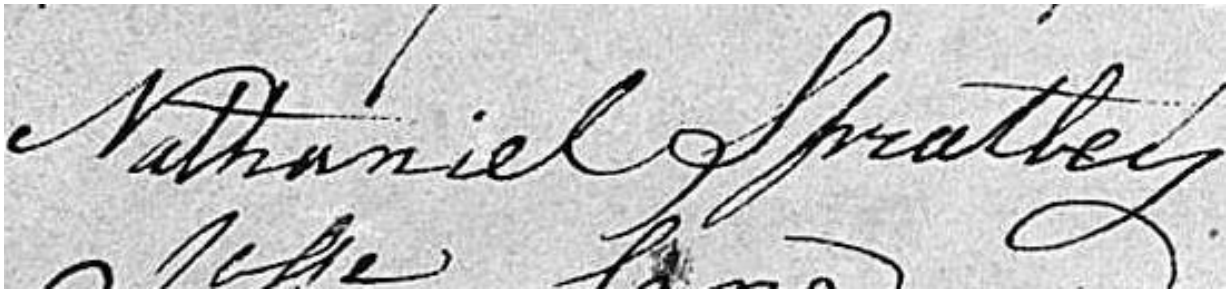
The Life of

Nathaniel Spratley

(c1791–Oct 1846)



of

Blackwater Swamp, Surry County, Virginia

Son of Benjamin Spratley & Susanna Sebrell,

Husband of Lucy Cocke

by Timothy Dean Hudson

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Introduction

This sketch traces the life of Nathaniel Spratley—*"Nate"*—who lived from about 1791 until 1846 along the north side of the Blackwater Swamp in southern Surry County, Virginia. Nate was a white man, presumably descended exclusively from ancestors native to western Europe.

Our Nathaniel Spratley had a namesake contemporary who also lived in Surry County, Virginia, and one must take care to distinguish between the pair. This other Nathaniel Spratley was born about 1803 to Mary Spratley, a free black woman. Commonly known as *"Nat Spratley,"* the son of Mary was born a free man and registered as such with the Surry County Court in 1829 [1].

Although the two men had a *"family"* connection, no known evidence suggests that it was biological. Mary Spratley was born in January 1775 to an enslaved woman owned by Benjamin Spratley, the father of Nate Spratley, the white man. On 28 October 1783, Benjamin Spratley had a document recorded in Surry County that stated,

> *…being fully persuaded that freedom is the natural right of all mankind, and that it is my duty to do unto others as I would desire to be done by in the like situation…,*

Benjamin Spratley then manumitted his eleven slaves, including the eight-year-old Mary, although he remained her legal guardian until she reached the age of eighteen in January 1793. The standard practice of the Surry County Clerks was to assign the surname of the owner who manumitted the slave as the now free person's surname. Thus, once Virginia began requiring free black people to register with their county officials in 1803, Benjamin's former slaves took his surname, giving rise to the large number of free black Spratleys who lived in southeastern Virginia between 1783 and 1865 [2].

Mary Spratley lived her entire life in Surry County, dying in the 1840s. Nat Spratley married Tempy and raised a large family of children nearby. He farmed in Surry County from the 1820s until the 1850s, when he moved across the county line into Sussex County. He died sometime after 1870 near Wakefield, Sussex County, Virginia [3].

The two Nathaniel Spratleys were undoubtedly acquainted, given that Nate Spratley's father, Benjamin, had manumitted Nat's mother eight years prior to Nate Spratley's birth and two decades prior to Nat's. While the men's paths certainly crossed over the years, their lives did not intersect in a manner we can discern today. The following biography therefore concerns only the white Nathaniel Spratley, whose life unfolded within the legal and social structures of early-nineteenth-century Surry County, Virginia.

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Life of Nathaniel Spratley

Nathaniel Spratley [Nate] (c1791–Oct 1846) was the youngest son of Benjamin Spratley (c1754–1792) and Susanna Sebrell (1755/1760–Apr 1794) [1]. Nate's grandparents were all natives of southeastern Virginia and longtime residents of Surry County. Benjamin was the son of John Spratley (1720/1725–1758) and Mary Cocke (c1730–1773) [2], and Susan was the daughter of Nathaniel Sebrell Sr. (1723–1815) and Elizabeth Faulcon (c1735–aft. 24 Feb 1784) [3]. Benjamin Spratley's father, John, had left him a farm on the north side of the Blackwater Swamp near that of Nathaniel Sebrell. Susanna and Benjamin Spratley operated his farm between about 1780 and 1792. Evidence indicates that Nathaniel was born about 1791, undoubtedly on his parents' farm [4].

Nathaniel Spratley was an infant when his father died in early 1792, and at about three years of age when she died in April 1794, he probably had no memory of his mother. His maternal uncle, Capt. David Sebrell, served as his guardian and Nathaniel probably lived with him in the 1790s and early 1800s. David Sebrell charged annual amounts for his board and clothing, but in 1807, Sebrell charged $22.88 for *"Board, Clothing and Tuition"* for Nathaniel, indicating that he received some formal education. Unlike the numerous personal items Sebrell purchased for Nathaniel's oldest sister, Polly, he only paid for a few items for Nathaniel. On 10 December 1811, when Nate was about twenty, he paid for these items, undoubtedly used to make clothing for him, possibly a coat:

Four yard *"Blue Coating"* $7.00
3½ yards *"Fancy Cord"*.....$4.81
"2 Doz. Buttons and 4 Hanks of Silk" .....83¢
three yards of cotton cloth.....$1.00

David Sebrell maintained a detailed accounting of the expenses related to each of his nieces and nephews through July 1813, shortly after Nathaniel Spratley had passed the age of majority. Sebrell's accounting was not formally accepted by the Surry County Court until 1837, after his death [5]. These records suggest that Nate's childhood was materially modest but stable under his uncle's supervision.

Although Sebrell handled Nathaniel's finances, his older siblings, Polly and Walter Spratley, a decade older than him, probably helped raise him. Walter married in 1808 and settled in Cabin Point near the James River, and by 1810, it appears that Nate had joined him. Walter's 1810 household includes three white individuals whose ages match Walter, his wife, and Nate. In both 1810 and 1812, Walter Spratley paid taxes on two males aged sixteen years and older, probably himself and Nathaniel. This indicates that Nate had left his elderly maternal grandfather's

plantation near the Blackwater Swamp and joined his older brother in Cabin Point, where Walter operated a tavern and plantation [6].

During the War of 1812, the British fleet blockaded the Chesapeake Bay beginning in February 1813. On June 22nd, the British force attempted to take Craney Island, located a short distance down the James River from Hog Island in Surry County. The Virginia Militia dealt the British a resounded defeat. Three days later, the British attacked and captured Hampton early on the morning on June 25th, and French mercenaries fighting for the British then spent the next two days pillaging the town. American observers reported that the French mercenaries raped and murdered American civilians. These events brought the war directly to Surry County's doorstep.

To reinforce the Virginia troops, additional militia companies formed in nearby counties, including Surry. Nathaniel Spratley and his first cousin, William Carsley, joined Capt. George Judkins' company as part of Lt. Col. William Allen's 71st Regiment Virginia Militia. They served from June 30th through July 10th, when the immediate British threat subsided [7]. This brief service was typical of Surry County men during the crisis of 1813.

The 414-acre Benjamin Spratley farm remained intact until 1812, when Nate reached the age of twenty-one. That year, he and his siblings, Polly, Walter, and Elizabeth, divided the farm among themselves, with Walter and Elizabeth receiving 100 acres each, and Polly and Nathaniel receiving 133⅛ [8]. Elizabeth Spratley died in 1812, and about 1814, Nate, Polly, and Walter inherited her share of the Spratley farm. This left Nate and Polly each with adjoining 166½-acre farms on the Blackwater Swamp. Walter had sold his portion of the land and became a businessman at Cabin Point [9]. This division marked Nate's transition into independent adulthood as a landholder.

Nate's aunt, Mary Ann Sebrell, wrote her will on 17 July 1818, bequeathing *"One Desk to him and his heirs,"* as well as giving him and his older sister, Polly, one fourth of the value of her estate. Mary Ann appointed Nathaniel's older brother, Walter, as her executor, and Nate accompanied Walter when he filed her will with the Surry County Court and qualified as their aunt's executor on September 28th. Nate served as security for his brother, and this is his signature on the executor's bond [10]:



On 26 October 1818, Nate posted bond to obtain a license to marry Lucy Cocke (c1783–1856), with her father, John Cocke, serving as his security. Nate signed his marriage bond as:



Their marriage took place the following month, on November 12th [11]. Lucy was the daughter of John Cocke (1760/1770–1841) and Elizabeth E. Moring (1765/1775–1844), who married in Surry County, Virginia on 9 March 1789 [12].

Nate and Lucy Spratley settled on his farm along the Blackwater Swamp. It appears that Nate's eldest sister, Polly, lived with Lucy and him in 1820, and he probably oversaw the cultivation of Polly's farm as well as his own. On 20 May 1839, Polly sold her 200-acre farm on Cypress Swamp to Nate for $160 [13].

Sometime prior to 1813, Joseph Ellis moved into the area north of the Blackwater Swamp near Nathaniel Spratley and his relatives and settled on a tract of land near The New Design Tavern. Ellis was a free black man, but his origins remain unclear. Although Virginia law required free black men and women to register with their county governments, Ellis' name is not found among the hundreds of free blacks who registered in Surry County during this era [14].

Joe Ellis proved himself an industrious farmer, making sufficient profits to purchase his own land. On 2 March 1813, he paid John G. Sharp $190 for a 47½-acre tract of land on the road from The New Design to Birch Island Bridge. On 23 December 1826, he paid Nicholas Sharp $96.67 for an adjoining 29-acre tract, and on 13 January 1832, Ellis paid Patrick H. Bilbo $255.75 for an additional 85¼ acres [15]. This brought his farm on the Blackwater Swamp to 149¾ acres. In 1836 or early 1837, he sold a 34½-acre tract of his land to his son, David Ellis [16].

By early 1837, Joseph Ellis had acquired a substantial estate of land and other property. Now aged at least in his sixties, he wrote his will on 21 March 1837, directing his executor to oversee the division of his 115¼-acre farm and the sale of his estate, naming his three children and two stepchildren as his legatees. In addition, he wrote

> *It is my desire that Mr. Nathaniel Spratley of this County would see this my last will and testament carried into effect.*

Several local white farmers witnessed Ellis' will, including Nathaniel Spratley's first cousin, Dr. John Nicholas Sebrell, John Spratley, Jesse Lane, and David Booth. Ellis's request reflects the trust he placed in Nate, despite the racial and legal hierarchies of the era.

On 24 June 1839, Nathaniel Spratley appeared before the Surry Court with two of his first cousins, Dr. Sebrell and Peter T. Spratley, and local farmer Jesse Lane to file Joseph Ellis' will. With Lane and Peter T. Spratley as his securities, Nathaniel signed a $1000 bond to secure his service as executor of Ellis' will:



Nathaniel Spratley filed the inventory of Joseph Ellis' estate with the Surry Court on 20 November 1839, and on 31 December 1841, he filed an accounting of his disbursement of funds, including payment of $5.00 for Ellis' coffin [17].

Nathaniel Spratley died about October 1846, only in his early fifties. His early death left Lucy and their sons to manage the farm in a changing and increasingly difficult economic landscape. He died owing several debts, leaving his estate insolvent—a common fate among middling farmers in antebellum Surry County. The resulting litigation caused a portion of his lands to be seized and sold to pay his debts in the early 1850s [18].

After her husband's death, Lucy Cocke Spratley continued to maintain their farm for the next decade with the help of her sons [19]. She died in 1856 [20].

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Epilogue

A curious epilogue to Nathaniel Spratley's life unfolded in 1850, arising from his administration of Joseph Ellis' estate. The case illustrates the precarious legal position of free Black families in antebellum Virginia, where even a father's bequest could be challenged on the grounds of ownership.

In his will, Joseph Ellis directed his executor, Nathaniel Spratley, to sell his property, and Ellis left one-fifth of the proceeds to his son, Moses. Although Joe was a free black man, Moses was born to an enslaved woman, making Moses a slave himself.

In 1850, Moses' owner, John Avery, filed a lawsuit with the Surry County Chancery Court. Avery claimed that as a slave, Moses was not entitled under the law to the bequest left him by his father. Instead, as Moses' owner, the money that his father left him should rightfully have gone to Avery. Because Spratley had paid the money directly to Moses, as Ellis's will required, Avery's suit demanded that Nathaniel Spratley's estate pay him the legacy left Moses by Joe Ellis.

Spratley's administrator, his first cousin, Peter T. Spratley, objected to Avery's claims. When the case appeared on the docket of the Surry Chancery Court in October 1851, they dismissed the lawsuit without offering any explanation [21].

Thus, even after his death, Nathaniel Spratley's actions as executor continued to shape local legal disputes.

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Children of Nathaniel Spratley & Lucy Cocke

Nathaniel Spratley Sr. and Lucy Cocke had five known children who survived infancy [1]:

1. **John B. Spratley** (c1819–10 May 1864) married Rebecca A. James (1835/1840 –Nov 1855) and Susan Ann Carroll (c1842–3 Feb 1889).
2. **Julia Ann Spratley** (c1824–1867/1880) married James Wesley Savedge (c1824–1866/1880).
3. **Jacob Nicholas Spratley** (c1827–aft. Apr 1862).
4. **James W. Spratley** (c1829–aft. 1880) married Martha Caroline Hill (c1835–aft. 1880).
5. **Susannah Elizabeth Spratley** (Jul 1831–25 Sep 1862) married James Wesley Savedge (c1824–1866/1880). After Susan's death, Savedge married her older sister, Julia.

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Brief Biographical Sketches of the Children of Nathaniel Spratley & Lucy Cocke

1. John B. Spratley

John B. Spratley (c1819–10 May 1864) married on 23 December 1845 in Surry County, Virginia to Rebecca A. James (1835/1840 –Nov 1855), daughter of Sarah H. James [2]. They moved to Ettrick, in Chesterfield County, and later, to Petersburg, where he worked as a carpenter. They had two children prior to Rebecca's death in November 1855, only one of whom—Arphelia—survived into 1860. That year, John lived in Ettrick with his sister Julia, his daughter Arphelia, and his late wife's mother and brother [3]. John remarried on 22 November 1860 in Chesterfield County, Virginia to Susan Ann Carroll (c1842–3 Feb 1889), daughter of John N. and Sarah Carroll [4].

John B. Spratley enlisted on 14 March 1862 at Petersburg, Virginia in Co. A, 9th Regiment Virginia Infantry, Confederate States Army. After suffering from several maladies in mid-1863, Spratley was reported as present for duty from July 1863 through April 1864. On 30 April 1864, during the Bermuda Hundred Campaign, Union troops began an expedition against the Richmond & Petersburg Railroad, intending to cut the line of communication. At Chester Station, the attacking troops met a large Confederate force, and in the resulting battle, John B. Spratley was killed in action [5].

It is not known what became of Spratley's daughter, Arphelia Spratley. He and his second wife, Susan Ann Carroll Spratley had only one known child, Patrick Henry Spratley (c1862–5 Apr 1895). In 1870 and 1880, Patrick H. Spratley lived with his mother and stepfather, Lawson Thomas Traylor. Patrick married on 13 December 1886 in Chesterfield County, Virginia to Martha Adalaide Chappell [Addie Lena] (11 Sep 1868–11 Jun 1937). He worked as a laborer in Chesterfield County before dying of typhoid fever in 1895, leaving three children [6].

John B. Spratley's life reflects the experiences of many working-class Virginians whose families were reshaped by migration, early widowhood, and the upheavals of the Civil War.

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2. Julia Ann Spratley Savedge

Julia Ann Spratley (c1824–1867/1880) remained single until the age of forty-one. She lived with her mother and siblings in Surry County in 1850, and in 1860, Julia lived in the household of her widowed older brother in Chesterfield County [7]. In 1858, Julia's younger sister, Susannah Elizabeth, married their neighbor, James Wesley Savedge (c1824–1866/1880), son of Robert Savedge and Wilmoth Crocker. Susan died four years later from the effects of childbirth [8]. On 1 February 1863, Julia married her former brother-in-law, James Wesley Savedge [9].

Julia Ann Spratley and James W. Savedge had two known children to survive to adulthood [10]:

1. **James William Savedge** (16 Feb 1864–18 Feb 1933) married on 25 November 1886 in Prince George County, Virginia to Clara Delilah Peter (26 May 1871–9 Jun 1946). They lived in Isle of Wight County, Virginia.
2. **Lucy Ann Savedge** (22 Jul 1867–6 Apr 1924) married on 21 December 1887 in Sussex County, Virginia to William Thomas Harrison (9 Jul 1862–11 Dec 1930). They settled on a farm in Prince George County, Virginia.

Neither Julia, her husband, nor her children have been identified on the 1870 federal census. It appears that both Julia and James had died by 1880, when their son, James W. Savedge, lived in Surry County with his unmarried aunt, Susannah R. Savedge. Lucy has not been identified on this census [11].

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3. Jacob Nicholas Spratley

Jacob Nicholas Spratley (c1827–aft. Apr 1862) lived with his mother and siblings on their farm in 1850, and it appears that he worked as a laborer in Surry County, Virginia in 1860 [12]. He enlisted on 22 June 1861 at the Surry County Courthouse as a private in Capt. Thomas W. Ruffin's company of Surry Light Artillery. His enlistment record listed him as a farmer born about 1830, but this slight discrepancy in his reported birth year is typical of enlistment records.

Jacob's unit was mobilized at Smithfield, Virginia on July 8th as the 3rd Virginia Infantry Regiment. He was reported present for duty through 30 April 1862, after which no further record of him survives [13]. Like many Confederate soldiers, Jacob vanished from the wartime record, almost certainly a casualty of the conflict.

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4. James W. Spratley

James W. Spratley (c1829–aft. 1880) lived with his mother and siblings on their farm in 1850 [14]. About 1858, he married Martha Caroline Hill (c1835–aft. 1880) [15]. They had a son, Marshall Nathaniel Spratley, born in Portsmouth, Virginia, on 14 January 1859 [16]. They remained in Portsmouth through 1860, with James working as a laborer. There is no evidence that James served in the Confederate military during the Civil War. In 1870 and 1880, he and his family farmed in Norfolk County, and they presumably died there before 1900 [17].

James W. Spratley's life reflects the mobility of mid-nineteenth-century Tidewater families, shaped by shifting labor opportunities and the disruptions of the Civil War era.

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5. Susannah Elizabeth Spratley Savedge

Susannah Elizabeth Spratley (Jul 1831–25 Sep 1862) lived with her mother and siblings on their farm in 1850, near the household of James Wesley Savedge (c1824–1866/1880). They married in Surry County on 17 June 1858 [18]. Susan and James had one daughter born about December 1859 or January 1860, and a son, Joseph Inman Savedge, born about 9 September 1862. Both the infant son and Susan died sixteen days later, on September 25th. It is not known what became of their young daughter, but she presumably died in infancy or early childhood. The following year, Susan's husband married her older sister, Julia Ann Spratley [19].

Susan Spratley's brief marriage and early death left a small and fragile family network that her sister Julia would later help sustain.

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Notes

Introduction

1. Surry County VA Register of Free Negroes (1803–1847), p. 160, #374: *"Nat alias Nat Spratley son of Mary Spratley a free woman of Surry County the said Nat was born free."* His registration gave this description of Nat Spratley: *"the said Nat is of a dark complexion five feet eight inches high has a scar on the right side of his face and another on the left side of his neck."*
2. Surry County VA Deed Book 12 (1783–1787), pp. 19–20 (Benjamin Spratley emancipates slaves Will (aged 34), Natt (27), Lucy (37), Betty (26), Simon (15), Jane (11), Mary (8), Sally (5), Cuffy (6), Annaky (3), and Judy (six months); 28 October 1783).
3. 1830 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 188, line #17: Nat Spratley. 1840 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 233, line #16: *"Mary Spratley f.n.;"* #28: *"Nat Spratley f.n."* 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 72a, Household #196, line #18: Nat Spratley (age: 47; black; Farmer); #19: Tempy Spratley (age: 42; black). 1860 Sussex County VA Federal Census, Dist. No. 1, P.O. *"Sussex C. H. Va,"* p. 18, Household #137: Nat Spratley (age: 55, black; Farmer). 1870 Sussex County VA Federal Census, Wakefield Township, P.O. Wakefield, p. 243a, Household #173: Nat Spratley (age: 65; black; Farm Laborer). In 1840, Mary Spratley was described as a *"Free Colored Woman"* aged 55–100; she is presumably Nat's mother. Nat's wife, Tempy, presumably died between 1850 and 1860, and he appears to have lived as a widower in 1860 and 1870.

Life of Nathaniel Spratley

1. Surry County VA Will Book 12 (1783–1792), pp. 318–319 (Will of Benjamin Spratley, written 13 January 1789, filed in court 28 February 1792). Surry County VA Will Book 1 (1792–1804), pp. 282–284 (Account of Benjamin Spratley Estate, filed 24 July 1798). Surry County VA Guardians Bonds (1797–1814), p. 3 (David Sebrell appointed guardian to Benjamin Spratley's Orphans, 27 February 1798). Surry County VA Fiduciary Accounts (1831–1839), pp. 233, 239 (Accounts of Walter and Elizabeth Spratley, orphans of Benjamin Spratley, filed by their guardian, David Sebrell, and approved by the Surry County Court on 24 October 1836). Surry County VA Guardians Bonds (1797–1814), p. 3 (Guardian of Walter, Henry, Benjamin, Betsy and Nathaniel Spratley, 27 February 1798). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 4 (1822–1827), pp. 614–616 (Nathaniel Sebrell Estate Account, filed 26 October 1826). 1782–1794 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Records. Either Thomas Spratley or commissioners appointed to complete the administration of Benjamin Spratley's estate after Thomas' death recorded payment of £95 8s 0½d for:

   > *To Board, Clothing & Schooling of Mary Spratley, Walter Spratley, Henry Spratley, Benjamin Spratley, Elizabeth Spratley & Nathaniel Spratley, orphans of the said Benjamin Spratley decd. from April 1794 to the 31st December 1797.*

   This implies that Susanna Sebrell Spratley died in April 1794. Administrator Thomas Spratley filed undated records of payments of 15 shillings, *"To Cash paid for a Coffin for Benjamin Spratley,"* and 12 shillings *"To Cash paid for a Coffin for Susanna Spratley."* In 1794, the taxes on three horses were not paid in Susanna's name, but in the name of *"Estate of Benja. Spratly Decd."* This further indicates that she died before the personal property taxes were paid in 1794. These multiple references all show that the children of Benjamin and Susanna Sebrell Spratley included Mary (Polly), Walter, Henry, Benjamin, Elizabeth (Betsy), and Nathaniel Spratley. Three of them died young, and by 1826, the surviving heirs of Susan Sebrell Spratley included Walter, Polly, and Nathaniel Spratley. On 2 December 1809, David Sebrell charged the four surviving children of his sister $2.00 each *"paid for Silling and smokehouse and pailing the Grave Yard in,"* showing that he maintained the graves of his sister and her husband.
2. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1754–1768), pp. 155–156 (Will of John Spratley, written 3 May 1758, filed in court 19 July 1758). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10a (1768–1779) (Will of Mary Spratley, written 19 March 1773, filed in court 23 November 1773). Surry County VA Order Book (1764–1774), pp. 335–336 (*"Benjamin, Ann, Walter and Thomas Spratley's Orphans of John Spratley Decd. made Choice of William Spratley for their Guardian,"* 22 December 1772). Surry County VA Guardians Accounts (1762–1783), p. 318 (Benjamin Spratley Acknowledgement, 22 August 1775). Both John and Mary Spratley identified Benjamin as their son in their wills.
3. Surry County VA Will Book 12 (1783–1792), p. 17–19 (Will of Nicholas Faulcon Sr., written 6 January 1781, filed in court on 23 December 1783). Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 140–141 (Will of Nathaniel Sebrell, written 25 December 1813, filed 22 April 1816); Book 4 (1822–1827), pp. 613–619 (Nathaniel Sebrell Estate Account, filed 26 October 1826); Book 5 (1827–1830), pp. 208–214 (Nathaniel Sebrell Estate Account, filed 22 October 1827). The 1826 and 1827 accounts of Nathaniel Sebrell's estate carefully lists his grandchildren by his deceased children, as named in his will. Nathaniel Sebrell named his deceased daughter, Susanna Spratley, and the accounts of payments to Sebrell's grandchildren prove that she married Benjamin Spratley.
4. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1754–1768), pp. 155–156 (Will of John Spratley, written 3 May 1758, filed in court 19 July 1758). In his will, John Spratley wrote, *"I Give and Bequeath to my two Sons William and John all*

my Land of the Southside of Blackwater Swamp to be equally divided between them…I give and bequeath to my Son Benjamin a peace [sic] *of Land on the north side of the said Swamp where John Allen now lives."*

5. Surry County VA Will Book 12 (1783–1792), pp. 318–319 (Will of Benjamin Spratley, written 13 January 1789, filed in court 28 February 1792). Surry County VA Guardians Bonds (1797–1814), p. 3 (David Sebrell appointed guardian of Benjamin Spratley's orphans, Walter, Henry, Benjamin, Betsy and Nathaniel Spratley, 27 February 1798). Surry County VA Fiduciary Accounts (1831–1839), pp. 227–231 (*"Nathaniel Spratley, Orphan of Benjamin Spratley. In account with David Sebrell his Guardian,"* approved by Surry County Court on 23 January 1837).
6. 1810 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 616, line #16: *"Walter Spratley Senr."* Spratley's household consisted only of three white people: one male 16–26, one male 26–45, and one female 16–26, plus eight slaves. The white people are probably Walter and his wife, and his younger brother, Nathaniel. 1810, 1812 Surry County VA Personal Property Tax Books, LDS Film #8188299, Images #696 (*"Walter Spratley Sen. Gent."*) and #734 (*"Walter Spratley Gent."*).
7. Butler, Stuart. *A Guide to Virginia Militia Units in the War of 1812.* 2nd ed. Athens, GA: New Papyrus, 2011, pp. 11–13, 192–193. *Muster Rolls of the Virginia Militia in the War of 1812.* Richmond, VA: William F. Ritchie, 1852, pp. 512–513 (Capt. George Judkins' Company, 71st Regiment Virginia Militia, Lt. Col. William Allen).
8. 1795 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #8742699, Image #188: *"Est^{a} Benjamin Spratley,"* 414 acres. 1811 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121838, Image #16: *"The Estate of Ben Spratley dec^{d},"* 414 acres. 1812 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121839, Image #24: *"Est. Benjamin Spratley,"* 414 acres. 1813 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4121840, Images #26: *"Walter Spratley Sen."* (100 acres), *"Eliz^{a} Spratley"* (100 acres); #27: Nathaniel Spratley (133⅛ acres), Polly Spratley (133⅛ acres).
9. 1815 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124791, Images #24: *"Walter Spratley Sen."* (100 acres), *"Estate of Elizabeth Spratley"* (100 acres), Nathaniel Spratley (133⅛ acres), Polly Spratley (133⅛ acres). 1816 Surry County VA Land Tax Book, LDS Film #4124801, Image #25, *"Walter Spratley Sen."* (33⅓ acres), *"Nath^{l} Spratley"* (166½ acres), Polly Spratley (166½ acres).
10. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 3 (1815–1821), pp. 314–315 (Will of Mary Ann Sebrell, written 17 July 1818, filed in court on 28 September 1818). Surry County VA Executors Bonds (1816–1831), p. 12 (Walter Spratley Senr., Executor of Mary Ann Sebrell, 28 September 1818; security: Nathaniel Spratley).
11. Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, 1818, LDW Film #4129184, Image #54 (Nathaniel Spratley bond to marry Lucy *"Cocks,"* 26 October 1818). Surry County VA Marriage Returns (1785–1854), p. 39 (Nathaniel Spratley to *"Lucy Cox,"* 12 November 1818). Surry County VA Marriage Returns (1785–1820), LDS Film #4131987, Image #20 (Nathaniel Spratley to *"Lucy Cox,"* 12 November 1818). Surry County VA Marriage Register (1768–1853), p. 110 (Nathaniel Spratley to *"Lucy Cocke"* bond dated 26 October 1818); p. 231 (Nathaniel Spratley to *"Lucy Cox,"* married 12 November 1818). Charles E. Cockes was probably a relative of Lucy's, for he served as security on her Administrator's Bond following her death in 1856. He was born about 1823, and in 1850, he worked as a merchant in adjoining Sussex County; see 1850 Sussex County VA Federal Census, p. 144a, Household #709, line #3: Charles Champion (age: 44; Farmer); #7: Charles E. Cocks (age: 27; Merchant).
12. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 8 (1840–1845), pp. 223–224 (Will of John Cocks, written 8 February 1841, filed with the Surry Court on 22 November 1841); pp. 485–486 (Will of Elizabeth E. Cocks, written 21 March 1844, filed with the Surry Court on 27 May 1844). 1789 Surry County VA Marriage Bonds, LDS Film #4129139, Images #40–41 (John Cocks to Elizabeth E. Moring, 9 March 1789).
13. 1820 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 278b, line #8: *"Nath^{l} Spratley."* Surry County VA Deed Book 11 (1839–1843), p. 53 (Polly Spratley to Nathaniel Spratley, 20 May 1839).
14. 1820 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 278b, line #8: *"Nath^{l} Spratley;"* #22: Joe Ellis. 1830 Surry County VA Federal Census, p. 170, line #1: David Sebrell; #8: Joseph Ellis. Joe Ellis' 1820 household contains one older free black man and three younger free black females. In 1830, his household consisted of ten *"Free Colored Persons,"* with Joe the free black man aged 55–100, together with 2 free black males 10–24, 1 aged 24–36, 1 free black female under ten years, two aged 10–24, and three aged 24–36.
15. Surry County VA Deed Book 4 (1811–1815), pp. 223–224 (John G. Sharp to Elizabeth S. Sharp to Joe Ellis, 2 March 1813); Deed Book 8 (1826–1830), pp. 73–74 (Nicholas Sharp and Moriah Sharp to *"Joe Ellis free negro,"* 23 December 1826); Deed Book 9 (1830–1834), pp. 190–191 (Patrick H. Bilbro and Louisa N. Bilbro to *"Joe Ellis F.N.,"* 13 January 1832). The 1813 deed described Ellis' land as lying *"on the North side of Blackwater Swamp and…Beginning at a Sycamore on the road leading from the New Design to Birch Island Bridges…,"* while the 1832 deed described the land he bought as *"lying the east side of the road leading from Birth Island bridges to Cabin Point."*
16. 1835 Surry County VA Land Tax Record, LDS Film #4126538, Image #16, *"Joe Ellis f.n.,"* 149.75 acres. 1837 Surry County VA Land Tax Record, LDS Film #4126548, Image #20: *"Joe Ellis (f.n.),"* 115¼ acres; the Surry Clerk noted that he had sold 34½ acres to David Ellis *"per deed."* The deed book for this period is missing.

17. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 7 (1834–1840), p. 637 (Will of Joseph Ellis, written 21 March 1837, filed with Surry Court on 24 June 1839 by executor Nathaniel Spratley); Wills, Etc. Book 8 (1840–1845), pp. 77–79 (Inventory of Joseph Ellis Estate, filed by Nathaniel Spratley 22 July 1839); pp. 261–262 (Account of Joseph Ellis Estate, filed by Executor Nathaniel Spratley, 31 December 1841). Surry County VA Executors Bonds (1832–1858), p. 64 (Bond of Nathaniel Spratley, Executor of Joseph Ellis, 24 June 1839).
18. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 9 (1845–1852), pp. 209–212 (Estate of Nathaniel Spratley, 25 October 1847). Surry County VA Administrator's Bonds (1846–1859), p. 9 (Peter T. Spratley, Bond as Administrator of Estate of Nathaniel Spratley, 26 October 1846).
19. 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 99a, Dwelling #636, line #37: Lucy Spratley (age: 26); #38: Julia A. Spratley (age: 26); #39: Jacob Spratley (age: 23; Farmer); #40: James W. Spratley (age: 21; Farmer); #41: Susannah Spratley (age: 19).
20. Surry County VA Wills, Etc. Book 10 (1852–1863), pp. 309–310 (Estate of Lucy Spratley, 5 December 1856). Surry County VA Administrator's Bonds (1846–1859), p. 151 (John L. Davis, Bond as Administrator of Estate of Lucy Spratley, 22 November 1856; security: Charles E. Cockes).
21. Surry County VA Fiduciary Accounts (1849–1868), LDS Film #7645845, pp, 314–315, Image #169 (Account of Lucy Spratley Estate, John L. Davis, Administrator, filed 26 April 1858). Surry County VA Chancery Court Case #1851-003, Drawer #323: John Avery vs. Administrator of Nathaniel Spratley; Chancery Court Case #1852-006, Drawer #324: Administrators of Edwin T. Spratley, etc. vs. Administrators of Nathaniel Spratley. Nate's administrator was his first cousin, Peter Thomas Spratley, son of Thomas Spratley. Peter first paid debts of the estate on 10 November 1846, suggesting that Nathaniel Spratley died about October 1846.

Children of Nathaniel Spratley

1. Surry County VA Chancery Court Case #1852-006, Drawer #324: Administrators of Edwin T. Spratley, etc. vs. Administrators of Nathaniel Spratley. 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 99a, Household #636: Lucy Spratley (age: 57). Neither Nathaniel nor Lucy's estate records listed their heirs. In 1850, Lucy lived with her younger four children, apparently on their farm, although she was not listed as owning real estate. The younger people in her household included: Julia A., Jacob, James W., and Susannah Spratley. The Chancery Court case lists all of their children and proves that John Spratley was the eldest son. The original petition lists them as John, Julia, *"Jacob Nicholas,"* James, and Elizabeth Spratley.
2. 1845 Surry County VA Marriage Bonds & Consents, LDS Film #4131974, Image #44 (John B. Spratley to Rebecca A. James, 22 December 1845). Surry County VA Marriage Register (1768–1853), p. 196 (John B. Spratley to Rebecca A. James, marriage bond dated 22 December 1845; Sarah H. James, mother); p. 259 (John B. Spratley to Rebecca A. James, married 23 December 1845). Surry County VA Marriage Returns (1785–1854), LDS Film #4131988, Image #87, p. 127 (John B. Spratley to Rebecca A. James, 23 December 1845).
3. Chesterfield County VA Register of Deaths, LDS Film #4225424, Image #18 (#37: Rebecca A. Spratley, died November 1855; cause: *"Pleuresy"*); #57 (#16: Narcissee E. Spratley, died 18 March 1855; cause: *"Chronic;"* age: 1 year, 8 months; parents: *"Jno. B. & Rebecca Spratley;"* residence: Ettricks; informant: Rebecca A. Spratley, mother). 1860 Chesterfield County VA Federal Census, *"S. District Ettrick Fac,"* p. 548/87, Household #641, line #27: *"John B. Spratly"* (age: 40; Carpenter); #28: *"Arphelia Spratly"* (age: 9); #29: Sarah James (age: 50; Domestic); #30: Laenius H. James (age: 27; Carpenter); #31: *"Julian Spratly"* (age: 36; House Keeper). The year of the deaths on Image #18 is not given (it is marked as *"1853?,"* but since she gave the information when her daughter died in March 1855, it Rebecca's death must occurred in November 1855.
4. Chesterfield County VA Register of Marriages, LDS Film #7725166, Image #66, p. 28 (John B. Spratley [age 41] to Susan A. Carroll [age 18], 22 November 1860). Chesterfield County VA Register of Deaths, LDS Film #4225424, Image #271 (Susan Ann Taylor, died 3 February 1889, cause: *"exernia;"* age: 46; parents: John N & Sarah Carroll; birthplace: Surry County; spouse: Lawson T. Traylor). The marriage register provides this information: Spratley was a widower, but Susan was single; both were born in Surry County, Virginia; he resided in Petersburg, she in Chesterfield; his parents: Nathaniel & Lucy Spratley; her parents: John N. & Sally Carroll; his occupation: Carpenter.
5. Compiled Military Service Record, John B. Spratley, Corporal, Private, Co. A, 9th Virginia Infantry Regiment, Civil War (Confederate). Identified as a paroled prisoner, Spratley was admitted to the General Hospital at Petersburg, Virginia, on 12 June 1863, suffering from diarrhea. He was returned to duty on July 12th but readmitted the next day, 13 July 1863, suffering from lumbago (lower back pain). He was returned to duty on July 16th.
6. Chesterfield County VA Register of Marriages, LDS Film #7725166, Image #209, p.169 (Patrick H. Spratley to Martha A. Chappell, 13 December 1886). Chesterfield County VA Register of Deaths, LDS Film #4225424, Image #322 (#119: Patrick Henry Spratley, died 5 April 1895; place: Manchester; cause: typhoid fever; age: 33; parents: *"John Henry & Susan Ann"* Spratley; occupation: laborer; wife: *"Adalaide Spratley"*). The marriage register identified Patrick's parents as *"Jno H. & Susan A."* Spratley, and the death register listed his father as *"John Henry*

Spratley," but all other records show his middle initial as "B." The marriage register identified her parents as *"W^m E. & Ann Eliza"* Chappell.

7. 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 99a, Household #636, line #37: Lucy Spratley (age: 57); #38: Julia A. Spratley (age: 26). 1860 Chesterfield County VA Federal Census, *"S. District Ettrick Fac,"* p. 87/548, Household #641, line #27: John B. Spratley (age: 40; Carpenter); #28: Arphelia Spratley (age: 9, female); #29: Sarah James (age: 50; Domestic); #30: Laenius H. James (age: 27; Carpenter); #31: Julian Spratley (age: 36; HouseKeeper).
8. 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 99a, Household #627, line #7: Robert Savedge (age: 60; Farmer); #8: Wilmoth Savedge (age: 49); #9: James W. Savedge (age: 25; Laborer). Isle of Wight County VA Index and Marriage Register (1771–1853), LDS Film #7578992, Image #264, p. 198 (*"Robert Savidge"* to *"Wilmuth Crocker,"* bond dated 22 November 1823). Surry County VA Certificate to Obtain a Marriage License (1857–1858), LDS Film #4121698, Image #86: Susan E. Spratley to James W. Savedge, 24 May 1858 (consent). Virginia Death Register, LDS Film #4225409, Image 117, Surry County Deaths, Susan E. Spratley Savedge (died: 25 September 1862; cause: childbirth; age: 31 years, 2 months; parents: *"Nath^l & Lucy Spratley;"* husband: James W. Savedge.
9. Surry County VA Certificate to Obtain a Marriage License (1863–1864), LDS Film #4121714, Image #06–07: Julia A. Spratley to James W. Savedge (bride consent, 24 January 1863); #10: Marriage license dated 26 January 1863, performed 1 February 1863 (place: *"James W. Savedge's house;"* husband age: 39; wife age: 40; husband: widower; wife: single; birthplaces: *"Surry County Va"* (both); husband parents: *"Robert & Wilmouth Savedge;"* wife parents: *"Nathaniel & Lucy Spratley"*).
10. Virginia Certificate of Death, #9928, Lucy Ann Harrison, died 6 April 1924, Rives District, Prince George County (married white female; spouse: *"W^m T. Harrison;"* birthdate: 22 July 1867; age at death: 56 years, 8 months, 14 days; father: *"Wesley Savage;"* mother: *"Julia Spratley;"* burial: Prince George Co, Va.). Virginia Certificate of Death, #4244, James William Savedge, died: 18 February 1933, Hardy District, Isle of Wight County (married white male; spouse: Clara D. Savedge; age at death: 69 years, 0 months, 2 days; birthplace: Surry County, Va; father: *"James Wesly Savedge;"* mother: *"Julia Ann Spratley;"* parents' birthplace: Surry County, Va (both); buried 20 February 1933, Rouse Funeral Co., Smithfield, Virginia). These two death certificates provide the only known proof of James and Lucy's parents, except for his identification in 1880 as the nephew of Susan R. Spratley.
11. 1880 Surry County VA Federal Census, Cobham District, ED #107, p. 26/32a, Household #249, line #41: Susan Savedge (age: 41; single; Keeping House); #42: *"Ja^s W. Savedge"* (age: 16; nephew; Laborer).
12. Surry County VA Chancery Court Case #1852-006, Drawer #324: Administrators of Edwin T. Spratley, etc. vs. Administrators of Nathaniel Spratley. 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 99a, Household #636, line #37: Lucy Spratley (age: 57); #39: Jacob Spratley (age: 23; Farmer). 1860 Surry County VA Federal Census, P.O. Cabin Point, p. 64, Household #520, line #20: Jordan Clayton (age: 58; color: black; Laborer); #21: Jacob Spratley (age: 30; color: black; Laborer). The lawsuit against the administrators of Nathaniel Spratley listed his eldest son's full name as *"Jacob Nicholas Spratley."* Although the 1860 census has Jacob Spratley marked as black, this is probably an error. There were numerous Spratleys in Surry County, both white and free black.
13. Compiled Military Service Record, Jacob N. Spratley, Private, Co. I, 3rd Virginia Infantry Regiment, Civil War (Confederate).
14. 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 99a, Household #636, line #37: Lucy Spratley (age: 57); #40: James W. Spratley (age: 19).
15. Virginia Certificate of Death #8363, Roland Nicholas Spratley, died 5 March 1923, Norfolk, Virginia (born: 6 March 1869; born: Indian Creek, Virginia; father: J. J. Spratley; mother: *"Martha Hill;"* mother's birthplace: N.C.). Virginia Certificate of Death #243, John Walter Spratley, died 12 February 1925, Norfolk, Virginia (born: 22 July 1865; father: James W. Spratley; mother: *"Miss Martha Hill"*). Virginia Certificate of Death #10703, Thomas Jefferson Spratley, died 2 April 1935, Princess Anne, Virginia (born: 10 January 1871; birthplace: Princess Anne, Virginia; father: J. W. Spratley; mother: Caroline Hill). These three birth certificates of James and Martha Caroline's children verify that her maiden name was *"Hill."* This contradicts an unsourced marriage for James W. Spratley and *"Miss Caroline Martin"* on 22 July 1857 in Virginia (no county given).
16. Portsmouth City, Virginia Birth Register, LDS Film #4254534, Image #523, Marshall Spratley, born 14 January 1859, father: James Spratley, Laborer; mother: Caroline Spratley.
17. 1860 Portsmouth City VA Federal Census, Jefferson Ward, P.O. Portsmouth, p. 109, Household #908, line #30: James W. Spratley (age: 26; Laborer); #31: Caroline Spratley (age: 25; born: NC). 1870 Norfolk County VA Federal Census, Butt's Road Township, P.O. Great Bridge, p. 9b/17, Household #135, line #4: James W. Spratley (age: 41; Farmer; born: Virginia); #5: Caroline Spratley (age: 35; Keeping House; born: North Carolina). 1880 Norfolk County Federal Census, Butts Road, ED #59, p. 10b/19, Household #182/197, line #8: J. W. Spratley (age: 49; Farmer; born: Virginia); #9: Martha C. Spratley (age: 45; wife; born: North Carolina). There is no further record of James W. or Martha Carolina Spratley after 1880. They presumably died between 1880 and 1900.

18. 1850 Surry County VA Federal Census, *"the Parish of Southwark,"* p. 99a, Household #627, line #7: Robert Savedge (age: 60; Farmer); #8: Wilmoth Savedge (age: 49); #9: James W. Savedge (age: 25; Laborer); Household #636, line #37: Lucy Spratley (age: 57); #41: Susannah Spratley (age: 19). Surry County VA Certificate to Obtain a Marriage License (1857–1858), LDS Film #4121698, Image #86–87 Susan E. Spratley to James W. Savedge (bride's consent, 24 May 1858). Surry County VA Marriage Returns (1785–1854), LDS Film #4131988, Image #132, p. 8 (Susan E. Spratley to James W. Savedge, 22 May 1858). The return was clearly recorded with the incorrect date, since Susan's consent for the clerk to issue a marriage license was dated May 24th.
19. 1860 Surry County VA Federal Census, P.O. Cabin Point, p. 91/955, enumerated 9 August 1860, Household #746, line #14: Edwin White (age: 68; Farmer); #16: James W. Savidge (age: 40; Laborer); #17: Mrs. Savidge (age: 38); #18: Infant Savidge (age: 8/12; female). Virginia Register of Deaths (1853–1896), LDS Film #4225409, Image #117, Surry County, Susan E. Savedge (died: 25 September 1862; cause: childbirth; age: 31 years, 2 months; parents: *"Nathl & Lucy Spratley;"* husband: James W. Savedge); Joseph Inman Savedge, died 25 September 1862 (age: 16 days; cause: unknown; parents: Jas. W. & Susan E. Savedge).

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