Capt. David Sebrell

(1758/1760–1831)

of

Blackwater Swamp, Surry County, Virginia,

Son of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. & Elizabeth Faulcon



by Timothy Dean Hudson

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Early Life in Virginia & North Carolina

Capt. David Sebrell was the son of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. and Elizabeth Faulcon, making David the grandson of the wealthy Surry County tobacco farmer, Nicholas Faulcon Sr. [1]. In 1782, David lived in his father's Surry County, Virginia household as a male over twenty-one years. He was probably the unnamed male above twenty-one who lived in his father's 1783 household. This puts his birth at least a few years prior to 1762, probably between 1758 and 1760 [2].

David Sebrell's birth around 1760 meant that he was of prime military age during the 1778–1781 climax of the Revolutionary War. Because Surry County militia rolls have not survived and David was financially ineligible for a pension, no documentation of his Revolutionary War service exists.

On 7 May 1783, David Sebrell and his family's neighbor, Burwell Sharp, together witnessed a transfer of property left by Edward Petway in his will to his grandchildren, the children of Joseph Hart. Both Sebrell and Sharp appeared before the Surry County Court on May 27th to prove Hart's will, with Sebrell's uncle, Capt. Jacob Faulcon, recording the document as Surry Clerk of Court.

A few months later, on August 4th, David and his father witnessed a deed of gift made by Edward Darwell to Jesse Cocke. Both David and Nathaniel Sebrell appeared before the Surry County Court the following December 23rd to attest to Darwell's signature [3].

David Sebrell does not appear on either the 1784 or 1785 Surry County Personal Property Tax records, but in 1786, he paid taxes on one horse. In 1787, he paid only his poll tax, and on July 23rd that year, he witnessed the sale of an 83½-acre tract of land on Johnchecohunk Swamp from Joseph and Mary Holt to John Andrews, signing his name in a manner that suggests a better education than most of his contemporaries:



On 30 July 1787, David Sebrell witnessed the sale of a 48½-acre tract of land in Surry County, but he left shortly afterwards and did not pay Surry taxes between 1788 and 1794 [4].

In the early 1770s, Nathaniel Sebrell's brother-in-law, John Faulcon Sr., moved across the provincial line and settled in Bute County, North Carolina. He served in the North Carolina Militia against the British and Tories during the early stages of the Revolutionary War [5]. Faulcon played an instrumental role in the 1779 division of old Bute County into Warren and Franklin Counties, with the North Carolina General Assembly appointing him as a town commissioner of Warrenton, the new county seat. Local citizens elected Faulcon as their first senator to represent them in the

North Carolina General Assembly, and in the mid-1780s, he served on the North Carolina Council of State and as a commissioner to extend navigation of the Roanoke River [6].

After leaving Surry County, Virginia in mid- or late 1787, David Sebrell followed his uncle to North Carolina. The 1790 census lists David Sebrell as the sole member of his household in Franklin County, while John Faulcon still lived in the adjoining Warren [7]. Sebrell soon joined his uncle in Warren County, and on 30 December 1791, he paid £200 *"current money of N. Carolina"* for a 675-acre tract of land there. David Sebrell did not retain possession of the large tract for long, selling it for the same price he paid on 26 July 1792 [8].

While living near his uncle in Warren County, North Carolina, David Sebrell met and married Sarah Stuart Ward (1775/1780–c1808), with the marriage reportedly occurring on 6 April 1794 [9]. Sarah Stuart Ward was the youngest daughter of Benjamin Ward by his first wife. His 1788 will contains a detailed and unusually explicit bequest to Sarah:

> *To my Daughter Sarah Stuart Ward to her Husband if she marries, I lend my Two Negroes Dinah and Violet, and their Increase if they have any, and on the Death of my said Daughter Sarah Stuart and her Husband if she Marries, I order that the Said Negroes Dinah and Violet and their Increase if they have any, be Equally Divided between their Lawful Issue by that Marriage. But if they die without such Issue, then the Said Negroes and their Increase if any to be Equally Divided between the Children of Marcellus Jordan by his now wife My Daughter Martha, and it is my Will and desire that the Said Marcellus Jordan and his wife Martha do on my Decease take into their Care and Keeping my said Daughter Sarah Stuart Ward, and the Negroes above mentioned and that till the Time my said Daughter Marries or comes of Age They for their Care in Feeding, Lodging, Cloathing* [sic]*, and Schooling my said Daughter Sarah Stuart Ward, and Feeding, Cloathing* [sic]*, Etc. the said Negroes till my said Daughter Comes of Age or Marries, shall have the Benefit of the Said Negroes Labour* [sic]*. Also I give to my Said Daughter Sarah Stuart Ward One good New Bed and Furniture, also my Sorrel Mare, and saddle and Bridle.*

Benjamin Ward's death in late October or November 1788 left Sarah an underage orphan. Evidence indicates that, as their father directed, her sister, Martha Ward Jordan, cared for her until her 1794 marriage [10].

Soon after their marriage, David and Sarah Sebrell returned to his birthplace on the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County, Virginia. They were not yet living there in 1794, but by 1795, they had settled on his father's farm with the two enslaved females her father had left her in his will, Violet and Dinah. David paid his property taxes on 25 April 1795, including his own poll tax, that on Violet and Dinah, and the tax on his two horses, mares, or mules [11].

The most enduring documentary thread in David Sebrell's life concerns Violet, one of the enslaved women inherited by his wife. David Sebrell paid taxes on two slaves over sixteen in 1796

and three over sixteen in 1797. Between 1798 and 1803, he paid taxes on Violet, and between 1801 and 1803, he paid taxes on one slave aged above twelve and under sixteen, Bob, presumably Violet's son [12]. According to Benjamin Ward's will, David had use of Violet and her children during his lifetime, and so she presumably remained with him until his death in 1831.

In January 1843, the Surry County Court decreed that John N. Sebrell, David's son [13]:

> *...is exempted from the payment of County and parish levies, and public Taxes, on his slave Violet who is aged and infirm.*

Following John N. Sebrell's death in early 1844, his estate's inventory did not list Violet, as she had no monetary value due to her advanced age. On October 29th, John's sister, Elizabeth Faulcon Sebrell Watkins, placed the lowest bid of $90 for compensation from his estate for *"Keeping Old woman Violet."* In 1850, Elizabeth Watkins owned a female slave aged eighty years, presumably Violet, given that she did not own a female slave in that age range in 1840. In 1860, Elizabeth owned an enslaved female aged ninety-five. Presumably this is Violet, indicating that she survived until almost the age of one hundred years [14]. It is not known what became of Dinah, but she presumably died in the latter 1790s.

Through these records—land, tax, guardianship, and the long life of Violet—David Sebrell's presence along the Blackwater emerges with unusual clarity for a man of his era.

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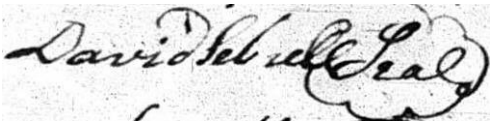
Civic Affairs & Military Service

Upon his 1795 return to the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County, David Sebrell settled on his father's lands and farmed them for the remainder of his life. From 1795 through the late 1820s, he became one of the most frequently recorded civic actors in Surry County, remaining active in local affairs, assisting his relatives and neighbors with legal obligations, and performing various civic duties and military service:

23 Jun 1795 – The Surry County Court recommended David Sebrell be appointed Ensign of Capt. Blunt's Company of Surry County Militia *"in the room of"* his brother, James Sebrell, who the Court now recommended to the rank of Lieutenant. Sebrell's commission as Ensign arrived from the Governor's Office within a few months, and on September 22nd, he presented the commission to the Surry Court and took the oath of office [1].

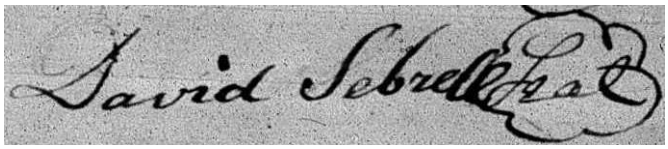
24 Oct 1797 – The Surry County Court ordered three of David Sebrell, John Stiles (Sebrell's brother-in-law), John Tillott, and Edmund Carsley to appraise the personal estate of the recently-deceased William Rose Sr., a neighbor of Sebrell's. The three besides Sebrell acted as appraisers of the Rose estate, conducting the inventory on October 28th [2].

27 Feb 1798 – David Sebrell petitioned the Surry County Court, requesting that they appoint him as guardian to his nephews and nieces, Mary, Walter, Henry, Benjamin, Betsy, and Nathaniel Spratley, orphans of his deceased sister, Susanna Sebrell, and her husband, Benjamin Spratley. He signed his $5000 guardian's bond as [3]:



David Sebrell's Spratley nieces and nephews probably lived with him and his father, and David kept careful accounts of his expenditures of the Spratley monies through 1817 [4].

27 Feb 1798 – While he was at Surry Courthouse handling the affairs of his orphaned nieces and nephews, David Sebrell served as security for his neighbor, William Spratley Jr., on his guardian's bond for his younger brother, Walter Spratley Jr. This document gives another sample of Sebrell's signature made on the same day [5]:



29 Mar 1798 – The Surry Court recommended the promotion of David Sebrell to the rank of Lieutenant in Capt. Richard Blunt's company of Surry Militia *"in the room of James Sebrell who has removed out of the county."* On July 24th, *"David Sebrell Gent."* presented his commission to

the Surry County Court from the Virginia Governor appointing him as lieutenant in the 71st Regiment, 2nd Battalion, 8th Brigade, 4th Division, Virginia Militia for Surry County [6].

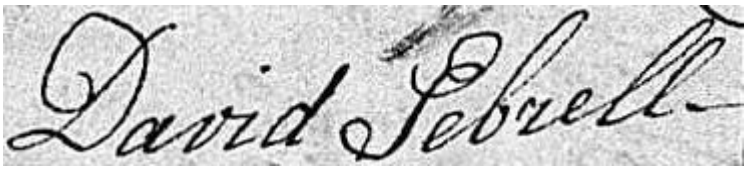
26 Feb 1799 – Surry County Court appointed David Sebrell *"Surveyor of the roads in Archibald Cocks precinct,"* replacing Burwell Sharp, who the court discharged from the office [7].

1799 – David Sebrell witnessed the will of Richard Barker on March 13th, and on April 23rd, David appeared before the Surry County Court with Barker's widow, Nancy, to attest to his signature on the will. That same day, David served as security on Nancy's $5000 bond as executrix of her husband's will. A few days later, on April 27th, David and his father, Nathaniel, appraised Richard Barker's estate [8].

1799 – On August 18th, Burwell Sharp, a longtime Sebrell neighbor, wrote his will, stating

> *My will and desire is that my Friends Archibald Cocke, James S. Lane, Archibald Davis and David Sebrell, or any two of them (when requested so to do by my Executors or by any of the legatees herein mentioned) do lay off and set apart my wife's part of the land and slaves, and make equal distribution of the remainder of the slaves agreeable to the proceeding Clauses of this Will…*

Sharp died within the next two months, for his executor filed the will with the Surry Court on 22 October 1799. On December 18th, David Sebrell and Joseph and David Williamson appraised Burwell Sharp's estate, which amounted to £1035 9s 8d. Sebrell signed the inventory as [9]:



By the turn of the century, Sebrell's civic responsibilities expanded significantly.

1800 – On March 25, the Surry County Court appointed David Sebrell as the captain of the Surry County Militia following the death of Capt. Richard Blunt. On August 26th, David Sebrell appeared before the Surry Court:

> *David Sebrell…produced in Court a Commission from the Governor under the seal of the Commonwealth bearing date the 30th day of April 1800 appointing him Captain of a Company of Militia in this County, and thereupon he took the several oaths prescribed by Law, his said appointment is therefore made effectual.*

Four days later, Gabriel's Conspiracy erupted in Richmond, Virginia in which a group of enslaved men planned to take control of Richmond and negotiate for their freedom. A combination of a torrential rainstorm and a warning by two slaves of the plot thwarted the

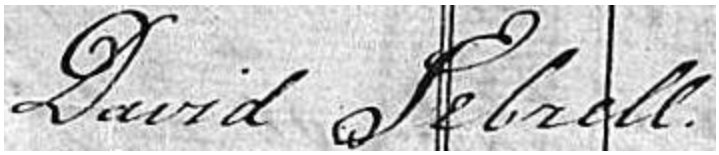
plans, but Virginia Governor James Monroe called out the state militia to patrol and arrest conspirators [10].

1801 – In early 1801, citizens of the Birch Island District elected David Sebrell as their Overseer of the Poor, the elected official that oversaw distribution of funds for the region's destitute residents. On April 28th, *"David Sebrell Gt"* [gentleman] appeared before the Surry County Court and took his oath of office as Overseer of the Poor. On the same day, he *"made return of a Patrole performed by him and others to which he made oath"* to the Court. Later that year, on October 27th, the Court ordered payments issued to David Sebrell for $1.00 for 24 hours of patrol [11]. In the aftermath of Gabriel's Conspiracy, the Virginia General Assembly ordered regular patrols throughout the state to prevent slaves from congregating without a pass, and Sebrell was conducting one of these regular patrols.

27 Apr 1802 – The Surry Court appointed Archibald Cocke, James S. Lane, Archibald Davis, and David Sebrell, or any two of them, to sell Ephraim, an enslaved man, on a credit of twelve months and equally divide the proceeds among various siblings of Nancy Sharp [12].

7 Jan 1803 – David Sebrell, his father, Nathaniel Sebrell, and John Watkins (school master) appraised the estate of the Sebrell's neighbor, John Watkins Sr. [13]. In 1815, David married the elder Watkins' daughter, Anna Howard Watkins, and about a year later, David's eldest daughter, Elizabeth Faulcon Sebrell, married Watkin's elder son, John Watkins.

12 Dec 1803 – David Sebrell, Thomas Ellis, and John G. Sharp appraised the estate of Benjamin Cocke. The original inventory papers show Sebrell 's signature on the appraisal [14]:

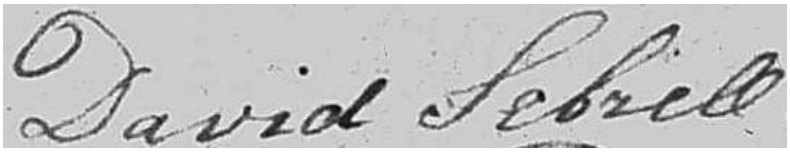


26 Jun 1804 – The Surry County Court appointed David Sebrell and Langley C. Wills to examine the accounts filed by Richard Drewry as administrator of the estate of James Drewry, deceased, and verify their accuracy. Sebrell signed the document as [15]:



1805–1806 – On 22 April 1805, David and Nathaniel Sebrell's neighbor, Frederick Cooper, appointed *"my friend David Sebrell"* and Cooper's wife, Elizabeth, as the executors of his will. On 28 January 1806, David Sebrell presented the will to the Surry County Court, which

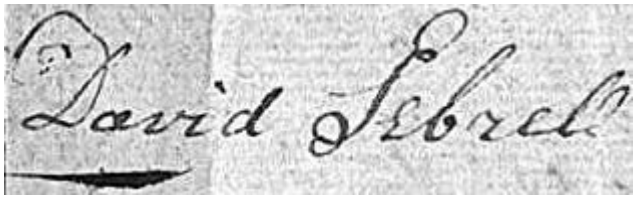
appointed him as sole executor after he signed a $1000 bond to secure his service as executor. David signed his bond as:



A few months later, Sebrell oversaw the court-appointed appraisers' work as they conducted the inventory of Cooper's estate on March 4th, signing his name as:



Ten days later, on March 14th, Sebrell conducted a sale of Cooper's estate, himself purchasing a *"goard"* of buckshot for 1 shilling, 2 pence. The sale netted total proceeds of £35 4s 8½d for Cooper's estate, and Sebrell submitted his accounting of the sale to the Surry Court on 28 July 1807, signed as [16]:



9 Dec 1805 – David Sebrell, together with his neighbors Robert Ellis and John Velvin, appraised the estate of Thomas Barker Jr. [17].

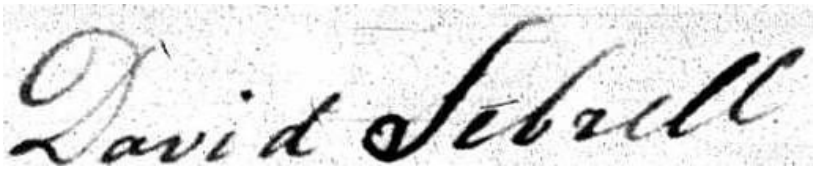
5 Jul 1806 – David Sebrell witnessed his neighbor, Elizabeth Watkins, the widow of John Watkins Sr., selling two 100-acre tracts and one 27-acre tract of land [18].

15 Dec 1806 – David Sebrell appraised the estate of John Watkins, referred to in the records as *"Schoolmaster"* to distinguish him from the John Watkins Sr., Sebrell's neighbor who had died a few years earlier. The schoolteacher was probably either a nephew or cousin of his John Watkins Sr. [19].

26 May 1807 – The Surry County Court heard the case of Benjamin Cocke, who had previously been arrested for gambling. Cocke pleaded not guilty, but the county attorney insisted he was guilty. This prompted the Court to impanel a jury, and David Sebrell was seated on the jury. After hearing evidence, the jury found Benjamin Cocke *"guilty of Gambling, but not to considerably amount"* [20].

27 Oct 1807 – Rebecca Cooper, orphan of Frederick Cooper, appeared before the Surry County Court, *"…and with the approbation of the Court made choice of David Sebrell for her guardian."*

Sebrell's brother, Nicholas Sebrell, served on the bench as one of the court justices that day. As required by law, David Sebrell posted a $1000 bond for his service as Rebecca's guardian, signing his name on the bond as:



John Velvin served as the security on Sebrell's guardian's bond [21].

In 1800, Velvin had married Frederick Cooper's cousin, Permelia Cooper [22]. Velvin began serving as the local constable in 1805 [23], and in 1809, he took over as commander of the Surry County Militia company when David Sebrell stepped down after nine years [24]. During the War of 1812, Capt. Velvin's company was mobilized against the British threat [25]. Beginning in 1817, Velvin began serving as the major of the Surry County Militia [26].

21 Jun 1808 – David Sebrell and John Watkins Jr. witnessed the will of Cherry Sharp Ellis Watkins. Cherry had married Isaac Ellis in 1781, and in 1787, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. had sold them a portion of his 400-acre farm. Isaac Ellis died shortly afterwards, and in 1798, Cherry had remarried to John Watkins, the schoolmaster [27].

28 Feb 1809 – On 3 November 1808, John Newsum, a resident of Cabin Point, wrote his will, naming as his executors his wife, Catherine (Katy), and *"my friend Walter Spratley Senr,"* the nephew of David Sebrell. On the following February 28th, Spratley and Katy Newsum appeared before the Surry County Court to file his will. After the witnesses proved it, Spratley and Katy Newsum petitioned the Court and

> *…refused to take upon themselves the burthen…of the execution of the same, but prayed administration with the said will annexed, the same granted…*

David Sebrell served as security on his nephew's $10,000 administrator's bond [28].

25 Jul 1809 – The Surry County Court recommended to the Virginia Governor that John Velvin be commissioned as Captain of the 71st Regiment Virginia Militia for Surry County, *"in the room of David Sebrell who has resigned."* Sebrell had served as captain of the Surry County Militia for the previous nine years [29].

1810 – The Marshal of Virginia tasked to take the Third United States Census appointed David Sebrell as his assistant to conduct the 1810 Federal Census in Surry County [30].

1811 – The Surry County Court ordered David Sebrell to serve as one of the commissioners appointed to review the administrators and executors' accounts filed with the Court [31].

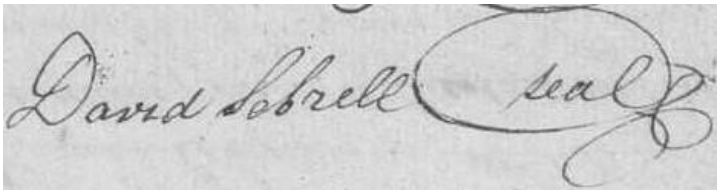
3 Dec 1812 – David Sebrell presented three receipts to Thomas Ellis, administrator of John Watkins, the schoolmaster. Ellis made these cash payments to David Sebrell: 12s, £4 13s, and £4 7s 6¼p. On the same day, Sebrell paid a debt to the Watkins estate of £9 10s 10½p [32].

7 Jan 1815 – David Sebrell appraised the slaves belonging to the estate of John Watkins Sr. *"at the New Design,"* a local tavern and community gathering place [33].

8 Dec 1815 – David Sebrell, Richard Dewell, and Thomas Bailey Jr. appraised the estate of Benjamin Bilbro [34].

22 Apr 1816 – In his will written on 1 September 1802, David Sebrell's neighbor, John Watkins Sr., left one slave to each of his daughters, with the bulk of his slaves left to his wife, Elizabeth. At her death, Watkins directed that the slaves be equally divided between his two sons, Robert Henry and John Watkins Jr. Elizabeth Watkins died in 1813, and in November 1815, Robert H. Watkins petitioned the Surry County Court to have the twelve slaves divided between him and his brother. On November 27th, the Court ordered that David Sebrell serve as one of the commissioners to equally divide the slaves. Sebrell and the other commissioners, Thomas Bailey Jr. and Edwin Rodgers, completed their division on 22 April 1816. The Watkins brothers were Sebrell's brothers-in-law, as he had married their sister, Anna Howard Watkins, in March 1815. About 1818, David's brother-in-law, John Watkins Jr., became his son-in-law, for he married David's eldest daughter, Elizabeth Faulcon Sebrell [35].

23 Mar 1818 – David Sebrell signed as the security on the marriage bond of his brother-in-law, Robert Henry Watkins, for his marriage to Elizabeth S. Sharp [36]:

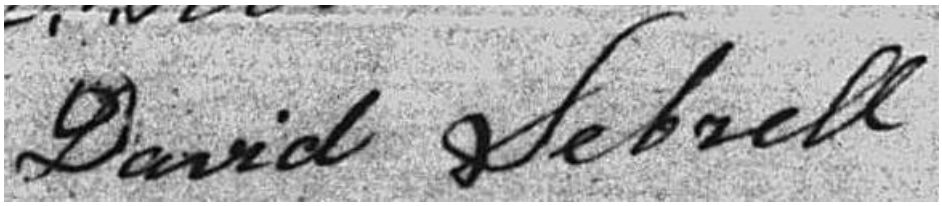


29 Oct 1824 – David Sebrell, along with Jesse P. Warren and Archer B. Holdsworth, appraised the estate of Sarah White Sharp Ellis, the widow of Sebrell's former neighbor, Burwell Sharp [37].

28 Aug 1829 – David Sebrell and his son, James W. Sebrell, witnessed the signature of their neighbor, Jesse P. Warren, on his will. Mr. Warren had appointed another of David's sons, John Nicholas Sebrell, as his executor, describing him as *"my friend John N. Sebrell"* [38].

Jesse P. Warren had lived next to the Sebrells since 1812, when he purchased a 388-acre tract of land that adjoined the farm of David's father, Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. [39]. In 1813, Warren served as a witness when the ninety-year-old Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. made his mark to his will [40], and in 1816, he helped to appraise Sebrell's estate [41].

23 Nov 1829 – John N. Sebrell filed Jesse P. Warren's will with the Surry Court. David and James W. Sebrell appeared before the Court that same day to attest to their signatures on Warren's will. Additionally, David and his nephew, Walter Spratley Sr., both served as security on the executor's bond of John N. Sebrell. This gives the last known sample of Capt. David Sebrell's original signature [42]:



By the end of his public career, David Sebrell had become a central figure in the civic life of southern Surry County, his name appearing in nearly every category of local governance.

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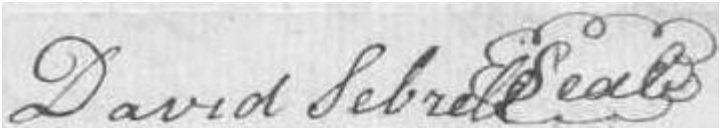
Family & Farmland

Following their April 1794 marriage, David Sebrell and Sarah Stuart Ward Sebrell had five documented children born between 1796 and 1806 who survived to adulthood. A list of the precise dates of birth for David Sebrell's seven known children as well as his precise marriage date survive, but it does not include Sarah's date of death. However, she died sometime after the death of her youngest daughter, Martha Ann Nicholas Sebrell, on 9 April 1806, and before 29 November 1808, when David Sebrell posted bond of £500 in Warren County, North Carolina, for the county court there to appoint him as Sarah's administrator. Her brother, Seth Ward, served as David's security on his administrator's bond. David signed the bond as [1]:



In 1810, Capt. Sebrell served as the assistant marshal who completed the 1810 federal census enumeration of Surry County [2]. He described his own household as consisting of himself and his five children. Thus, we have no indication that he remarried immediately after Sarah's death. In fact, it appears that he may have remained a widower for at least seven years after Sarah's death.

On 23 March 1815, David Sebrell posted bond in Surry County for a license to marry Anna Howard Watkins [Anner] (c1794–1820/1830), the daughter of Sebrell's longtime neighbors, John Watkins Sr. and his wife, Elizabeth. Sebrell signed his marriage bond as [3]:



Anna was younger than David by at least three decades. They had two known children to survive to adulthood, daughters born in 1815 and 1818. Since David Sebrell's 1820 household included a female of Anna's age, she presumably lived until at least 1820. We have no evidence that David and Anna had any children born after 1818, which could indicate that she died in the early 1820s. In any case, she probably died young, sometime between about 1820 and mid-1830 [4].

In his will written on Christmas Day 1813, Nathaniel Sebrell left David, his only surviving son, 123½ acres of his lands on Blackwater Swamp. Nathaniel left his remaining 100 acres on which he then lived to David's single sister, Mary Ann Sebrell, as long as she remained single. Nathaniel stipulated that, upon Mary Ann's marriage or death, ownership of the tract he left her would pass to David. Mary Ann Sebrell died in 1818, at which time David Sebrell acquired full possession of

his father's 223½-acre farm. Nathaniel appointed David as his executor, and between Nathaniel's death in the fall of 1815 and 1827, David Sebrell managed the affairs of his father's estate [5].

One of the most complex financial matters David inherited from his father involved a decades-old deed of trust held by his Faulcon uncles. Like many Virginia farmers, Nathaniel Sebrell fell into debt to British merchants in the decade before the Revolutionary War. He borrowed money from his father-in-law, Nicholas Faulcon Sr., during the war, and during the 1780s, it appears that his brothers-in-law covered his debts as owners of Jacob Faulcon & Co., the mercantile firm owned and operated by his brothers-in-law, Jacob Faulcon and Nicholas Faulcon Jr. To secure his debt to J. Faulcon & Co., Nathaniel mortgaged his 223½-acre farm and eleven enslaved workers to the firm on 4 May 1787 [6].

Nathaniel Sebrell's brothers-in-law never took action to sell his property to recoup their money. Instead, the firm continued to hold it in trust for the next thirty-six years, long after all three of them had died. Each year between 1787 and 1813, J. Faulcon & Co. paid the land taxes on Sebrell's farm [7]. However, in late 1813, they returned the land to Nathaniel, and he began paying the land taxes again in 1814, as he entered his tenth decade of life [8].

In settling his father's estate, David Sebrell made several payments to his first cousin, John Faulcon, Surry County Clerk of Court and the eldest son of Jacob Faulcon. These payments satisfied Nathaniel Sebrell's debts, and even though the younger Faulcon had returned the land to his uncle in 1813, it remained in trust to J. Faulcon & Co. On 25 April 1823, John Faulcon acknowledged that David Sebrell had fully paid the debt and interest mentioned in the 1787 trust:

> *Whereas Nathaniel Sebrell of the County of Surry did by his certain deed, commonly called* [a] *deed of trust, dated the fourth day of May in the year of Christ one thousand seven hundred and eighty seven, convey unto Nicholas Faulcon, and Jacob Faulcon, surviving partners of Jacob Faulcon and Company and John Hartwell Cocke executor and so forth of Hartwell Cocke deceased, who was one of the co-partners of the said Jacob Faulcon and Company a certain tract or parcel of land, situate, lying and being in the County of Surry, and lying on Blackwater Swamp, being the whole of the land the said Nathaniel Sebrell was at that time in possession of containing by estimation two hundred acres, be the same more or less, also the follow Negroe* [sic] *Slaves, to wit, Harry, Peter, Charles, Isaac, Linah, Lizza, Jacob, Billy, Davy, Jenny and Bolling for the purpose of securing the payment of a certain debt in the said deed of trust particularly mentioned. And whereas the said Nicholas Faulcon, John H. Cocke and Jacob Faulcon (the said Jacob Faulcon lived to be the surviving partner of the said firm of Jacob Faulcon & Company) and the said Nathaniel Sebrell have all departed this life, since the execution of the said deed of trust and John Faulcon has obtained Letters of Administration on the estate of the said Jacob Faulcon dec^{d} who was the surviving partner as aforesaid) and David Sebrell hath obtained Letters Testamentary as executor of the last Will and Testament of the said Nathaniel Sebrell deceased: and whereas the*

debt &c the Interest, mentioned in the said deed of trust have been fully paid and satisfied by the said David Sebrell as Executor of the said Nathaniel Sebrell deceased.

John Faulcon then conveyed to David Sebrell as his father's executor the 223½-acre farm and eleven slaves, *"and the increase of the females (if, any) of the said slaves"* [9].

After inheriting his father's lands, David Sebrell made two additional land purchases in the 1820s. First, on 24 September 1822, he paid $53.25 to Sampson and Elizabeth Grantham for an 8½-acre tract of land that adjoined his existing farm and lay along his fence. A few years later, on 27 May 1825, David Sebrell paid $600 to his brother-in-law, Robert Henry Watkins and his wife, Elizabeth Sharp Watkins, for the 250-acre tract adjoining Sebrell's land that Robert inherited from his father, John Watkins Sr. [10].

Not all of Sebrell's later responsibilities were routine. Thomas Blunt had witnessed the 1825 Watkins-Sebrell land transaction, and so he was at least one of Sebrell's acquaintances, if not someone he knew well. In mid-January 1828, the sudden discovery of Blunt's corpse led local coroner John Nicholas Spratley to convene a coroner's jury and conduct an inquest. David Sebrell served on the jury, along with his son-in-law, John Watkins Jr. The jury reported:

Thomas Blunt not having God before his Eyes, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil at his dwelling house aforesaid in the county aforesaid in and upon himself, then and there being in the peace of God and the said Commonwealth, feloniously, voluntarily and of his malice and aforethought, made an assault, and that the aforesaid Thomas Blunt, then and there with a Certain Gun of the value of five dollars which he the said Thomas Blunt then and there held in both his hands charged with Powder and Shot, (Commonly Called Gun Powder and Buck Shot) [shot] *himself in and upon his face and head then and there feloniously, voluntarily and of his malice aforethought did Shoot and give to himself then and there with the Gun aforesaid upon his head & face aforesaid one Mortal wound…and of which said Mortal wound the said Thomas Blunt at his dwelling house in the County aforesaid on the Night of the sixteenth of January 1828 did Instantly die.*

Blunt had written his will merely six weeks before he committed suicide, suggesting that he had long premeditated his plans for ending his own life. David Sebrell's signature on the inquest form shows that he still had the same bold and deliberate handwriting as he had in the 1780s [11]:

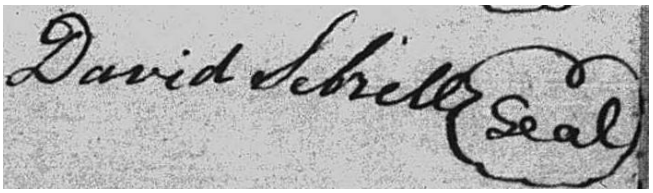


Family tragedy soon followed. Benjamin W. Sebrell, David's eldest son, formed a mercantile partnership at nearby Cabin Point with his first cousin, Walter Spratley Sr., in 1826 [12]. Just two

years later, at the age of only thirty, Benjamin's health began to decline. Like so many of Nathaniel Sebrell's descendants in southeastern Virginia, it appears that tuberculosis cut Benjamin down in his prime. He wrote his will on 1 March 1828, naming David as his first legatee:

I Give unto my beloved Father David Sebrell my Gun to him and his heirs forever.

Benjamin W. Sebrell lived another year, succumbing to his malady in early 1829. On April 27th, his brother filed his will with the Surry County Court and qualified as executor. David Sebrell and his nephew, Walter Spratley Sr., served as securities on the executor's bond, with David signing his name on the bond as [13]:



David Sebrell wrote his will on 16 June 1830, equally dividing his property among his children and naming his two surviving sons as his executors. It appears that Sebrell lived another year, probably dying in September or October 1831 while in his early seventies. His sons filed his will with the Surry County Court on 24 October 1831 [14].

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Children of Capt. David Sebrell

David Sebrell left children by both of his known wives [1]. The birthdates for the Sebrell children, together with David's marriage date to his first wife, come from an undocumented source, but these dates do match other sources and are given below. These birthdates may come from a family Bible, but we have no confirmation of their source [2].

The seven known children of Capt. David Sebrell formed two distinct family groups, born to his first wife, Sarah Stuart Ward, and his second wife, Anna Howard Watkins.

The children of David Sebrell and his first wife, Sarah Stuart Ward:

1. **Elizabeth Faulcon Sebrell** (7 Apr 1796–28 July 1874) married John Watkins (c1787–18 Dec 1831).
2. **Capt. Benjamin Ward Sebrell** (19 Mar 1798–1829)
3. **John Nicholas Sebrell** (12 July 1802–1844)
4. **James William Sebrell** (8 Aug 1803–1838)
5. **Martha Ann Nicholas Sebrell** (9 Apr 1806–1842) married Thomas N. Burt and Eldridge D. N. Clary (c1800–1852).

The known children of David Sebrell and Anna Howard Watkins:

6. **Mary Drew Sebrell** (25 Dec 1815–1842/1850) married Nicholas Holt (c1804–1837) and Samuel N. D. Carroll (c1821–aft. 1850).
7. **Susan Jane Sebrell** (7 Mar 1818–c1852) married John C. Clements (1808–1885).

These seven children formed the foundation of the Sebrell family's nineteenth-century presence along the Blackwater.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

1830 Will of David Sebrell
Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 6 (1830–1834), p. 193–194

*I **David Sebrell** of Surry County do make this my last Will and Testament in manner & form following.*

Item. 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, & one hundred & forty one and three quarters acres of the North part of the tract purchased of Robert H. Watkins, including the houses now standing on the same tract, also a negro man by the name of Dennis and a bed with its furniture.

Item. I give to my Son James William Sebrell, to him and to his heirs forever the tract of Land on which I now live and the balance of the tract purchased of Robert H. Watkins not above disposed of, also a negro man by the name of Henry, and a bed with its furniture.

Item. I give to Mary Drew Sebrell, my daughter, a negro boy, Allen, and a bed with its furniture, to her & her heirs forever.

Item. I give to my daughter Susan Jane Sebrell a negro boy called Edge, and a bed with its furniture, to her & her heirs forever.

Item. I lend to my daughter Elizabeth Faulcon Watkins during her life, one sixth part of my Negroes not above disposed of, (including a boy by the name of Lijah, and a woman named Milly with her increase) which said negroes I give at her death to all her children then living, to them and to their heirs forever.

Item. I give to my Son John Nicholas Sebrell and to his heirs forever, one sixth part of my negroes after setting aside Dennis, Henry, Allen & Edge, who have been before disposed of.

Item. I give to my Son James William Sebrell & to his heirs forever, one sixth part of my negroes excepting those just named (Dennis, Henry, Allen & Edge.

Item. I lend to my daughter Martha Ann Nicholas Burt during her life, one sixth part of my negroes after excepting those before named (Dennis, Henry, Allen & Edge) which said negroes I give at her death to her living child or children, if she have any, if not they are to return to my then living children.

Item. I give to my daughters Mary Drew Sebrell & Susan Jane Sebrell and to their heirs forever, one sixth part of my Negroes not before excepted, to each of them one sixth part.

Item. I wish my just debts paid out of my property not herein disposed of, and the residue of the amount arising from the sale of the said property, to be divided equally between my two sons John Nicholas Sebrell & James William Sebrell, whom I hereby appoint the Executors of this

my last Will and Testament, revoking all other or former Wills or Testaments by me heretofore made.

Given under my hand & seal this 16th day of June 1830.

[signed] ***David Sebrell***

Witness
Wm N Lane
John F Cocke
Edwin Rogers

In Surry County Court, October 24th 1831.

The within written last Will and Testament David Sebrell decd was proved by the oaths of John F Cocke & Edwin Rogers two of the subscribing witnesses and ordered to be recorded. John N. Sebrell one of the executors therein named, appeared in Court, and refused to take on himself the burthen of the execution thereof. And on motion of James W. Sebrell the other Executor therein named who made oath and together with Walter Spratley Edwin T. Spratley and John N. Sebrell his securities, entered into and acknowledged a bond in the penalty of fifteen thousand dollars, conditioned as the Law directs, certificate is granted him for obtaining a probate thereof in due form.

Examd

[signed] ***Walter S. Booth****, clk.*

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Notes

Early Life in Virginia & North Carolina

1. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 140–142; 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). Surry County VA Will Book 12 (1783–1792), pp. 17–19; Surry County VA Wills, Inventories & Estate Inventories #2 (1770–1873), LDS Film #4125015, Images #427–428 (Will of Nicholas Faulcon Sr., written 6 January 1781, filed in court on 23 December 1783). Nathaniel identified David as his son in his 1813 will. In his 1781 will, Nicholas Faulcon Sr. made a bequest to *"my Daughter Elizabeth Sebrell"* and *"her Husband Nathaniel Sebrell."* While the precise date on which Sebrell married Elizabeth Faulcon is unclear, Nathaniel's first wife died prior to April 1752, and it appears that Sebrell married Elizabeth a few years later. Records below show that David's birth occurred between about 1758 and 1760, and his eldest daughter was named *"Elizabeth Faulcon Sebrell."* This implies that David was the son of Elizabeth Faulcon.
2. 1782–1783 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books showed this information for Nathaniel Sebrell Sr:
   1782: *"Nathaniel Sebrell, David Sebrell"* 2 *"white males above 21 years"*
   1783: *"Nathaniel Sebrell Senr"* 2 *"white males above 21 years"*
   References: LDS Film #8458765, 1782: Image #10: Nathaniel Harrison's District; Image #12, column #2, line #5; 1783 Image #24: column #1, line #40; LDS Film #8574973, 1782: Image #377, column #2, line #5; 1783: Image #390, column #1, line #40. An unknown source gives precise dates of birth for David Sebrell and his children, as well as the date of his first marriage. While these dates for David's children and first marriage match other sources, the date of birth given for him, 2 December 1764, does not match Surry County Personal Property Tax records from the 1782 and 1783 that show he had already passed the age of twenty-one by early 1782.
3. Surry County VA Deeds, Wills, Etc. Book 11 (1778–1783), p. 384 (Joseph Hart to John Watkins Holdsworth and Jesse Cocks, 7 May 1783; witnesses: Burwell Sharp, Thomas Burgess, David Sebrell; proved 27 May 1783 by Sharp, Burgess, and Sebrell). Surry County VA Deed Book 12 (1783–1787), p. 22 (Edward Darwell to Jesse Cocks, 4 August 1783; witnesses: David Sebrell, Nathaniel Sebrell; proved 23 December 1783 by David Sebrell and Nathaniel Sebrell).
4. 1784–1794 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Records. Surry County VA Deed Book 12 (1783–1787), pp. 312–313 (Joseph and Mary Holt to John Andrews, 23 July 1787; witnesses: J. Kee, Thomas Rose, David Sebrell); pp. 318–319 (John and Mary Andrews to Richard Ellis, 31 July 1787; witnesses: James Kee, Thomas Rose, David Sebrell). Surry County VA Indentures (1699–1796), LDS Film #4123079, Images 585–586 (Joseph and Mary Holt to John Andrews, 23 July 1787). The original document was filmed by the LDS in the *"Indentures,"* and this is the original document recorded in Deed Book 12, pp. 312–313.
5. Bute County NC Marriage Bonds (1764–1779), John Faulcon to Lucretia Person, 27 May 1773 (LDS Film #102155824, Images #38–39). North Carolina Revolutionary War Pay Vouchers (1779–1782), LDS Film #4320514, Images #284–292: John Faulcon.
6. Clark, Walter, ed. *The State Records of North Carolina.* Vol. XIII-XXV, 1896–1906. Vol XIII, pp. 622–624, 735–736, 751–753, 760, 765, 790, 825, 860, 863, 893–895, 898; Vol. XX, pp. 225–226, 414; Vol. XXI, pp. 776–778, 816–819, 934–935, 983–987, 989–991; Vol. XXIV, pp. 293 – 294, 449; Vol. XXV, p. 107.
7. 1790 Franklin County NC Federal Census, p. 50, line #4: David Sebrell. 1790 Warren County NC Federal Census, p. 66, line #6: John Faulcon.
8. Warren County NC Deed Book 12 (1791–1794), pp. 174–176 (Diana Tabb, Executrix of William Tabb, deceased, to David Sebrell, 30 December 1791); pp. 203–205 (David Sebrell to James Alston, 20 July 1792).
9. Register of Deaths, Surry County, Virginia (1853–1896), Elizabeth Watkins (LDS Film #4225409, Image 138). This source records the death of Elizabeth Watkins on 28 July 1874 from *"Consumption,"* identifying her parents as *"David & Sarah Sebrell."* David Sebrell wrote his will in 1830, identifying Elizabeth Faulcon Sebrell Watkins as his daughter. The precise marriage date for David Sebrell to Sarah Stuart Ward given here is undocumented and comes from the same unknown source as the precise dates of birth for David and his children. While other records show that David's birth year is inaccurate, the dates for his children approximately match other documented sources. It is not clear where their marriage occurred, as no marriage record for them has been located in either North Carolina or Virginia. The same undocumented source that gives the birthdates for David Sebrell's children lists his wife as *"Sarah S. Ward."*
10. Warren County NC Will Book 5 (1788–1792), pp. 40–47 (Will of Benjamin Ward, written 24 October 1788, filed in court November 1788). Warren County NC Original Wills, Benjamin Ward, 1788 (LDS Film #7640335, Images #980–984). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 5 (1827–1830), pp. 414–415 (Will of Benjamin W. Sebrell, written 1 March 1828, filed in court 27 April 1829). In his will, Benjamin W. Sebrell made a bequest to *"my beloved Father David Sebrell."* He also wrote: *"It is my desire that my Interest in the property which will faul* [sic] *to me at the death of my father, by my Grand Father Benjamin Wards will…"* This proves that David Sebrell's first wife was the daughter of Benjamin Ward. Several Benjamin Wards lived in the surrounding Virginia counties, as well as this

Benjamin Ward in Warren County. We know that Sarah Ward Sebrell's father is the Warren County man from his will, which specifically left her the slaves, Violet and Dinah, stating that they were to remain in the possession of Sarah and her husband until his death, and then pass to Sarah's legitimate children by her husband. The Surry County tax records referenced below show Violet living with David Sebrell's family until after 1850, and the wording of Benjamin W. Sebrell's will confirms that their inheritance from their grandfather, Benjamin Ward, would come after the death of David Sebrell.

11. 1795 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, Cabin Point District, David Sebrell.
12. 1796–1803 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books, David Sebrell.
13. Surry County VA Order Book (1838–1843), pp. 381, 390 (John N. Sebrell exempted from paying taxes on infirm slave Violet, 23 January 1843).
14. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 9 (1845–1852), p. 60 (Account of Estate of John N. Sebrell, filed 26 April 1846). 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, Slave Schedule, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 795, column 2, line #35: Elizabeth F. Watkins, *"Slave Owners,"* female slave, aged 80, black complexion. 1860 Surry County VA Federal Census, Slave Schedule, p. 369/7, column 1, line #7: Elizabeth F. Watkins, slave owner, female slaves aged 95, *"color: mulatto."*

Civil Affairs & Military Service

1. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 40 (*"Militia Officers recommended; James Sebrell Lieutenant in Capt. Blunts Company…David Sebrell Ensign of said company in the room of James Sebrell now recommended Lieutenant,"* 23 June 1795); p. 48 (Court session 25 August 1795); p. 58 (*"David Sebrell being Commissioned Ensign of the Militia of this County came into court, produced the said commission & took the oath of Office,"* 22 September 1795).
2. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 195 (*"Ordered that David Sebrell, John Stiles, John Tillott and Edmund Carsley…do appraise the personal estate of William Rose deceased,"* 24 October 1797); p. 258 (Court session 24 July 1798); p. 262 (*"An Inventory and Appraisement of the Estate of William Rose dec^{d} was this day returned to Court, and was ordered to be recorded"*). Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 281–282 (Inventory of the Estate of William Rose, taken 28 October 1798 [sic–1797], filed in court on 24 July 1798; appraisers: Edmund Carsley, John Stiles, John Tillott).
3. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), pp. 218–219 (David Sebrell appointed guardian of Benjamin Spratley's orphans, 27 February 1798). Surry County VA Guardians Bonds (1797–1814), p. 3 (Bond of David Sebrell, Guardian to Benjamin Spratley orphans, 27 February 1798; security: William Spratley).
4. Surry County VA Fiduciary Accounts (1831–1839), pp. 221–223 (Account of Henry Spratley, orphan of Benjamin Spratley, filed 24 October 1836); pp. 227–245 (Account of Benjamin Spratley's Orphans, filed 23 January 1837). David Sebrell's eldest niece, Mary (Polly) Spratley, was not listed in the court order or guardian's bond, but this was apparently an accidental omission. David Sebrell kept a meticulous accounting of the monies expended on and due to the Spratley orphans, including Polly, from 1798 until 1817. He returned his accounts to the Surry County Court at that time, but the Court did not approve them until 23 January 1837, several years after Sebrell's death in 1831.
5. Surry County VA Guardians Bonds (1797–1814), p. 3 (Bond of William Spratley, Guardian to Walter Spratley, orphan of William Spratley, 27 February 1798; security: David Sebrell). This Walter Spratley was a younger son of Capt. William Spratley Sr. He was known as *"Walter Spratley Jr."* in the later Surry County records to distinguish him from the elder man by that name, who became known as *"Walter Spratley Sr.,"* the son of Benjamin Spratley and Susanna Sebrell.
6. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800):
   p. 228: Court session 29 March 1798;
   p. 231: *"Ordered that the following persons be recommended to the Executive as fit and proper persons to be commissioned Militia officers in this county…David Sebrell Lieutenant in Captain Richard Blunt's company in the room of James Sebrell who has removed out of this county."*
   p. 258: Court session 24 July 1798;
   p. 260: *"David Sebrell Gent. this day presented in Court a Commission from the Governor appointing him Lieutenant…and thereupon he took the oath of Office."*
7. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 324 (Court session 26 February 1799); p. 330 (David Sebrell appointed road surveyor).
8. Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 321–322 (Will of Richard Barker, written 13 March 1799, filed in court 23 April 1799; witness: David Sebrell); pp. 325–327 (Inventory of Estate of Richard Barker, made 27 April 1799; appraisers: David Sebrell, Nathaniel Sebrell). Surry County VA Executors Bonds (1798–1816), p. 11 (Ann Barker, executrix of Richard Barker, 23 April 1799; securities: David Sebrell, William Spratley, Robert Ellis). In his will, Richard appointed his wife, *"Nancy Barker,"* as his executrix, but her executor's bond lists her as *"Ann Barker."*

9. Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 350–352 (Will of Burwell Sharp, written 18 August 1799, filed in court 22 October 1799); pp. 469–471; Surry County VA Wills, Inventories & Estate Inventories, Vol. 2 (1770–1873), LDS Film #4125015, Images 22–23 (Inventory of Estate of Burwell Sharp, made 18 December 1799, filed with Surry Court 24 February 1801; appraisers: David Sebrell, Joseph Williamson, David Williamson).
10. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), pp. 477, 479 (David Sebrell appointed Militia Captain, 25 March 1800); pp. 549, 551 (David Sebrell commissioned Surry County Militia Captain, 26 August 1800).
11. Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804):
    pp. 35–36: *"David Sebrell G^{t} made return of a Patrole* [sic] *performed by him and others to which he made oath, the same is ordered to be filed,"* 28 April 1801;
    p. 39: *"David Sebrell being elected Overseer of the Poor in this County for Burch* [sic] *Island district, came into Court and took the oath of s^{d} office,"* 28 April 1801;
    p. 105: David Sebrell paid $1.00 for 24 hours patrol, 27 October 1801.
12. Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804), p. 224 (Court session 27 April 1802); p. 226 (On motion of Thomas Ellis, the Court set aside their order made in December 1801 and appointed Cocke, Lane, Davis, and Sebrell to sell Ephraim and divide among Nancy Sharp's siblings).
13. Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 612–614 (Inventory of John Watkins, made 7 January 1803; appraisers: David Sebrell, John Watkins, Nathaniel Sebrell).
14. Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 687–688; Surry County VA Wills, Inventories & Estate Accounts (1770–1873), LDS Film #4124979, Images 2041–2042 (Inventory of Benjamin Cocke, made 12 December 1803; appraisers: Thomas Ellis Jr., David Sebrell, John G. Sharp). The original inventory shows the signature of David Sebrell.
15. Surry County VA Wills, Inventories & Estate Accounts (1770–1873), LDS Film #4124979, Image 2225 (Account of Estate of James Drewry; commissioners: Langley C. Wills, David Sebrell).
16. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815):
    p. 80: Will of Frederick Cooper, written 22 April 1805, filed in court 28 January 1806; executor: David Sebrell;
    pp. 183–185: Inventory of Estate of Frederick Cooper, made 4 March 1806, filed in court 23 June 1807;
    pp. 193–194: Sale of Frederick Cooper Estate, 14 March 1806.
    Surry County VA Wills, Inventories & Estate Inventories (1770–1825), LDS Film #4124947:
    Images 476–477: Sale of Frederick Cooper Estate, 14 March 1806;
    Images 916–917: Inventory of Estate of Frederick Cooper, made 4 March 1806, filed in court 23 June 1807.
    Surry County VA Executors Bonds (1798–1816), p. 68 (Bond of David Sebrell, Executor of Frederick Cooper, 28 January 1806).
17. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 207–208 (Inventory of Estate of Thomas Barker, made 9 December 1805, filed in court 27 January 1817; appraisers: David Sebrell, Robert Ellis, John Velvin).
18. Surry County VA Deed Book 3 (1804–1811):
    pp. 192–194: Elizabeth Watkins, Executrix of John Watkins, to John J. Anson, 5 July 1806; witnesses: David Sebrell, Edwin Rogers, *"Jno Watkins."*
    pp. 194–196: Elizabeth Watkins, Executrix of John Watkins, to Sarah Moring, 5 July 1806; witnesses: David Sebrell, Edwin Rogers, *"Jno Watkins."*
    pp. 197–198: Elizabeth Watkins, Executrix of John Watkins, to James Stewart, 5 July 1806; witnesses: David Sebrell, Edwin Rogers, *"Jno Watkins."*
19. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), pp. 155–156 (Inventory of the Estate of *"John Watkins dec^{d} (Schoolmaster)."*
20. Surry County VA Order Book (1807–1811), pp. 3–4 (The Commonwealth against Benjamin Cocke, *"Summons for Gambling,"* 26 May 1807).
21. Surry County VA Order Book (1807–1811), p. 51 (Rebecca Cooper chooses David Sebrell as guardian, 27 October 1807; Nicholas Sebrell, *"Gentleman Justices"*). Surry County VA Guardians Bonds (1797–1814), p. 82 (David Sebrell bond as guardian of *"Rebecca Cooper orphan of Frederick Cooper,"* 27 October 1807; John Velvin, security).
22. Surry County VA Marriage Register (1768–1853), p. 58 (John Velvin to Permelia Cooper, bond dated 23 December 1800).
23. Surry County VA Deed Book 3 (1804–1811), p. 75 (John Velvin Constable Bond, 23 July 1805).
24. Surry County VA Order Book (1807–1811):
    p. 258: Court session of 25 July 1809;
    p. 260: *"Ordered that the following persons be recommended to the Governor and Council as fit and proper persons to be commissioned Militia Officers, to wit: John Velvin as Captain in the 71st Regiment in the room of David Sebrell who has resigned and John Watkins as Lieutenant in the room of John Velvin who is promoted."*

25. *Muster Rolls of the Virginia Militia in the War of 1812.* Richmond, VA: William F. Ritchie, 1852, pp. 799–800 (Capt. John Velvin' Company, 71st Regiment Virginia Militia, Lt. Col. William Allen).
26. Surry County VA Order Book (1815–1820):
    p. 334: Court session of 28 July 1817;
    p. 336: *"There being a majority of the Justices present the Court proceeded in the recommendation of Militia Officers…John Velvin as a fit and proper person to be commissioned as Major in the said Regiment."*
    p. 355: Court session of 24 November 1817); p. 357 (John Velvin qualified as *"Major in the 71st Regt. of Virginia Militia."*
27. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), pp. 244–245 (Will of Cherry Ellis, written 21 June 1808, filed in court 27 September 1808; witnesses: David Sebrell, John Watkins). Sussex County VA Marriage Register (1754–1853), p. 28 (Isaac Ellis to Cherry Sharp, bond dated 1 June 1781). Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1798, John Watkins Jr. to Cherry Ellis, 9 October 1798; security: *"John Watkins senior."*
28. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), pp. 281–282 (Will of John Newsum, written 3 November 1808, filed in court 28 February 1809; executors: Catherine Newsum, Walter Spratley Sr.). Surry County VA Executors Bonds (1798–1816), p. 87 (Bond of *"Caty Newsum"* and Walter Spratley Sr. as administrator of John Newsum, 28 February 1809; securities: Archibald Davis, David Sebrell, John Bell).
29. Surry County VA Order Book (1807–1811), p. 258 (court date: 25 July 1809), p. 260 (*"Ordered that the following persons be recommended to the Governor and Council as fit and proper persons to be commissioned Militia Officers, to wit. John Velvin as Captain in the 71st Regiment in the room of David Sebrell who has resigned…"*).
30. *"Virginia Argus"* (Richmond, VA), 8 May 1810, p. 1, column 2.
31. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), p. 411 (Account of Walter Cocke *"in behalf of his mother Ann Cocke,"* examined by David Sebrell and John Bartle, 20 July 1811); pp. 411–414 (Estate of John Newsum, examined by David Sebrell and John Bartle, 20 July 1811).
32. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), pp. 523–525 (Account of estate of *"Jno Watkins (S.M.) decd,"* filed 25 May 1813).
33. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 9–10 (Inventory of Slaves of Estate of John Watkins, made 7 January 1815, filed 27 March 1815; appraisers: Archibald Davis, David Sebrell, Edwin Rogers).
34. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 135–137 (Inventory of the Estate of Benjamin Bilbro, made 8 December 1815, filed in court 22 April 1816; appraisers: David Sebrell, Richard Dewell, Thomas Bailey Jr.).
35. Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 571–573 (Will of John Watkins Sr., written 1 September 1802, filed in court 23 November 1802). Surry County VA Chancery Causes #1816-038, Drawer #87: Robert Henry Watkins vs. admins. of John Watkins Sr.
36. Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1818, LDS Film #4129184 (Robert H. Watkins to Elizabeth S. Sharp, 23 March 1818; David Sebrell, security).
37. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 5 (1827–1830), pp. 173–174 (Inventory of the Estate of Sarah Ellis, 29 October 1824; appraisers: David Sebrell, Jesse P. Warren, Archer B. Holdsworth); pp. 589–592 (Account of Estate of Sally Ellis, filed 23 February 1830). Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1792, LDS Film #4129784 (Burwell Sharp to Sarah White, 24 December 1792). Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1801, LDS Film #4129146 (Thomas Ellis Jr. to Sarah Sharp, 5 March 1801). The estate records of Sally Ellis filed in 1830 prove that she was the widow of Burwell Sharp.
38. 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).
39. Surry County VA Deed Book 4 (1811–1815), pp. 161–162 (Thomas Ellis Jr. and his wife, Sarah Ellis, to Jesse P. Warren, 12 October 1812). Warren purchased the 388-acre tract, *"Beginning at a pine on the road from the New Design to Birch Island."* The description included this boundary: *"…to a red oak in Nathaniel Sebrells Mill Pond, thence by said Sebrells line of marked trees…"*
40. 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).
41. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 4 (1822–1827), pp. 203–205 (Inventory of Estate of Nathaniel Sebrell, made 10 December 1816, filed in court 27 October 1823; David Sebrell, executor; appraisers: Jesse P. Warren, Robert Ellis, Edwin Rogers).
42. 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). The signature shown comes from the executor's bond of John N. Sebrell.

Family & Farmland

1. Bond of David Sebrell, Administrator of Sarah S. Sebrell, 29 November 1808; security: Seth Ward. Both the original and recorded versions of David Sebrell's bond as administrator of Sarah S. Sebrell survive:
   Warren County NC Will Book 14 (1807–1809), pp. 257–258; LDS Film #47794564, Images #140–141.
   Warren County NC Original Estate Records (1772–1940), LDS Film #4763722, Image #1804.
2. 1810 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 615, line #17: *"David Sebrell."* The number of white people in his household listing fits perfectly with his known family structure: one male aged 45 and over (David), 1 male 10–15 (Benjamin), 2 males under 10 (John and James), 1 female 10–16 (Elizabeth), and one female under 10 (Martha).
3. Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1815, LDS Film #4129176 (David Sebrell to *"Anner H. Watkins,"* 23 March 1815). Surry County VA Marriage Register (1768–1853), p. 97 (David Sebrell to Anna H. Watkins, bond dated 23 March 1815). Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 571–573 (Will of John Watkins, written 6 September 1802, filed in court on 23 November 1802). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 2 (1804–1815), pp. 537–538 (Will of Elizabeth Watkins, written 9 March 1813, filed in court on 28 September 1813). John Watkins named *"Anner Howard Watkins"* as one of his *"five youngest children,"* and he made a bequest to *"my daughter Anner Howard Watkins."* Elizabeth Watkins left several bequests to *"my Daughter Anner H. Watkins."*
4. 1820 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 280b, line #5: David Sebrell. 1830 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 170, line #1: David Sebrell.
5. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 140–142 (Will of Nathaniel Sebrell, written 25 December 1813, filed 22 April 1816); pp. 314–315 (Will of Mary Ann Sebrell, written 17 July 1818, filed in court on 28 September 1818); Wills, Etc. Book 4 (1822–1827), pp. 203–205 (Inventory of Estate of Nathaniel Sebrell, made 10 December 1816, filed in court 27 October 1823; David Sebrell, executor); pp. 308–312 (Account of Estate of Nathaniel Sebrell, David Sebrell, executor, filed 24 May 1824); pp. 613–619 (Account of Nathaniel Sebrell Estate, David Sebrell, executor, filed 26 October 1826); Wills, Etc. Book 5 (1827–1830), pp. 208–214 (Account of Nathaniel Sebrell Estate, David Sebrell, executor, filed 22 October 1827).
6. Surry County VA Deed Book 12 (1783–1787), pp. 320–322 (Nathaniel Sebrell to Jacob and Nicholas Faulcon, and to Hartwell Cocke, 4 May 1787).
7. 1788 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #8742699, Images #55 (*"Nicholas & Jacob Faulcon & John H. Cocke,"* 223½ acres @ £262 12s 3d); #63 (*"Alienations and Alterations of Landed Property in Surry County for the Year 1788"*); #64, column #1, #6: *"Nicholas & Jacob Faulcon & John Hartwell Cocke To Nathaniel Sebrell,"* 223½ acres @ £262.12.3, tax due: £3.18.9. Surry County VA Land Tax Books, 1789–1813. Nicholas Faulcon Jr. died in 1793, and Jacob Faulcon died in 1801. Between 1802 and 1813, the land taxes were paid in the name of *"Estate of Jacob Faulcon & Co.,"* with the land described as *"Sebrell's Adj. Robert Ellis."*
8. 1814 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film#4124779, Image #26. 1815 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film#4124791, #Image #24. Both show Nathaniel Sebrell as the owner of 223½ acres on Blackwater Swamp valued at $875.38, with a total land tax due of $7.44.
9. Surry County VA Deed Book 7 (1823–1826), pp. 17–18 (John Faulcon, *"administrator of Jacob Faulcon dec^{d}, surviving Partner of Jacob Faulcon & Company"* to David Sebrell *"executor of Nathaniel Sebrell deceased,"* 25 April 1823). Faulcon returned title to David Sebrell of the 224 acres of land and to the slaves that Nathaniel Sebrell had mortgaged back in 1787.
10. Surry County VA Deed Book 7 (1823–1826), pp. 7–8 (Sampson and Elizabeth Grantham to David Sebrell, 24 September 1822; witnesses: J. N. Sebrell, Wilie David, B. W. Sebrell); pp. 460–461 (Robert H. and Elizabeth S. Watkins to David Sebrell, 27 May 1825; witnesses: Thomas Blunt, John Watkins, J. W. Sebrell, Susanna Fenn, John Collier). Surry County VA Indentures (1770–1835), LDS Film #4121786, Images #193–194 (Robert H. Watkins & Elizabeth S. Watkins to David Sebrell, 27 May 1825; witnesses: Thomas Blunt, Jno Watkins, J. W. Sebrell, Susannah Fenn; receipt dated 11 July 1825 and signed by Robert H. Watkins acknowledging receipt of $600 from David Sebrell; witnesses to receipt: Thomas Blunt, John Collier).
11. Surry County VA Miscellaneous Records–1 (1784–1942), LDS Film #4126722, Images #1321–1322 (*"Inquisition taken over the Body of Thos Blunt,"* 24 March 1828). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 5 (1827–1830), p. 250 (Will of Thomas Blunt, written 1 December 1827, filed in court 25 February 1828). In his will, Blunt left all of his property to his wife, Agnes Archer Blunt, *"to be us'd by her in any way she may think proper."* He also wrote, *"To my children I have nothing to leave, except my most sincere wishes for them to pay due regard to honour* [sic] *care and industry."* In the list of signatures of the members of the coroner's jury, David Sebrell signed first and above the others, suggesting he served as foreman of the jury.
12. 1826–1829 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books, LDS Film #8248743, Images #295 (*"Spratley & Sebrell,"* license dated 1 May 1826, $20); 326 (*"List of Licenses…to Merchants, vending Goods of foreign and domestic growth or manufacture: Spratley & Sebrell,"* license dated 1 May 1827, $20); 344 (*"Spratley & Sebrell,"* license dated 12 May 1828, $20).

13. Surry County VA Will Book 5 (1827–1830), pp. 414–415 (Will of Benjamin W. Sebrell, dated 1 March 1828, filed in court 27 April 1829). Surry County VA Executors Bonds (1816–1831), p. 159 (Executor's bond of James W. Sebrell, executor of Benjamin W. Sebrell, 27 April 1829; securities: David Sebrell, Walter Spratley).
14. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 6 (1830–1834), pp. 193–194 (Will of David Sebrell, written 16 June 1830, filed in court 24 October 1831).

Children of Capt. David Sebrell

1. Proof of David Sebrell's seven children comes from the wills of David and three of his children, as well as many Surry County Chancery Causes (1785–1922), including:
    a. 1836-006, Drawer #102: Nicholas Holt & wife vs. Heirs of Mary Lucas
    b. 1836-028: John N. Sebrell vs. Executor of Benjamin W. Sebrell
    c. 1836-010: Elizabeth F. Watkins, Etc., vs. Guardian of Susan J. Sebrell
    d. 1839-005, Drawer #103: Elizabeth F. Watkins vs. Executor of James William Sebrell
    e. 1842-024: John N. Sebrell, Executor of Martha A. Clary vs. Administrator of John N. Watkins
    f. 1847-006, Drawer #105: Elizabeth F. Watkins, etc. vs. Patrick H. Holt, etc.
    g. 1847-008, Drawer #323: Administrators of John N. Sebrell vs. Elizabeth F. Watkins, etc.
    h. 1859-004, Drawer #107: James E. Hines, etc. vs. Elizabeth F. Watkins
2. Precise birthdates for David Sebrell's seven known children, as well as a birth date for him and the date of his first marriage, come from an undocumented source. The birth dates match other approximations for his children's births, but as described earlier, the precise birth date given for David Sebrell himself conflicts with other primary source records. While these dates appear to have come from a family Bible, their source and accuracy is unclear.

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