Sen. Nicholas Sebrell
(1760s–1810)

of

Blackwater Swamp, Surry County, Virginia,

Son of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. & Elizabeth Faulcon of Surry County, Virginia

by Timothy Dean Hudson

Nicholas Sebrell does not appear as a young man in his father's household on the personal property tax records like all of his brothers. This makes it difficult to pinpoint Nicholas' precise year of birth, which could have occurred anytime between the early 1760s and about 1770. Considering his later activities as a Surry County Justice of the Peace and both representative and senator in Virginia's General Assembly, he may have worked as an attorney. If so, Nathaniel Sebrell probably sent Nicholas away to school at a young age like his nephew, Walter Spratley Sr.

In April 1788, Surry County officials charged Henry Johnson with stealing a horse. On April 27th, Sheriff William Boyce apprehended Johnson and confined him in *"the public Jail,"* presumably located at the Surry County Courthouse. Boyce then appointed John Bartle Jr. as *"Sergeant of the Guard,"* and required Bartle to summon *"a guard of men for 8 days…for the safe keeping of Johnson."* Sheriff Boyce later continued Johnson's confinement for another ten days.

Nicholas Sebrell was paid for *"Guarding Henry Johnston* [sic] *8 Days while in the County Jail"* in May 1788, along with his neighbors Jesse Carsley, Austin Carsley, and Thomas D. Watkins. To have served as a guard for a prisoner, Nicholas Sebrell was at least eighteen years of age, probably even in his twenties. This would place his birth in the 1760s [1].

There are no known records of Nicholas Sebrell in Surry County between 1788 and 1795, suggesting that he may have lived elsewhere during this period, perhaps away at school. He first appears in the Surry County personal property tax records in 1795, when he lived in the *"Lower District"* at Cobham along the James River and near his uncle, Jacob Faulcon, and first cousins Edward, John, Walter, and Nicholas Faulcon III. Sebrell paid taxes one white poll and one horse [2].

On 21 March 1796, as a resident of Surry County, Nicholas Sebrell paid $60.50 to Mary Finnie of Prince George County for a 50-acre tract of land on Clair's Branch and adjoining lands of Allen Love and William Johnson. His new land lay close to his father's farm along the Blackwater Swamp [3]. Sebrell paid Surry County personal property taxes in 1796, again assessed for one free male tithable and one horse or mare [4].

On 25 October 1796, the Surry County Court ordered Nicholas Sebrell and his first cousin, Edward Faulcon, to *"audit, state, and settle"* the accounts submitted to the Court by the late William Spratley, son and Executor of Mary Spratley who had died in 1773, and for them to make a return to their next court session. Mary's legatees include Sebrell's brother-in-law, Benjamin Spratley, the husband of his sister, Susanna, and Sebrell's uncle, Capt. Jacob Faulcon, husband of Ann Spratley [5]. The three men appointed as auditors must have been present at the courthouse on that very day, for they completed their audit and returned it to the Court that very day, with Sebrell's uncle, Clerk of Court Jacob Faulcon, ordering it recorded that very day [6].

Nicholas Sebrell paid the taxes on his 50-acre tract of land in 1796, 1797, and 1798, but he was not assessed personal property taxes in Surry County for 1797 or 1798 like he was in 1795–1796 [7]. This suggests that Sebrell did not live in Surry County in 1797 and 1798, although we have no record of him in either of the two adjoining counties, Sussex or Southampton.

If he lived elsewhere in 1797 and 1798, Nicholas Sebrell remained near Surry County, for on 30 March 1798, he was at the Surry County courthouse where he served on a jury along with his first cousin, Edward Faulcon, his father's longtime neighbor, John Tillott, and two locals, Robert McIntosh and David Price [8]. McIntosh owned the land surrounding McIntosh's Cross Roads, a local landmark in the latter eighteenth century. Located 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 period: the path 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.

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 [9]. In March 1796, McIntosh gave two acres of his land at Cross Roads to the Surry Justices 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 [10].

Robert McIntosh began operating a tavern at his house at Cross Roads by 1786 to serve locals and travelers, and he continued as tavernkeeper into the early 1790s. McIntosh had others take over as tavernkeeper beginning in 1793, and after he built the new courthouse there in 1797, the Surry Court House Tavern became one of the most important gathering places of Surry County [11]. By 1799, David Price settled at Surry Court House, for in January 1800, the Surry Court

ordered the sheriff to pay Price for repairing the jail. On 24 February 1801, the county granted Price a license to operate the Surry Court House Tavern [12].

After his election to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1799, Nicholas Sebrell began spending much of his time in the new village of Surry Court House, and he became acquainted with David Price. On 23 March 1802, the Surry Court renewed Price's license as keeper of the Surry Court House Tavern, and Nicholas Sebrell served as the security on his bond. The original record gives us this sample of Sebrell's elaborate signature [13]:



In 1798, Nicholas Sebrell entered the campaign for Surry County representative in Virginia's General Assembly, even though he did not pay a poll tax for that year. At the election held on April 24th, he received nineteen votes, including votes from his brother-in-law, John Stiles Sr., and neighbors Frederick Cooper, John Justiss, and John Watkins. The identity of Sebrell's opponent is unclear, but he did not run against his first cousin, Nicholas Faulcon III, who had represented Surry in the General Assembly since 1794 and ran again this year. Faulcon prevailed over his own opponent, Caufield Seward [14].

It does not appear that Sebrell won the 1798 election, but the following year, he triumphed against William Clinch in their race to represent Surry County in Virginia's General Assembly by a vote of 148 to 53 [15]. Nicholas Sebrell represented Surry in the Virginia House of Representative for the next eight years [16].

Nicholas Sebrell's 1799 election to the House of Delegates in the Virginia General Assembly representing Surry County coincided with his resumption of residence there. Although he owned his own land in Surry, beginning in 1799, Nicholas returned to his father's farm on the Blackwater Swamp, and he lived in Nathaniel Sebrell's household between 1799 and 1807 [17].

Between 1798 and 1803, Nicholas Sebrell became embroiled in a legal issue between Surry County Court Justice John Watkins Jr. and Thomas Peter, both neighbors of his family. On 24 May 1797, Justice John Watkins Jr. filed a lawsuit against Thomas Peter. Watkins died within the month, causing the Court to dismiss the suit. In November 1798, Watkins' brother and executor, Robert Watkins resumed the lawsuit against Peter, and all parties agreed to submit to arbitration [18].

Apparently dissatisfied with the outcome, Robert Watkins either convinced the Court to allow him to change his mind about abiding by the results of the arbitration, or else he filed another suit

in May 1800. The Watkins-Peter case dragged on for the next four years, with Nicholas Sebrell repeatedly called to testify on behalf of Thomas Peter in testimony before the Surry Court between 1801 and 1803 [19].

On Tuesday, 23 November 1802, the Surry County Court recommended Nicholas Sebrell and seven other men *"to the Governor and Council as fit and proper persons to be commissioned Magistrates in this County."* Early the following year, the Governor issued a commission to Sebrell as a Justice of the Peace for Surry County. On May 24th, he took the oath of office and assumed his seat on the Surry County Court [20].

For the next five years, Nicholas Sebrell frequently sat on the Surry County Court as a justice at its quarterly sessions [21]. As the need arose, he also served as a justice on periodic criminal courts, called a *"Court of Oyer & Terminer."* At a Surry Court of Oyer & Terminer held at Surry Court House on Tuesday, 22 May 1804, Nicholas Sebrell heard cases against Tom, *"a negro boy"* belonging to Robert McIntosh Jr., and Mingo, *"a negro Man"* belonging to Michael Smith, both charged with burglary. When brought before the Court and charged, Tom *"answered he was in no wise guilty of the charge."* After hearing witnesses, the Court ruled him not guilty and ordered his release. Similarly, when charged, Mingo *"answered he was in no wise guilty,"* and after hearing the testimony of witnesses, the Court ruled him not guilty and ordered him discharged [22].

A few days later, on Monday, May 28th, Nicholas Sebrell sat on the Court when they heard the criminal case against Dolly Thorn, charged with *"having murdered an infant child born of the body of her the said Dolly Thorn."* The Surry Court ruled her guilty of this felony and ordered that she should be tried at the next District Court held at Williamsburg and remanded her to jail. The next year on 28 September 1805, Sebrell sat on the bench when the Court heard the case against John Ruffin, charged with having *"feloniously taken a Pocket book containing a considerable sum of money in Bank Notes."* The Court found Ruffin guilty and ordered him to stand trial at the next District Court session at Williamsburg. Finally, Nicholas Sebrell sat on the bench on 23 November 1808 when the Surry Court of Oyer and Terminer heard two cases for receiving *"stolen Hogs or Shoots"* against Mary *"alias Mary Jonathan,"* and John Drew. After hearing testimony, the Court found both not guilty and ordered their discharge [23].

In 1807, Nicholas Sebrell ran against Dr. John Purdie for Virginia State Senator from the district that included Surry, Prince George, and Isle of Wight Counties. In the election held on April 28th, he handily won Surry County, receiving 319 votes to Purdie's 5 votes. Sebrell served one two-year term in the Virginia State Senate [24].

Although his birth occurred during the 1760s, no known records indicate that Nicholas Sebrell married until his mid-forties or perhaps closer to fifty years of age. Since he spent time living outside Surry, either in school or for professional obligations, it is possible that he married as a younger man and his wife died young. However, no evidence of such a marriage has been found.

On 25 October 1808, Nicholas Sebrell signed a bond in Southampton County, Virginia for a license to marry Elizabeth Saunders [Betsy] (22 Dec 1768–1811), daughter of Thomas Saunders and Ann D. Turner [25]. Betsy had married Samuel Edmunds in Brunswick County, Virginia on 28 April 1794. Edmunds died in 1807 without children, leaving his large estate mainly to Betsy during her lifetime, and afterwards, to his nieces and nephews [26].

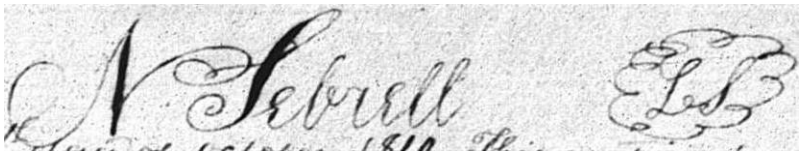
Following his marriage, Nicholas Sebrell moved the short distance from his father's farm on the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County to his wife's plantation in adjoining Sussex County. He completed his term in the Virginia State Senate, but it does not appear that he ran for reelection in 1809 [27].

Something prompted Nicholas Sebrell to write his will on 2 December 1808, merely six weeks after his marriage:

> *Nicholas Sebrell of the County of Southampton and late of the county of Surry and State of Virginia possessing as much soundness of mind & understanding as ever he did do make and direct that this shall be his last will and testament in manner and form following to wit…*
>
> *I do hereby appropriate all my estate in Surry as a fund for the discharge of all my debts.*
>
> *I do hereby give unto my beloved wife Betsey* [sic] *all the property that came by her and was left to her by her deceased husband Samuel Edmund, of what kind soever to her and her heirs forever and I do further give unto my beloved wife Betsey all the use of my estate in Surry after my first debts being paid during her natural life and after her death I devise and give the same unto my beloved sister Mary Ann Sebrell to her and her heirs forever, it is my will and desire that my estate may not be appraised.*
>
> *I do hereby appoint my loving wife Betsey and my brother James Sebrell my executrix and executor of this my last will and Testament, and if any difficulties should arise respecting this my last will and testament as to the meaning and intent of the same it is my wish and desire that it may be refered* [sic] *to three respectable men whose decision shall be valid as if it had been so decreed by the Supreme Court of the United States. As this my last will and testament is written with my own hand and subscribed by me, it is thought by me unnecessary to call upon any of my friends to witness the same as my hand writing and signature can be proved by I may say hundreds of my acquaintances and I do hereby sign, seal and deliver this as my last will and testament…*

Nicholas Sebrell died in September or early October 1810, for his widow filed his will with the Southampton County Court on October 15th. Although signatures on wills recorded in county record books are typically transcriptions made by court clerks after the person has died, before

his death, Nicholas Sebrell signed the will book in which his will was recorded, giving us the last known sample of his signature:



Elizabeth Saunders Sebrell wrote her own will on 30 May 1811, only six months after her husband's death, and she left all of her property to her nieces and nephews. She named her brother-in-law, William Gholson, as her executor, and the Southampton Court appointed him to handle the affairs of Nicholas Sebrell's estate as well. Gholson held a sale of the Sebrell estate in 1812 that netted £732 4s 3½d. After paying debts, Gholson reported a balance of £505 15s 7½d for Sebrell's estate. Although he left his estate in Surry to his sister after paying his debts, it is unclear if Gholson delivered any portion of it to her [28].

William Gholson sold Nicholas Sebrell's 50-acre tract of land on 22 January 1816 for $100. According to Nicholas Sebrell's will, Gholson should have paid this sum to Mary Ann Sebrell, but there is no record of precisely what he did with the money [29].

Nicholas Sebrell's life reflects the trajectory of a locally prominent but regionally mobile planter-politician in post-Revolutionary Virginia.

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Notes

1. 1778 Surry County VA Receipts for County Services, LDS Film #4131799, Images #26, 28, 30, 32 (Henry Johnson, horse stealing, January–June 1788). The statement made regarding Nicholas Sebrell's age when serving as a guard is speculative. Law enforcement officials may have assigned a physically mature teenager of sixteen or seventeen years as a guard, but this seems more unlikely.
2. 1795 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #8458765, Image #492: *"lower District in Surry County;"* #536, #6: Nicholas Sebrell, one free male tithable, one horse or mare.
3. Surry County VA Deed Book 1 (1792–1799), pp. 484–485 (Mary Finnie to Nicholas Sebrell, 21 March 1796). Surry County VA Processioners Returns (1796–1828), pp. 23–24 (Johnchecohunk Precinct, Lands of David Sebrell, Nathaniel Sebrell Jr. [deceased], Nathaniel Sebrell Sr., Nicholas Sebrell, and Allen Love, 11–12 April 1804); LDS Film #9101627, Images #24–26. The processioners records show that Nicholas Sebrell's land lay near that of his father on the Blackwater Swamp.
4. 1796 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #8458765, Image #567, #23: Nicholas Sebrell.
5. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), pp. 116, 118 (Edward Faulcon, Nicholas Sebrell, and William Simmons appointed to review account of Mary Spratley, 25 October 1796). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1768–1779), pp. 327–328 (Will of Mary Spratley, written 19 March 1773, filed in court 23 November 1773).
6. Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 188–189 (Final account of William Spratley, deceased, Executor of Mary Spratley, deceased, filed by auditors with the Surry Court in October 1796, recorded by Clerk of Court Jacob Faulcon 25 October 1796).
7. Surry County VA Land Tax Books, LDS Film #8742699, 1796 (Images #213, 218), 1797 (Image #239), and 1798 (Image #266).
8. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 233 (Court session Friday, 30 March 1798); p. 234 (*"James Baird surviving Partner, &c. of John Hay & Co. Pltff against Albridgton Seward Deft, In Debt. This day came the parties by their Attornies* [sic]*, and thereupon came also a Jury to wit,…Nicholas Sebrell,…Edward Faulcon, David Price, Robert McIntoch, John Tillott…"*).
9. Shepherd, Samuel. *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).
10. 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 the walls to be brick.
11. Surry County VA Business Licenses (1783–1856), LDS Film #4131659, Images #4–5 (Robert McIntosh, *"license to keep an Ordinary at his house in the County of Surry,"* 23 April 1788); Images #52–53 (William Scammell, *"license to keep an Ordinary at the Cross roads,"* 25 July 1797; security: Robert McIntosh); Images #60–61 (William Scammell, *"license to keep an Ordinary at the Cross Roads,"* 28 June 1796; security: Robert McIntosh); Images #106–106 (Robert McIntosh, *"license to keep an Ordinary at the cross roads,"* 27 March 1792); Images #226–227 (Lewis Caffrey, *"license to keep an Ordinary at the cross roads where Robert McIntosh lately lived,"* 28 May 1793); Images #292–294 (Robert McIntosh, *"License to keep an Ordinary at his House in the County of Surry,"* 28 March 1786).
12. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), p. 462 (Court session of 28 January 1800); p. 467 (*"Order'd that William Boyce Sheriff…do pay David Price the sum of Forty Dollars out of any money he may have in his hands belonging to the County for repairs made by him on the Jail within the same"*). Surry County VA Order Book (1800–1804), p. 6 (Court session of 24 February 1801); p. 11 (*"On the motion of David Price, a License is granted im to keep an Ordinary at his House for one year next ensuing, he entered into Bond with approved security agreeably to Law"*). Surry County VA Business Licenses (1783–1856), LDS Film #4131659, Images #188–189 (David Price, *"license to keep an Ordinary at Surry court house,"* 24 February 1801).
13. Surry County VA Business Licenses (1783–1856), LDS Film #4131659, Images #70–71 (Bond of David Price for *"License to keep an Ordinary at her* [sic] *house at Surry C. House,"* 23 March 1802; security: Nicholas Sebrell).
14. 1798 Surry County VA Voter Election Results, LDS Film #4131905, Images #4 (*"A poll taken for Mr. Nicholas Sebrell for the County of Surry April 24th 1798"*), #11 (*"A Poll taken for Mr. Nicholas Faulcon, for the County of Surry, April the 24th 1798"*), #12 (*"Caufield Seward, Nichs Sebrell,"* voting for Faulcon), #14 (*"A Poll taken for Mr. Caufield*

Seward, for the County of Surry, April the 24th 1798"), #17 (*"Ns Sebrell,"* voting for Caufield). The tabulation shows that Faulcon prevailed over Seward by 217 to 121 votes.

15. 1799 Surry County VA Voter Election Results, LDS Film #4131906, Images 11 (*"A Poll taken for Nichs Faulcon, this 24 April 1799, as a Senator in this State Legislature"*), #13 (*"Nicholas Sebrell,"* voting for Faulcon), #15 (*"A Poll taken for Nichs Sebrell, this 24 April 1799 for this State Assembly"*), #19 (*"A pole taken for Wm Clinch 24th April 1799 for this State Assembly"*), #20 (*"Nicholas Sebrell,"* voting for Clinch). These results show that Sebrell received 148 votes, whereas Clinch received only 53 votes.
16. *"The Commercial Register"* (Richmond, VA), 28 December 1802 (p. 3, column 1); 6 January 1803 (p, 3, column 3). *"Virginia Argus Extra"* (Richmond, VA), 22 December 1804 (p. 1, column 1). *"Virginia Argus"* (Richmond, VA), 30 December 1806 (p. 1, column 2); 6 January 1807 (p. 1, column 1). *"The Enquirer"* (Richmond, VA), 8 January 1805 (p. 3, column 1). These newspapers all reference Nicholas Sebrell's membership in the House of Delegates of the Virginia General Assembly.
17. 1797–1807 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books. Nicholas Sebrell has not been located in the 1797 or 1798 Surry County Personal Property Tax Books, but between 1799 and 1804, he is listed by name as a free white tithable in the household of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. He is undoubtedly one of the two white male polls over aged sixteen in Nathaniel's 1805 household, and in 1806 and 1807, Nicholas is probably one of the three white male polls in Nathaniel's household. The third is probably John Stiles Jr., Nathaniel's grandson. The 1808 personal property tax records do not exist, and by 1809, Nicholas had married and moved to Southampton County.
18. Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 243–244 (Will of John Watkins Jr., written 15 August 1796, filed in court 24 October 1797). Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), pp. 156, 160, 163 (Justice John Watkins Jr. vs. Thomas Peter, 24 May 1797); pp. 170, 172 (John Watkins *"junior Gt"* vs. Thomas Peter, *"This suit abates by the death of the Plaintiff,"* 27 June 1797); p. 299 (*"Robert Watkins Executor of John Watkins against Thomas Peter,"* 27 November 1798). In the court minutes of November 1798, *"by the like Consent all matters in difference depending between them in this suit are submitted to the final determination of William Allen, Peter Jemm, and Richard Fletcher, or any two of them, and agree that their award or the award of any two of them be binding between the parties."*
19. Surry County VA Order Book (1795–1800), pp. 525, 528, 531 (Thomas Peter ordered to pay Nicholas Sebrell $1.59 *"as a witness for him at the suit of Robert Watkins executor of John Watkins decd.,"* 29 May 1800). Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804), pp. 19, 32 (25 March 1801); pp. 53, 58 (27 May 1801); pp. 89, 98 (25 August 1801); pp. 126, 138 (25 November 1801); pp. 191, 203 (24 March 1802); pp. 236, 245 (26 May 1802); pp. 297, 302 (Thomas Peter ordered to pay Nicholas Sebrell 53¢ for *"attending this Court one day as a witness"* for Peter, 25 August 1802); pp. 358, 372 (Nicholas Sebrell paid 53¢ for one day's attendance, 22 March 1803); pp. 451, 473 (Nicholas Sebrell paid $1.59 for three day's attendance, 26 May 1803). Unless otherwise indicated, at each of these court sessions, the Court ordered Thomas Peter to pay Nicholas Sebrell $1.06 *"for attending this Court two days as a witness for him at the suit of Watkins's exor."*
20. Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804), p. 316 (Court session of 23 November 1802); p. 326 (*"Ordered that Nicholas Sebrell…be recommended to the Governor and Council as fit and proper persons to be commissioned Magistrates in this County"*); p. 394 (Court session of 24 May 1803); p. 396 (*"Nicholas Sebrell,…Gentlemen being Commissioned Justices of the Peace for this County appeared personally in Court, and took the several Oaths prescribed by Law; Present: Nicholas Sebrell"*).
21. Surry County VA Order Book (1801–1804), p. 451 (*"Session continued by adjournment and held for Surry County,"* 26 May 1803); p. 452 (*"Present John Judkins & Nicholas Sebrell Gent"*); p. 462 (*"Absent Nicholas Sebrell Gent"*).
22. Surry County VA Clerk of the Circuit Court, Criminal Proceedings Against Free Persons, Slaves, Etc. (1742–1822), LDS Film #8249456, Image #72 (Case against Tom, Nicholas Sebrell, justice, 22 May 1804); #73 (Case against Mingo, Nicholas Sebrell, justice, 22 May 1804);
23. Surry County VA Clerk of the Circuit Court, Criminal Proceedings Against Free Persons, Slaves, Etc. (1742–1822), LDS Film #8249456, Image #74 (Case against Dolly Thorn, Nicholas Sebrell, justice, 28 May 1804); #75–76 (Case against John Ruffin, Nicholas Sebrell, justice, 25 September 1805); Image #81 (Cases against Mary Jonathan and John Drew, Nicholas Sebrell, justice, 23 November 1808).
24. 1807 Surry County VA Voter Election Results, LDS Film #4131913, Images 8 (*"Surry Ct House 28th April 1807. Poll taken for John Purdy Esqr a Candidate to sit in Senate for the State."*); 9 (*"Poll taken for John Purdie esq a candidate to for Senate 1807–28th April"*); 22–25 (*"Surry C. House 28th April 1807. Poll taken for Nicholas Sebrell Esquire, a Candidate to sit in Senate for the State."*) *"Impartial Observer"* (Richmond, VA) 18 April 1807 (p. 4, column 2). *"Virginia Argus,"* 23 May 1807 (p. 2, column 4). *"Farmer's Repository"* (Charleston, VA), 15 March 1811 (p. 3, column 2). Complete vote totals for this Senate race are not available, but the May 23rd issue of the *"Argus"* announces Sebrell's victory in the contest. The April 1807 *"Observer"* gives the vote totals from Isle of Wight County: Dr. Purdie (392) and Nicholas Sebrell (67). The Surry voter records show that Sebrell won Surry by a very wide margin, 319 to 5. To have won the race, Sebrell must have won more votes in Prince George and any other counties in their senate district.

25. Southampton County VA Marriage Register (1750–1853), p. 186; LDS Film #7579160, Image #196 (Nicholas Sebrell to Betsy Edmunds, bond 25 October 1808; Security: Benj. Cobb). Albemarle Parish Register (1739–1778) [Surry and Sussex Counties], LDS Film #7893694, Image #115 (Betsy, daughter of Thomas and Anne Saunders, born 22 December 1768). Brunswick County VA Will Book 6 (1795–1804), pp. 393–395 (Will of Thomas Saunders, written 22 January 1801, filed in court 25 January 1802). Southampton County VA Will Book 7 (1810–1815), p. 72–73 (Will of Elizabeth Sebrell, written 30 May 1811, filed with the Southampton County Court in July 1811). Thomas Saunders makes a provision in his will to his daughter, *"Betsey Edmunds,"* and other children. In the 1811 will of Elizabeth Sebrell, she leaves her property to her brothers and sisters, the identical children that Thomas Saunders named in his will.
26. Brunswick County VA Marriage Register (1751–1853), p. 80; LDS Film #7578837, Image #214 (Samuel Edmunds to *"Betsey"* Saunders, bond dated 28 April 1794). Brunswick County VA Marriage Records (1750–1850), p. 64; LDS Film #7578838, Image #28 (Samuel Edmunds to Betsy Saunders, bond dated 28 April 1794). Southampton County VA Will Book 6 (1804–1810), pp. 380–382 (Will of Samuel Edmunds, written 25 July 1806, filed in court 21 September 1807).
27. 1809 Southampton County VA Personal Property Tax Book, LDS Film #7856307, Image #160: Nicholas Sebrell. He paid taxes on two white males above sixteen years, 25 *"Blacks"* above twelve years, 22 *"Blacks"* above sixteen years, and 12 horses or mules, and two *"Riding chairs with two wheels."* He paid a total personal tax of $14.16.
28. Southampton County VA Will Book 7 (1810–1815), pp. 17–18 (Will of Nicholas Sebrell, written 2 December 1808, filed with the Southampton County Court on 15 October 1810); pp. 72–73 (Will of Elizabeth Sebrell, written 30 May 1811, filed with the Southampton County Court in July 1811); pp. 157–158 (Account of Nicholas Sebrell Estate, filed 15 June 1812).
29. Surry County VA Indentures (1770–1835), LDS Film #4121786, Images 165–166 (William Gholson, *"Sebrells exor,"* to Burley Davis, 22 January 1816). It is unclear if this transaction was recorded in the Surry County deed book. The index to Deed Book 5 (1815–1818) shows no reference to it.

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