* constable summoned *"James W. Sebrell exor. of David Sebrell as Garnishee;"* Stiles did not appear, judgment for plaintiff for $10.70 plus interest from 8 September 1817, plus costs of $4.44; ordered for James W. Sebrell, executor of David Sebrell, *"who was Exor. of Nath[l] Sebrell do pay over to the plaintiff the amount of this Judgement & costs"*).
6. Surry County VA Order Book (1833–1838), p. 32 (Court session 28 October 1833); p. 38 (William Birdsong, executor of *"Nancy Birdsong dec[d], having obtained an attachment against the estate of John Stiles…summoned James W. Sebrell executor of David Sebrell as a Garnishee;"* Stiles failed to appear, judgement for plaintiff for $23.41 plus interest from 13 January 1821, plus costs of $4.12; *"James W. Sebrell executor…being sworn declared that he holds in his hands funds belonging to the defendant; it is therefore ordered that the said James W. Sebrell do pay to the plaintiff the amount of this Judgement & the costs, if he holds a sufficiency to pay the same"*).
7. 1825–1834 Surry County VA Land Tax Books.

8. Surry County VA Administrators Bonds (1826–1836), p. 145 (John Owen, bond as administrator of Edwin Rogers, 27 October 1834).
9. 1835 Surry County VA Land Tax Record, LDS Film #4126538, Image #32, #7: John Stiles (residence: unknown; estate: *"Wife's life;"* adjoining: *"Pamala Velvin;"* value of buildings: $50; value of land: $300; tax: 24¢).
10. 1835–1856 Surry County VA Land Tax Books.
11. Surry County VA Deed Book 13 (1848–1857), p. 676 (Benjamin Collier to Martha Collier, 31 March 1856). The land that Rebecca Cooper Stiles owned had adjoined land owned by John C. Crump and David Booth in the 1840s. In 1852, they sold their land to Charles H. Clarke; see Surry County VA Deed Book 13 (1848–1857), pp. 461–462 (John C. Crump of Nansemond County and David Booth of Surry County, to Charles H. Clarke of Surry, 27 March 1852). Clarke bought 45 acres of land bounded by Boling Ellis, Caleb Cooper, and *"Stile's line."*
12. 1791–1792 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #8458765, Image #315 (1791), line #15: Emilia Collier; taxes paid 7 April 1791, *"Negroes: Charles, Kate 16 y;"* no white tythes aged 16 and above; Image #336 (1792), line #12: *"Emilia Collier (Son Benjamin Collier);"* taxes paid 2 April 1792, *"Negroes Charles, Kate, Abby, 16y;"* 1 white tythe aged 16 and above. This shows that Benjamin Collier reached the age of sixteen years between 7 April 1791 and 2 April 1792, i.e., his birth occurred about 1775 or 1776.
13. 1857–1880 Surry County VA Land Tax Books.
14. 1884 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4126008, Image #21, Guilford District, #3: Jonathan W. Cooper Est. 1885 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4126011, Image #22, Guilford District, #8: Jonathan W. Cooper decd. In 1884, the Cooper estate paid the taxes on the 100-acre tract of land held only for *"life of W. M. Gary,"* with the land described as adjoining *"Ellis & Crump land,"* valued at only $250. Between 1884 and 1885, W. H. and G. F. Gary (or Gay/Guy) sold their interest in the land to the estate of Jonathan W. Cooper, and his estate owned Fred Cooper's old 100-acre tract of land outright. In 1885, it was described as adjoining land of *"Ellis & Cooper"* and valued at $300.

Life in the Old Southwest

1. 1820 Wayne County NC Federal Census, p. 480, line #17: John Stiles. This household enumeration shows John Stiles Sr., together with his wife, and their children, Leroy and Mary Elizabeth Stiles, plus Leroy's wife and their young children. Records there document Leroy Stiles in Wayne County, North Carolina in January 1822, but it is unclear if they remained there through 1824 or 1825 before leaving for Tennessee.
2. These census records help document the birthplace of George T. Stiles in Tennessee. The enumerator of the 1850 census record mistakenly wrote George's initials as *"D. T. Stiles:"*
    - 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #419, line #31: Jack Stiles (age: 66; Farmer; born: *"Va"*); #32: Rebecca Stiles (age: 56; born: *"Va"*); #33: *"D. T. Stiles"* [sic] (age: 24; Farmer; born: Tenn).
    - 1860 Columbia County AR Federal Census, Mississippi Township, P.O. Palestine, p. 262/48, Dwelling #321, line #39: George Stiles (age: 34; Farmer; born: Tenn).
    - 1870 Columbia County AR Federal Census, Mississippi Township, P.O. Magnolia, Ark., p. 447b/19, Dwelling #115: George T. Stiles (age: 43; Farmer; born: Tennessee).
    - 1880 Columbia County AR Federal Census, Mississippi Township, ED #43, p. 207b/1, Dwelling #6, line #36: George T. Stiles (age: 53; Farmer; born: Tennessee).
3. 1830 Franklin County TN Federal Census, p. 64, line #21: *"John Stiles Senr;"* #26: John Stiles; p. 70, line #17: *"Benjm Nevill;"* p. 96, line #1: *"LeRoy Stiles."* Mary Elizabeth Stiles married Benjamin Nevill Sr. on 23 November 1826 according to family records.
4. 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #419, line #31: Jack Stiles (age: 66; Farmer; born: *"Va"*); #32: Rebecca Stiles (age: 56; born: *"Va"*); #34: *"Rufus A. Stiles"* (age: 18; Farmer; born: Tenn).
5. Franklin County TN Court Minutes, Vol. 2, Part 1 (1832–1834); WPA Transcriptions, LDS Film #4769009, Image #607, p. 88 (Court session of 26 November 1832); Image #610, p. 90 (John Stiles appointed overseer).
6. 1840 Coffee County TN Federal Census, p. 186, line #30: Leroy Stiles; p. 187, line #1: *"Mary Neville."* Mary Neville's household included one male aged 70–80, clearly her father, John Stiles Sr. In his will the following year, the elder Stiles implied that he lived with his daughter, as he expressed his wishes to be buried at her house, undoubtedly in her family cemetery where her husband had been buried a few years earlier. The elder Stiles also left his daughter the bulk of his property. Leroy Stiles was the last name on p. 187, so his household adjoined that of his sister.
7. 1839–1840 Union County AR Tax Lists, LDS Film #8339821, Images #672–674 (1839) and #720–724 (1840). Neither of these tax records include anyone with the Stiles surname as assessed Union County taxes.
8. Union County AR Deed Record A (1830–1845), p. 123 (*"Dennice Mires"* to *"Elisabeth Stiles,"* 31 May 1840). The record reads *"I M. C. Driskill an acting Justice of the Peace in and for the township of Jackson in the County foresaid*

do hereby certify that on the 31st day of May A. D. 1840, I solemnised [sic] *the rights of Matrimony between Dennice* [sic] *Mires & Elisabeth* [sic] *Stiles. Both being of lawful age by the consent of both parties. Recorded this May 20th A.D. 1840."* It seems that one of the days was incorrect, for the marriage record could not possibly have been recorded before it occurred. The next record was the sale of a horse dated 3 December 1839 and recorded 20 May 1840, the same day the Mires/Stiles married was recorded.

9. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, line #7: Dennis Myres; #8: *"Jas. Dunbar;"* #9: *"John Styles Senr;"* line #10: *"John Styles Jr.;"* line #18: M. C. Driskill.
10. 1841 Union County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8339821, Images #759–760, line #16: Dennis Myers; Images #766–767, #23: *"Stiles Frederic;"* #24: *"Stiles Jno. Sen;"* #25: *"Stiles Jno Jr."*
11. Coffee County TN Will and Probate Records, LDS Film #4727878, Images 73–74. Coffee County TN Will Book 1 (1833–1859), pp. 40–41, LDS Film #4776229, Image #37 [original]. Coffee County TN Will Book 1 (1833–1860) [typed], pp. 34–35, LDS Film #4769001, Images 622–623 (Will of John Stiles, written 6 November 1841, proved 4 March 1844). John Stiles Sr. named John Stiles (Jr.) and Leroy Stiles as his sons, leaving them $5.00 each. He left the bulk of his property to his daughter, Mary E. Stiles Nevill, and made her his administrator.
12. 1842 Union County AR Tax Lists, LDS Film #8339821, Images #806–807, #27: *"Dennis Myers;"* Images #818–819, #13: *"Stiles Leroy;"* #14: *"Stiles John Senr.;"* #15: *"Stiles Frederick."*
13. Union County AR County Court Record Book A (1830–1846), p. 144 (*"Be it Ordered that Sampson Coker be and hereby is appointed Overseer of the Road from James Meek's passing Mr. Stiles to the Louisiana State Line,"* 10 October 1842).
14. Union County AR Deed Record A (1830–1845), p. 215 (James Boatright to Jane Stiles, 16 October 1842); p. 232 (Frederick Stiles to Nancy Stiles, 1 March 1843).
15. 1843–1844 Union County AR Tax Lists, LDS Film #8339821, 1843, Image #853, #16 *"Dennis Myres;"* Image #856, #22: *"Stiles F. C.;"* #23: *"Stiles Leroy;"* #24: *"Stiles Jno. Senr;"* 1844, Image #876, #28: *"Dennis Myers;"* Image 881, #3: *"Stiles John;"* #4: *"Stiles Leroy;"* 1845–1846 Union County AR Tax Lists, LDS Film #8339822, 1845, Image #16, #12: *"Jas. Boatright;* Image #35, #30: *"Dennis Myers;"* Image #42, #11: *"Leroy Stiles;"* #12: *"John Stiles;"* 1846, Image #56, #13: *"James Boatwright;"* Image #76, #2: *"Dennis Myres;"* Image #86, #18 *"___Stiles"* [0 polls]; #19 *"Leroy Stiles."* The male Stiles with zero white polls in 1846 is John Stiles Jr., as this man paid taxes on similar livestock as John Stiles did in 1845.
16. 1848 Union County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8339822, Image #137, #3: *"G. F. Stiles"* [sic]. This is undoubtedly George Thomas Stiles.
17. 1850 Union County AR Federal Census:
    El Dorado Township, p. 236b:
    Dwelling #418, line #24: Dennis Myers (age: 40; Farmer; born: *"Ga"*); #25: Elizabeth Myers (age: 28; born: *"Va"*).
    Dwelling #419, line #31: Jack Stiles (age 66; Farmer; born *"Va;"*); line #32: Rebecca Stiles (age 56; born *"Va"*).
    Jackson Township, p. 279a:
    Dwelling #191, line #24: James Boatright (28; Farmer, born: *"Ark"*); #25: Jane E. Boatright (age: 24; born: *"Tenn"*).
    Proof that Dennis Mires was a local Jackson Township official as late as 1849: Union County AR Marriage Record A (1847–1850):
    pp. 6–7: *"Dennis Mirs J.P."* married John Hicks to Mary Benet (?), 22 October 1846.
    p. 23: *"I Dennis Mires an acting Justice of the Peace in and for the Township of Jackson"* married Thompson Simpson and Elizabeth Banks, 29 October 1846.
    p. 74: *"I Dennis Myers an acting and duly commissioned Justice of the Peace"* married John Rule and Elizabeth Jane Teague, 3 December 1849; signed: *"Dennis Mires J.P."*
    p. 74: *"I Dennis Mires an acting and duly commissioned Justice of the Peace"* married Joseph McMath to Glovina McDaniel, 12 December 1848.
    p. 75: : *"I Dennis Mires an acting and duly commissioned Justice of the Peace"* married Gibson Smith to Margaret Jones, 14 December 1848.
18. 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule, El Dorado Township, pp. 481–482, 4 November 1850, line #23: *"Dennis Myer;"* #24: Jack Stiles; Jackson Township, pp. 461–462, 11 October 1850, line #4: *"Jas Boatright."*
19. Union County AR County Court Record Book A (1830–1846), p. 311 (*"Brown Township established,"* 13 July 1846).
20. Union County AR County Court Record D, p. 226 (James *"Boatwright"* Bond as Constable, 6 April 1852; securities: George T. Stiles, John N. Stiles); LDS Film #8197438, Image #593. The Union County court minutes did not indicate who served as Boatright's approved securities after they initially rejected the Stiles brothers.

21. Baker, Russell Pierce. *Arkansas Township Atlas: A History of the Minor Civil Divisions & each Arkansas County.* Revised ed. Arkansas Genealogical Society, 1987, p. 197. Baker indicates that while in Union County, the township was named *"Browne,"* whereas in Columbia County, it was *"Brown."* The court records describing the township's creation in both counties spelled it as *"Brown,"* and that is the spelling used here.
22. 1851 Union County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8339822, Image #231, #3: *"Dinnis Myers;"* Image #242, #24: Leroy Stiles. It is unclear why James Boatright and George T. Stiles were not assessed 1851 Union County taxes, as other records show them as residents that year.
23. 1853 Union County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8339822, Image #267, #27: James Boatright (one white poll tax). 1853 Columbia County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8343025, Image #420, #11: *"Jaˢ Boatright;"* Image #437, #11: *"Denis Myres;"* Image #446, #10: *"John M. Styles"* [sic]; #11: *"George Styles;"* LDS Film #8197448, Image #13, p. 6, #15: James Boatright; Image #35, p. 28, #12: *"Dennis Myres;"* Image #60, p. 39, #6: John N. Stiles; #7: George Stiles. Multiple versions of Columbia County tax assessments from the 1850s survive, and references to both are listed.
24. Columbia County AR County Court Record Book A (1855–1858), p. 5 (Court session of 25 March 1853); p. 6 (*"Ordered by the Court that John M. Anderson Esqr. be and is hereby appointed apportioning Justice and William McWilliams and Dennis Mires are appointed Commissioners to apportion hands to the overseers of roads in and for Brown Township"*). The Columbia Court was using the townships previously created by Union County, as it had not yet officially created Brown Township.
25. United States Bureau of Land Management Tract Books, Vol. 45, LDS Film #7110440, Images #95–103, Township 17 South, Range 21 West.
26. Champagnolle, Arkansas Land Office Cash Entry #7414, *"Judge S. Miers,"* 24 November 1853 (NE¼ of SE¼ of Section 1, Township 17 South, Range 21 West, 40 acres @ $1.25/acre); Cash Entry #7415, *"Anson L. Miers,"* 24 November 1853 (NE¼ of SW¼ of Section 1, Township 17 South, Range 21 West, 40 acres @ $1.25/acre). The tract book has the Mires' second son's name as *"Anson L. Miers,"* but this was corrected by the time the government issued him a patent for the land. It identified him as *"Ansel L. Mires."*
27. 1854 Columbia County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8343025, Image #504, #5: Dennis Mires; LDS Film #8197448, Image #176, #5: Dennis Mires.
28. The deed in which the Mires sold their land near Magnolia does not appear to have been recorded in Columbia County, Arkansas.
29. Monroe, Land Office Cash Entry #18044: Dennis Mires, 17 May 1858 (SE¼ of SW¼ of Section 27, and E½ of NE¼ & SW¼ of NE¼ of Section 34, Township 23 North, Range 5 West; 159.75 acres @75¢/acre or $119.81).
30. Monroe, Land Office Cash Entry #19612: Dennis Mires, 17 January 1859 (NW¼ of NW¼ & NW¼ of SW¼ of Section 34, Township 23 North, Range 5 West; 79.91 acres @50¢/acre or $39.95); Cash Entry #20676, Dennis Mires, 27 August 1859 (NW¼ of NE¼ of Section 34, Township 23 North, Range 5 West; 39.96 acres @50¢/acre or $19.98).
31. 1860 Claiborne Parish LA Federal Census, *"1 Ward,"* P. O. Argus, p. 634/70, Dwelling #456, line #9: *"D. Myers"* (age: 55; Farmer; born: *"Ga"*); #10: *"E. Myers"* (age: 39; born: *"Va"*); p. 775/211, Dwelling #1407, line #13: *"D Myers"* (age: 50; Farmer; born: *"Ga"*); #11: *"E. Myers"* (age: 35; born: *"Ten"*). The household of Dennis and Elizabeth Mires was enumerated twice.
32. Columbia County AR Marriage Record A (1853–1865), p. 24 (*"George T. Styles"* to Mary Legg, 19 March 1854; performed by J. M. Anderson, J. P.); p. 26 (Rufus A. Stiles to Mary A. Anderson, 28 March 1854; performed by James M. Barnes J. P.).
33. Columbia County AR County Court Record Book A (1855–1858), p. 32 (Creation of Brown Township, 9 January 1854).
34. 1854 Columbia County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8343025, Image #481, #9: *"James Boatwright;"* Image #514, #16: George Stiles; Image #515, #10: J. N. Stiles; LDS Film #8197448, Image #152, #9: *"James Boatwright;"* Image #187, #16: George Stiles; Image #188, #10: J. N. Stiles.
35. 1855 Columbia County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8197448, Image #234, p. 9, #4: James Boatright; Image #287, p. 60, #17: George T. Stiles; Image #290, p. 63, #3: John N. Stiles.
36. Columbia County AR County Court Record Book A (1855–1858), p. 93 (Court session 8 January 1855); p. 94 (James *"Boatwright"* and John *"Styles"* appointed road overseers, 8 January 1855).
37. United States Bureau of Land Management Tract Books, Vol. 69, LDS Film #7110448, Images #205–213, Township 18 South, Range 19 West.
38. Gates, Paul. *History of Public Land Law Development.* Wm. W. Gaunt & Sons, Inc., Holmes Beach, Florida, 1968, pp. 224–226.
39. Champagnolle, Arkansas Land Office, Cash Entry #3948, James Boatright, 15 November 1855 ($80 for 160 acres @ $0.50/acre, for the NW¼ of Section 8, Township 18 South, Range 19 West).

40. Columbia County AR Deed & Mortgage Record Book B (1855–1857), pp. 130–132 (James and Jane E. Boatright to Steve Williams, 19 November 1855). The Boatrights sold the precise tract of land that James had purchased four days earlier at the land office.
41. 1856–1857 Columbia County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8343025, 1856, Image #651, #19: *"John M. Styles"* [sic–John N. Stiles]; 1857, Image #759, #7: *"George Styles;"* Image #751, #13: *"J. N. Styles;"* LDS Film #8624749, 1856, Image #127, p. 119, #18: *"John N. Stiles;"* Image #219, p. 84, #8: *"George Styles;"* Image #234, p. 86, #16: *"J. N. Styles;"* Image #317, #19: *"Jno. M. Stiles"* [sic]; LDS Film #8197448, 1857, Image #506, p. 74, #7: *"George Styles;"* Image #508–509, p. 76, #13: *"J. N. Styles."* James Boatright was not listed on the 1856 or 1857 Columbia County tax lists as were his brothers-in-law.
42. 1857 Union County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8339822, Image #446, #7: James Boatright. In addition to one white poll, Boatright was assessed for one horse or mare over two years of age valued @ $100 for which he owed state taxes of 17¢.
43. Union County AR Count Court Record E, p. 265 (1857 Delinquent Tax List, 6 April 1858). James Boatright owed 18¢ in state taxes and 62¢ in county taxes.
44. Hamburg City Cemetery (Hamburg, Ashley County AR), tombstone of William P. Boatright (10 Nov 1857–8 Feb 1901). The 1860, 1870, and 1900 federal census records list William P. Boatright's birth in Louisiana, indicating that James Boatright and Jane E. Stiles had returned with their family to his father's farm north of Farmerville by the time Jane gave birth to William in November 1857.
45. Champagnolle, Arkansas Land Office, Cash Entry #4225, George T. Stiles, 18 February 1856 ($40 for 80 acres @ $0.50/acre, for the W½ of SE¼ of Section 1, Township 18 South, Range 20 West).
46. Washington, Arkansas Land Office, Cash Entry #13089, Rufus A. Stiles, 28 January 1858 ($60 for 120 acres @ $0.50/acre, for the W½ of NW¼ & SE¼ of NW¼ of Section 14, Township 19 South, Range 21 West).
47. Columbia County AR Deed Record C (1857–1859), pp. 295–296 (George Stiles and Mary Ann Stiles to David M. Emerson, 26 December 1857). Washington, Arkansas Land Office, Cash Entry #14459, George T. Stiles, 2 August 1859 ($20 for 40 acres @ $0.50/acre, for the SW¼ of SE¼ of Section 1, Township 19 South, Range 21 West). George and Mary Ann Stiles sold the precise tract that he had purchased in 1856 at the Champagnolle Land Office.
48. 1858–1859 Columbia County AR Tax Record, LDS Film #8624749, 1858, Image #446, p. 91, #14: *"J. N. Styles;"* LDS Film #8343026, 1859, Image #178, p. 106, #6: J. N. Stiles. Tax records for John N. Stiles for the years 1853–1857 are given earlier.
49. 1860 Union Parish LA Federal Census, P. O. Farmerville, p. 587/82, Dwelling #528, line #23: James Boatrite [sic] (age: 38; Farmer; born: *"Ark"*); #24: J. E. Boatrite [sic] (age: 36; *"House Keeper;"* born: *"Tenn"*); #32: John Stiles (age: 76; Farmer; born: *"Va"*); #33: Becca Stiles (age: 66; *"House Keeper;"* born: *"Va"*).
50. For more details on Jane E. Stiles Boatright, see the biography of James Boatright and Jane E. Stiles.
51. Compiled Military Service Record, J. S. Miers (private), Co. G, 25 Louisiana Infantry (Confederate), Civil War. His military file states that Mires enlisted on 15 March 1862 at Lisbon, in Claiborne Parish, and that he died at Columbus, Mississippi on 26 June 1862. It does not state his cause of death. There is no known military record of Ansel L. Mires, but he completely disappears from the historical record after 1860. He may have died of natural causes in the 1860s, but given his age, if he survived until 1862, he could likely have not escaped Confederate military service.
52. 1867 Hunt County TX Voter Registry, LDS Film #8504518, Image #758–759, p. 370, #2: *"Dennis Myers"* (registered 2 August 1867; Precinct #1; Time of Residence in State: 2 years; Time of Residence in County/Precinct: 1 year; born: Georgia). Hunt County TX List of Registered Voters, LDS Film #8152026, Image #18, p. 13, #453: *"Dennis Myers"* (date: 2 August 1867; born: *"Ga"*); Image #34, p. 29, #1037: *"Dennis Myers"* (date: 19 November 1869; born: *"Ga"*). 1868–1869 Hunt County TX Tax Rolls, LDS Film #4653086, Image #720 (1868), #739: Dennis Myres; #Image 775 (1869), #672: Dennis Myres.
53. National Archives and Records Administration, M1104 Record Group 123, Eastern Cherokee Applications of the U. S. Court of Claims, 1906–1909, #35535: James William Boatright, received 21 August 1907. Boatright gave his birthdate as 25 June 1866 and birth location as Johnson County, Texas. Despite his statement regarding his birthdate, Boatright's precise year of birth is uncertain. His tombstone is inscribed 25 June 1870, but this conflicts with census records of 1870, 1880, and 1900, which place his birth in 1868. See Beulah Cemetery (Calhoun, Ouachita Parish LA), tombstone of *"James W. Boatright"* (25 Jun 1870–4 Jul 1948).
54. 1870 Hunt County TX Federal Census, Mortality Schedule, LDS Film #4300469, Image 526, Precinct No. 2, p. 1, line #12: Rebecca Stiles (age: 78; widowed; born: Virginia; death: October 1869; occupation: *"At home;"* cause of death: *"Palpitation of the Heart"*). After the document was completed, someone drew a single line through *"Palpitation"* and wrote *"Dis,"* presumably for "disease." The leftmost column of this document has the heading: *"Number of the Family, as given in the 2d column of Schedule 1,"* and the number beside Rebecca Stiles is 150. This matches the household number of her daughter, Elizabeth Stiles Mires, on the population schedule. See 1870 Hunt

County TX Federal Census, Precinct No. 2, P. O. White Rock, Texas, p. 20, line #29, Dwelling #151, Family #150: Dennis Mires (age: 63; Farmer; born: Georgia); line #30: Elizabeth Mires (age: 48; Keeping House; born: Virginia).

Epilogue

1. Surry County VA Order Book (1815–1820), p. 427 (Court session 26 May 1818); pp. 429–430 *("Thomas Bailey jun"* vs. John Collier and George C. Collier, *"In debt"*); Order Book (1820–1822), p. 151 (Court session 29 March 1821); pp. 152–153 (Miles Burgess vs. John Collier, *"In debt"*). In 1818, the Collier brothers owned Baily £51 12s 10d plus costs, but the Court ordered that the debt be discharged upon payment of £25 12s 5d plus interest. In 1821, Burgess sued John Collier, who failed to appear before the Court. George C. Collier served as the *"common bail"* for his brother, and the Court ordered both be confirmed for the debt of $25.11¼ plus interest.
2. 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Agricultural Schedule, El Dorado Township, pp. 481–482, 4 November 1850, line #23: *"Dennis Myer;"* #24: Jack Stiles; Jackson Township, pp. 461–462, 11 October 1850, line #4: *"Ja^{s} Boatright."*
3. Champagnolle, Arkansas Land Office, Cash Entry #2847, Leroy Stiles, 16 October 1854 ($50 for 40 acres @ $1.25/acre, for the NW¼ of NE¼ of Section 29, Township 19 South, Range 15 West); Cash Entry #2790, Leroy Stiles, 13 July 1854 ($200 for 160 acres @ $1.25/acre for the NW ¼ of Section 29, Township 19 South, Range 15 West).

Children of John Stiles Jr. & Rebecca Cooper

1. Various pieces of circumstantial evidence identify Frederick C. Stiles as the eldest son of Jack and Becca Stiles, including:
   a. 1830 Franklin County TN Federal Census, p. 64, line #21: *"John Stiles Senr;"* #26: John Stiles. The younger man's household includes a male aged 15–20, matching the age of Frederick C. Stiles.
   b. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, line #7: Dennis Myres; #8: *"Ja^{s}. Dunbar;"* #9: *"John Styles Senr;"* line #10: *"John Styles Jr."* After arriving in Arkansas, the use of *"Sr."* and *"Jr."* switched, for Jack Stiles' second son, John N. Stiles, had now become an adult. The 1840 household of Jack Stiles, listed by the enumerator as *"John Styles Senr,"* included a male aged 20–30, matching Frederick's age.
   c. 1841–1843 Union County AR Tax Lists. References are listed above and below and show Frederick C. Stiles living in Union County with John Stiles Jr. and John N. Stiles prior to the arrival of Leroy.
   d. Union County AR Deed Record A (1830–1845), p. 215 (James Boatright to Jane Stiles, 16 October 1842); p. 232 (Frederick Stiles to Nancy Stiles, 1 March 1843). These marriage records show that Baptist minister John Scarborough married both Jane and Frederick Stiles in Jackson Township within six months of each other.
   e. Documentation given above show that Rebecca Cooper Stiles was the daughter of Frederick Cooper, making it natural that she would name one of her elder sons after her father, *"Frederick Cooper Stiles."* No document specifically lists his middle name, but it seems virtually certain that *"Cooper"* was his middle name.
2. Various pieces of circumstantial evidence identify John N. Stiles as the second eldest son of Jack and Becca Stiles, including:
   a. 1830 Franklin County TN Federal Census, p. 64, line #21: *"John Stiles Senr;"* #26: John Stiles. The younger man's household includes a male aged 10–15, matching the age of John N. Stiles.
   b. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, line #7: Dennis Myres; #8: *"Ja^{s}. Dunbar;"* #9: *"John Styles Senr;"* line #10: *"John Styles Jr."*
   c. 1841 Union County AR Tax List, LDS Film #8339821, Images #759–760, line #16: Dennis Myers; Images #766–767, #23: *"Stiles Frederic;"* #24: *"Stiles Jno. Sen;"* #25: *"Stiles Jno Jr."*
   d. Union County AR County Court Record D, p. 226 (James *"Boatwright"* Bond as Constable, 6 April 1852; securities: George T. Stiles, John N. Stiles); LDS Film #8197438, Image #593.
   e. 1853–1858 Columbia County AR Tax Lists. References for these are given above and below. They show John N. Stiles living in the same area as George T. Stiles, Rufus A. Stiles, James Boatright, and Dennis Stiles.
3. Union County AR Deed Record A (1830–1845), p. 123 (*"Dennice Mires"* to *"Elisabeth Stiles,"* 31 May 1840). 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, line #7: Dennis Myres; #8: *"Ja^{s}. Dunbar;"* #9: *"John Styles Senr;"* line #10: *"John Styles Jr."* 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #418, line #24: Dennis Myers (age: 40; Farmer; born: *"G^{a}"*); #25: Elizabeth Myers (age: 28; born: *"V^{a}"*); #419, line #31: Jack Stiles (age 66; Farmer; born *"V^{a};"*); line #32: Rebecca Stiles (age 56; born *"V^{a}"*). See also the 1870 Hunt County Texas Federal Census referenced above, together with the Mortality Schedule. These records show that Elizabeth's maiden name was *"Stiles,"* that her household adjoined that of Jack and Becca Stiles in 1840 and 1850, and that Rebecca Stiles died in October 1869 while living in the household of Elizabeth Stiles Mires. These records document that Elizabeth was the daughter of Jack Stiles and Becca Cooper.
4. 1830 Franklin County TN Federal Census, p. 64, line #21: *"John Stiles Senr;"* #26: John Stiles. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, line #7: Dennis Myres; line #9: *"John Styles Senr."* In 1830, the

household of John Stiles Jr. includes a male aged 5–10, but his 1840 household does not enumerate this male. The adjoining household of Dennis does include an extra male aged 20–30 who could possibly have been an unknown son of Jack and Becca Stiles. This male could possibly be an unknown Stiles son.

5. Union County AR Deed Record A (1830–1845), p. 215 (James Boatright to Jane Stiles, 16 October 1842). 1860 Union Parish LA Federal Census, P. O. Farmerville, p. 587/82, Dwelling #528, line #23: James Boatrite [sic] (age: 38; Farmer; born: *"Ark"*); #24: J. E. Boatrite [sic] (age: 36; *"House Keeper;"* born: *"Tenn"*); #32: John Stiles (age: 76; Farmer; born: *"Va"*); #33: Becca Stiles (age: 66; *"House Keeper;"* born: *"Va"*). Documentation that Jane's maiden name was *"Stiles,"* and that Jane and Becca lived in her household in 1860 verify that she was their daughter.
6. 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #419, line #31: Jack Stiles (age 66; Farmer; born *"V^{a};"*); line #32: Rebecca Stiles (age 56; born *"V^{a}"*); line #33: *"D. T. Stiles"* [sic] (age: 24; Farmer; born: *"Tenn"*); line #34: Rufus A. Stiles (age: 18; Farmer; born: *"Tenn"*).
7. 1830 Franklin County TN Federal Census, p. 64, line #21: *"John Stiles Senr;"* #26: John Stiles. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, line #7: Dennis Myres; line #9: *"John Styles Senr."* In 1830, the household of John Stiles Jr. includes two male children aged under five years. One was George T. Stiles, but we have no further record of the other. Jack Stiles' 1840 household does not enumerate this male, and so if he were an additional son of Jack and Becca born between 1825 and 1830, it appears that he died between 1830 and 1840.
8. 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #419, line #31: Jack Stiles (age 66; Farmer; born *"V^{a};"*); line #32: Rebecca Stiles (age 56; born *"V^{a}"*); line #33: *"D. T. Stiles"* [sic] (age: 24; Farmer; born: *"Tenn"*); line #34: Rufus A. Stiles (age: 18; Farmer; born: *"Tenn"*).
9. Union County AR Deed Record A (1830–1845), p. 232 (Frederick Stiles to Nancy Stiles, 1 March 1843). Baptist preacher John Scarborough performed the ceremony, and in his return to the Union County Court, he wrote, *"I Do hereby Certify that I did Solemnize the Holy Rights of Matrimony between Frederick Stiles 27 years and Nancy Stiles 16 years they being of Lawfull* [sic] *age…"* If Frederick Stiles was twenty-seven years of age on 1 March 1843, his birth occurred in 1815 or 1816.
10. 1870 Boone County AR Federal Census, Jefferson Township, P. O. Mt. Pleasant, p. 437b/7, Dwelling #51, line #14: *"Jno. N. Styles"* (age: 51; Farmer; born: *"Va"*); #15: *"S. A. Styles"* (age: 48; House Keeper; born: *"Va"*). 1880 Logan County AR Federal Census, Six Mile Township, ED #98, p. 292a/58, Dwelling #518, line #29: John N. Stiles (age: 62; Farmer; born: Virginia); #30: Sarah Stiles (age: 58; Keeping house; born: Tennessee).
11. Union Hill Cemetery (Cooke County TX), tombstone of *"Elizabeth Wife of Dennis Mires"* (9 Nov 1822–28 Feb 1888).
12. Union County AR Deed Record A (1830–1845), p. 123 (*"Dennice Mires"* to *"Elisabeth Stiles,"* 31 May 1840).
13. Green Elm Cemetery (Jack County TX), tombstone of *"Dennis Mires"* (5 Feb 1803–12 Nov 1883).
14. 1830 Franklin County TN Federal Census, p. 64, line #21: *"John Stiles Senr;"* #26: John Stiles.
15. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, #9: *"John Styles Senr."*
16. The 1850–1900 federal census records give conflicting information regarding Jane's birthplace. While the 1850 and 1860 enumerators recorded Jane's birth in Tennessee, the 1870 enumerator gave Virginia as her birthplace. The 1880 enumerator clearly did not have the correct information, listing her birthplace as Arkansas, her father's birthplace as Georgia, and her mother's birthplace as Mississippi. However, the 1900 enumerator listed the birth of Fannie's mother as occurring in Virginia:
    - 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 279a, Dwelling #191, line #24: James Boatright (age: 28; Farmer; born: Ark); #25: Jane E. Boatright (age: 24; born: Tenn).
    - 1860 Union Parish LA Federal Census, P.O. Farmerville, p. 587, Dwelling #528, line #23: *"James Boatrite"* (age: 38; Farmer; born: Ark); #24: *"J. E. Boatrite"* (age: 36; female; Housekeeper; born: *"Tenn"*); #32: *"John Stiles"* (age: 76; Farmer; born: Va); #33: *"Becca Stiles"* (age: 66; *"HouseKeeper;"* born: Va).
    - 1870 Union Parish LA Federal Census, Ward No. 3, p. 66a/34, Dwelling #229, line #27: *"Jane Boatwright"* (age: 40; Keeping House; born: Virginia).
    - 1880 Union Parish LA Federal Census, Ward No. 3, ED #87, p. 471b/35, Dwelling #311, line #48: Jane E. Boatright (age: 50; widowed; Keeping house; born: *"(Arks);"* father born: *"(Ga);"* mother born: *"(Miss)"*).
    - 1900 Union Parish LA Federal Census, Ward 1, Precinct 2, ED #116, p. 20a, Dwelling #25, line #23: Fannie Albritton (born: Apr 1861; age: 39; wife; born: Louisiana; father born: Louisiana; mother born: Virginia).
17. Union County AR Deed Book A, p. 215 (James Boatright to Jane Stiles, 16 October 1842).
18. 1830 Franklin County TN Federal Census, p. 64, line #21: *"John Stiles Senr;"* #26: John Stiles. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, #9: *"John Styles Senr."* 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #419, line #31: Jack Stiles (age: 66; Farmer; born: *"V^{a}"*); #32: Rebecca Stiles (age: 56; born: *"V^{a}"*); #33: *"D. T. Stiles"* [sic] (age: 24; Farmer; born: Tenn); #34: *"Rufus A. Stiles"* (age: 18; Farmer; born: *"Tenn"*). The precise source of the death date of George Thomas Stiles is unknown, other than from family records. No Columbia County court record has been found to confirm it.

19. Columbia County AR Marriage Record A (1853–1865), p. 24 (*"George T. Styles"* to Mary Legg, 19 March 1854; performed by J. M. Anderson, J. P.); p. 26 (Rufus A. Stiles to Mary A. Anderson, 28 March 1854; performed by James M. Barnes J. P.).
20. 1830 Franklin County TN Federal Census, p. 64, line #21: *"John Stiles Senr;"* #26: John Stiles.
21. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, #9: *"John Styles Senr."*
22. 1840 Union County AR Federal Census, Jackson Township, p. 222, #9: *"John Styles Senr."* 1850 Union County AR Federal Census, El Dorado Township, p. 236b, Dwelling #419, line #31: Jack Stiles (age: 66; Farmer; born: *"V^{a}"*); #32: Rebecca Stiles (age: 56; born: *"V^{a}"*); #33: *"D. T. Stiles"* [sic] (age: 24; Farmer; born: Tenn); #34: *"Rufus A. Stiles"* (age: 18; Farmer; born: *"Tenn"*). The second reference for Rufus' year of birth comes from his military record referenced below. On 31 March 1862, he was twenty-nine years of age. If his age on the 1850 federal census was accurate, this suggests that his birth occurred between April and December 1832.
23. Columbia County AR Marriage Record A (1853–1865), p. 26 (Rufus A. Stiles to Mary A. Anderson, 28 March 1854; performed by James M. Barnes J. P.).

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