

# Spier Family of Nansemond County, Virginia

By Forrest King

( [fkroots@yahoo.com](mailto:fkroots@yahoo.com) )

This paper provides a compiled lineage of one line of the Spier family beginning with immigrant Dr. John<sup>1</sup> Spier through his granddaughter Elizabeth Spier who married William Coffield. The children of Dr. John Spier are a challenge to piece together because they initially lived in a county that experienced significant historical record loss before 1750.<sup>[1]</sup> Most of the remaining records that exist for Nansemond County, Virginia today are found in colonial and English repositories. In addition to the loss of these records, the wills of two of John's sons have also been lost.

**1. Dr. John<sup>1</sup> Spier** was born about 1648 probably in England and died before September 1684 in Nansemond County.<sup>[2]</sup> John married **Frances** (---) about 1671 most likely in Nansemond County. Frances was probably born about 1650 in England and died after 5 May 1685 in Virginia. Since John died at a younger age, it was possible that Frances remarried but no information is available to document that event.

There are few clues to Dr. John Spier's birth and background before he came to Virginia. He was a practicing medical doctor in Virginia by 1677, and his opportunity to learn this profession most likely came in England. Some have speculated that he was born in Scotland but there is no documentation to support that claim. It is possible that Dr. John may have been in Virginia by 25 Apr 1667. A John Spire was a headright<sup>[3]</sup> of Mr. Nicholas Merewether who purchased land in Surry County, Virginia.<sup>[4]</sup> John Spire was listed by himself, without a wife, children or a professional title. He also might have come as part of Governor William Berkeley's recruiting campaign in the 1660s to attract the Royalist elite to Virginia after Charles II was put back on the throne.<sup>[5]</sup>

In any event, his medical practice extended into neighboring counties. John evidently had obtained some social standing in England<sup>[6]</sup> and was recognized as having such upon his arrival in Virginia. He is referred to as "Mr." in more than one colonial document.<sup>[7]</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Carol McGinnis, *Virginia Genealogy Sources and Resources* (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1993), 191. Nansemond County had some of their records destroyed several times.

<sup>2</sup> Weynette P. Haun, ed., *Surry County, Virginia Court Records (Part II: Order Book 1671-1691) 1682-1691 Book IV* (Durham, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1990), 24.

<sup>3</sup> Nell M. Nugent, ed., *Cavaliers and Pioneers, Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants Vol. 1, 1623-1666* (1934; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1991), xxiv-xxvi.

<sup>4</sup> Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants, Vol. 6, 1666-1679* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018), 46.

<sup>5</sup> David H. Fischer, *Albion's Seed, Four British Folkways in America* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 214-219. The large majority of these royal elite individuals came from the ports of London and Bristol.

<sup>6</sup> Philip A. Bruce, *Social Life in the Seventeenth Century* (1907; reprint, Williamstown, Massachusetts: Cornerhouse Publishers, 1968), 35-38.

<sup>7</sup> Philip A. Bruce, *Social Life in the Seventeenth Century* (1907; reprint, Williamstown, Massachusetts: Cornerhouse Publishers, 1968), 115; Barbara J. Evans, *A to ZAX, A Comprehensive Dictionary for Genealogists & Historians 3rd*

*Will of Richard Briggs<sup>[8]</sup> of Isle of Wight County, Virginia*

Dr. John is referenced in the will of Richard Briggs of Isle of Wight County on 3 Mar 1677/78. Richard's son Edmond was to live with Dr. John and learn the medical profession.<sup>[9]</sup>

Richard's will states in part:

“I bequeath my soone Edmond to Mr. John Speir Doctar in Nansemond Lykwayas I leave the said Speir the portn and goutring of the Estate that belongs to the said Edmond in his hands whill the said Edmond comes to the age of 21 years of age and then to be delewered his Estate pieable in kynd in his own possiong: Leakways if the sd. Speir goeth for England ore Ellswher, that the said John Speir shall have free toleration and leave to seall this Estat Land & moveabille belonging to the said Edmond and Carie him wher he goeth and put him to his Practice and at the Expiration of his time then he shall delaver upe the said Eastat in the hands of the Said Edmond and Leav him Sett upe for himself after his pleasure, Iff the said Speir continuethe in Virginia then he shall delaver the Estat in Virginia; but if he goeth for England and Carieth him then he shall pay the Said Edmond in money to Sett upe for himself acording to the Watges of it.”

It is not known what John did to fulfill this request of Richard Briggs since John lived only another six years. Edmond was never known to have practiced medicine as an adult.

John had patented 600 acres in Nansemond County on 28 Sep 1678<sup>[10]</sup> that previously belonged to Thomas Hunson.<sup>[11]</sup> Two years later, his social standing allowed him to be elected to the House of Burgesses. Both land-owning and landless freeholders were able to vote in this election.<sup>[12]</sup> He was

---

*Edition* (1978; reprint, Alexandria, Virginia: Hearthside Press, 1995), 176, 179. “Mr.” was “a title applied only to those who had some social standing, through their family or office, before they emigrated.” The title “Mr.” was used “sparingly in Colonial days”.

<sup>8</sup> Weynette P. Haun, ed., *Surry County, Virginia Court Records (Deed Book I) 1664-1671 Book II* (Durham, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1987), 22-23. Richard Briggs was in Surry County by 26 Jan 1665/66. He lived in Surry County until at least 1674 before relocating to Isle of Wight County. It is not known how or where Richard got to know John Spier. They never lived in the same county. It is possible they knew each other in England.

<sup>9</sup> *Isle of Wight County, Virginia, Record of Wills, Deeds, Etc. Volume 2, Part 1 1661-1719*, microfilm no. [Reel 23] page 195, Virginia State Archives, Richmond, Virginia. Edmond Briggs was probably very young when he was given to the Spiers to train as a medical doctor; (*Isle of Wight County, Virginia, Deed Book No. 1 1688-1705*, microfilm no. [Reel 2] page 186, Virginia State Archives, Richmond, Virginia.) On 9 Sep 1695, Edmond and brother James divided the land that was given to them by their father Richard seventeen years earlier. He was called Edward Briggs instead of Edmond Briggs in this document.

<sup>10</sup> Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants, Vol. 6, 1666-1679* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018), 662. He is called Doctor John Spier. This was land formerly belonging to Thomas Hunson and found to be escheat by an inquisition. No further description is available; (Nell M. Nugent, ed., *Cavaliers and Pioneers Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants 1666-1695* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 1977) A review of the Nansemond patents for the previous 25 years revealed no new clues; (Emmett E. Bottoms, *Seventeenth Century Settlement of the Nansemond River in Virginia* (Norfolk, Virginia: Privately printed, 1983), 48.) Most of the tithables were living close to the Nansemond River.

<sup>11</sup> Lothrop Withington, *Virginia Gleanings in England* (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1980), 195-196. The Thomas Hunson mentioned in the Anthony Young will of 1635/36 may or may not be the same person who purchased the patent.

<sup>12</sup> Philip A. Bruce, *Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century Vol. II* (New York: New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1910), 409-416. Landless freeholders probably gained the right to vote for the House of Burgesses

sworn in as a member of the House of Burgesses on 9 Jun 1680.<sup>[13]</sup> Because Jamestown had burned to the ground in 1676, the Burgesses met in a tavern in town.<sup>[14]</sup> There were also strict attendance rules with penalties for the Burgesses.<sup>[15]</sup>

He was placed on the committee to examine “run-away certificates” the day after being sworn in and later served on other committees over the next two years. He only served one term.<sup>[16]</sup> He was still a Burgess about 22 Apr 1682.<sup>[17]</sup> He was deceased by Aug 1684. John left a will that was probably lost with other Nansemond County records at the time.

John’s medical practice included patients in neighboring Surry County. Surry’s court records showed that John had married Frances (---), who was acting as the executrix of her husband’s will. She was found in Surry County records three times collecting his debts. The first debt collection was on 2 Sep 1684 when “Wm. Pope Confesseth Judgmt to Mr. Wm. Thompson for eight hundred pds. of tobo. & Caske being part of bill due Mrs. Speirs”.<sup>[18]</sup> Tradable commodities like tobacco were frequently used to pay debts at this time because of the lack of specie available in the community.

A more interesting debt collection came on 3 Mar 1684/5: “Judgmt. is granted Mr. Robt. Caufield assigne of Mrs. Frances Speirs Admx. of Doctor Jno. Speirs against Wm. Harris for six hundred & fivety pds. of tobo. & Caske due by bill dated the 11 Mrch 1678/9 agt. which bill the said Harris pleaded the Act limiting how long bills should be pleadeable, but owneing in Cort he never paid any pte. thereof, his plea was over Ruled by the Cort and Ordered that the said Harris pay the said six hundred & fivety pds. of tobo. & Caske to the said Mr. Robt. Caufield with Costs.”<sup>[19]</sup> Lastly, on 5 May 1685, “Judgmt. is granted Mr. Henry Baker assigne of Mrs. Fra. Spiers Exex. of Mr. Jno. Spiers agt. Mr. Jno. Moring for fower hundred pds. of tobo. & Caske with Costs.”<sup>[20]</sup>

### *Children of Dr. John Spier*

---

as a result of Bacon’s Rebellion. Eligibility requirements to vote for the House of Burgesses were changed a number of times in the 1600s. Nearly all other elections did not allow landless freeholders to vote.

<sup>13</sup> H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia 1659/60-1693* (Richmond, Virginia: unknown publisher, 1914), 119, 120, 122, 128, 131, 139. He was called Dr. Spiers on 19 Jun 1680.

<sup>14</sup> Philip A. Bruce, *Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century Vol. II* (New York: New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1910), 455-456. Committee meetings were held either in a tavern or in a private home.

<sup>15</sup> Philip A. Bruce, *Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century Vol. II* (New York: New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1910), 463-465. Burgesses were fined for not being in attendance.

<sup>16</sup> Cynthia M. Leonard, *The General Assembly of Virginia July 30, 1619-January 11, 1978* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 1978), 45.

<sup>17</sup> H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia 1659/60-1693* (Richmond, Virginia: unknown publisher, 1914), 164. He was on the examinations of grievances and consideration of propositions committee.

<sup>18</sup> Weynette P. Haun, ed., *Surry County, Virginia Court Records (Part II: Order Book 1671-1691) 1682-1691 Book IV* (Durham, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1990), 24.

<sup>19</sup> Weynette P. Haun, ed., *Surry County, Virginia Court Records (Part II: Order Book 1671-1691) 1682-1691 Book IV* (Durham, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1990), 31. Virginia must have had a long statute of limitations in those days.

<sup>20</sup> Weynette P. Haun, ed., *Surry County, Virginia Court Records (Part II: Order Book 1671-1691) 1682-1691 Book IV* (Durham, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1990), 35.

John died when his children were young. Since his will is now missing, the identification of his children as John<sup>2</sup>, James, and William came from the review of Nansemond County records and other records that have survived. The positions they held in the community, their land ownership, their dealings with each other, and their other activities in the upper parish of Nansemond County records support this conclusion.

John's social standing<sup>[21]</sup> and his being a Burgess<sup>[22]</sup> provided an opportunity where his sons could become officers in Nansemond County at an early age. John<sup>2</sup>, James, and William all held positions in the community by Mar 1701/2.<sup>[23]</sup> All are found living in Nansemond County in the 1704 quit rent rolls owning land.<sup>[24]</sup> All three sons of Dr. John were literate.

Additional records support all three being the sons of Dr. John Spier. John<sup>2</sup> had a son John who was born in Virginia in 1693.<sup>[25]</sup> William lived in the upper parish of Nansemond County in 1714.<sup>[26]</sup> William and John Spier were witnesses to a deed in Chowan County from Andrew Barran to Henry Coar, on 12 Oct 1715.<sup>[27]</sup> James stated in 1723<sup>[28]</sup> that he was a resident of the upper parish of Nansemond County and called himself of Nansemond County when he purchased two properties near Ahotsky Ridge in Chowan County, North Carolina on 24 Jan 1723/24.<sup>[29]</sup> John and William were neighbors when they were called into court for not repairing the Ahotsky Road in Chowan County on 13 Nov 1724.<sup>[30]</sup>

As far as is known, Dr. John died in possession of the 600 acres he patented in 1678. John<sup>2</sup>, James, and William Spier owned 900 acres combined in the quit rent rolls of 1704. James had purchased 100 acres in 1701 but there are no records showing John and William purchasing land any earlier. It is quite likely

---

<sup>21</sup> David H. Fischer, *Albion's Seed, Four British Folkways in America* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 406-407.

<sup>22</sup> Philip A. Bruce, *Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century Vol. II* (New York: New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1910), 423, 426. "The body consisted 'of the better sort of gentlemen from all parts of the country'".

<sup>23</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial America and West Indies: Vol. 20, 1702* (London, England: Privately printed, 1908), March 1702 pp. 153-170. There was a contention over the succession to the throne in England regarding who should succeed William of Orange. The primary concern of Parliament was to insure that the monarch was not of the Catholic faith. Governor Nicholson made an address on that date to the Magistrates and Militia Officers of Nansemond County supporting that premise. All three sons were listed as officers and were present to hear the address. All of them were under 30 years of age at that time. Nicholas Stallings was also present at this meeting. Thomas Exum was not mentioned as a military officer and may have been deceased at this time.

<sup>24</sup> Louis des Cognets Jr., ed., *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records* (1958; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1990), 198-200.

<sup>25</sup> John A. Brayton, *Order of First Families of North Carolina Ancestor Biographies Vol. 1* (Baltimore, Maryland: Otter Bay Books, 2011), 200-201.

<sup>26</sup> Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants, Vol. 10, 1710-1719* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018), 166. He was mentioned as owning neighboring land to John Small on that date.

<sup>27</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina Deed Book B no. 1, 1715-1719*, microfilm no. [0018486] pages 482-484, Family History Library [FHL], Salt Lake City. Both Andrew Barran and Henry Coar were of the upper parish of Nansemond County as well.

<sup>28</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1729-1732*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10022] images 232, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

<sup>29</sup> *Bertie County, North Carolina Deed Book A, 1721-1725*, microfilm no. [7510477] pages 193-200, [FHL], Salt Lake City.

<sup>30</sup> Weynette P. Haun, ed., *Bertie County, North Carolina County Court Minutes (Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions) 1724-1739 Book I* (Durham, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1976), 16; (Mattie E. Parker, ed., *The North Carolina Higher-Court Records 1697-1701* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1971), xiv.) Travel by road was very difficult at this time under the best of circumstances.

that 600 of the remaining unexplained 800 acres came from John Spier's patent of 1678. The loss of Nansemond County records and the lack of a detailed description from Dr. John's original patent make confirming this premise more difficult.

The children of Dr. John Spier and wife Frances (---) were:

- 2 M i. **John<sup>2</sup> Spier** was born about 1672 in Nansemond County and died about 1740 in Edgecombe County, North Carolina.
- 3 M ii. **James<sup>2</sup> Spier** was born about 1673 in Nansemond County and died after 12 Dec 1731 in Bertie County, North Carolina.
- 4 M iii. **William<sup>2</sup> Spier** was born about 1678 in Nansemond County and died before 18 May 1736 in Edgecombe County.

**2. John<sup>2</sup> Spier** (*John<sup>1</sup>*) was born about 1672 in Nansemond County and died about 1740 in Edgecombe County where his estate was filed.<sup>[31]</sup> John married **Mrs. John Spier** about 1692 in Nansemond County. She was probably born about 1673 in Nansemond County.

John was found in several records in Nansemond County. He was a member of a quorum on 18 Jun 1699<sup>[32]</sup> and a sheriff by 19 Apr 1710.<sup>[33]</sup> He was a captain in the militia in 1704.<sup>[34]</sup> In the 1704 Virginia quit rents, he owned 500 acres.<sup>[35]</sup> On 22 Oct 1706, John Spier examined John and William Perry regarding their effort to build a house for their father John Perry on his patent of land.<sup>[36]</sup> John<sup>2</sup> was still in Nansemond County when he witnessed a land transaction in 1715 in Chowan County.<sup>[37]</sup>

John was taken to the general court for the Colony of North Carolina several times by David O'Sheal of Nansemond County. John had relocated to Chowan County shortly before 4 Apr 1722. On that date, David had taken John to Chowan County court to collect a debt on the purchase of slaves. David was

---

<sup>31</sup> *Edgecombe County, North Carolina, Probate Records, 1730-1747*, pages 36, 57, 75-77, microfilm no. [4780010] [FHL], Salt Lake City, Utah. One of his inventories is undated. The other provided information about items sold on 25 Feb 1742/3.

<sup>32</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, America and West Indies, Vol. 17, 1699* (London, England: Privately printed, 1908), pp. 309-327; Louis des Cognets Jr., ed., *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records* (1958; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1990), 8. He was in all likelihood a justice on the court by this time.

<sup>33</sup> Louis des Cognets Jr., ed., *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records* (1958; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1990), 4.

<sup>34</sup> Louis des Cognets Jr., ed., *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records* (1958; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1990), 198.

<sup>35</sup> Annie L. Smith, ed., *The Quit Rents of Virginia 1704* (1957; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1987), 83. He was a captain in the militia.

<sup>36</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1700-1712*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10013] images 451, 456, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Both documents include a statement, "Sworne be four me Jno. Spier". These court documents were filed at the Edenton Courthouse in North Carolina; (*Chowan County, Deed Book W no. 1, 1699-1803*, microfilm no. [7513264] page 14, [FHL], Salt Lake City.) John Perry was a Nansemond County, Virginia resident when purchasing this property. No description of this land is available. The property in question was probably land purchased by their father John Perry in Chowan County 31 Apr 1700(sic) from Thomas Speight.

<sup>37</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina Deed Book B no. 1, 1715-1719*, microfilm no. [0018486] pages 482-484, [FHL], Salt Lake City. Brother William was a witness.

concerned that John's migration to Chowan County may prevent him from collecting his money.<sup>[38]</sup> In Jul 1727, David called on John to pay a 100 pound bond obligation that John had entered into on 5 Mar 1721 when he had lived in Nansemond County.<sup>[39]</sup> David also complained that John owed him money in the Jul 1730 general court.<sup>[40]</sup> In addition to dealing with David O'Sheal, John came to court on 31 Dec 1722 and filed a complaint against Valentine Brasswell requiring him to meet his obligation.<sup>[41]</sup>

Besides owning property in Virginia, John bought and sold quite a number of other properties North Carolina in his lifetime. His first recorded land purchase came on 6 Apr 1722 when he patented 450 acres in Chowan County on the south side of the Moratock River joining Cypress Swamp, James Denton, Kehukie Swamp, and the said river.<sup>[42]</sup> He claimed a lapsed patent of 640 acres in Chowan County on the south side of the Moratock River adjoining Thomas Jarrell on 9 Apr 1724.<sup>[43]</sup>

He was called a planter in Mar 1724 when he and others were brought before the court for selling strong liquors in their homes without a license.<sup>[44]</sup> He was discharged for lack of evidence on 26 Oct 1725.<sup>[45]</sup> He was called as a grand juror on 29 Mar 1726.<sup>[46]</sup> John was made a Justice of the Peace on 14 Apr 1726.<sup>[47]</sup> As Captain John Spier, he registered his stock mark on 4 May 1730.<sup>[48]</sup> The colony law required each person to register his stock mark.<sup>[49]</sup>

He began purchasing land in Edgecombe County in the 1730s. In 1733, John was appointed Justice of the

---

<sup>38</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1720-1725*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10016] images 82-84, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. John Spier is called late of Nansemond County. John Lovick said John Spier had taken the slaves, "out of this [Nansemond County] government".

<sup>39</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1727-1730*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10021] images 20, 93, 94, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

<sup>40</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1729-1732*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10022] image 374, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

<sup>41</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1720-1725*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10016] image 446, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Thomas Spier provided an appearance bond for Valentine. There appears to be no family relationship between Thomas Spier and John Spier. John later came to court and prayed discontinuance of this case and paid the fees.

<sup>42</sup> *North Carolina, Secretary of State Land Grant Record Books, Vol. 3, 1720-1730, 1735-1738*, microfilm no. [S.108.160.1] page 99, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. His residence at the time of purchase was not specified.

<sup>43</sup> William L. Saunders, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina, Vol. 2, 1713-1728* (1886; reprint, Wilmington, North Carolina: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1993), 524. The land was previously patented by Benjamin Foreman.

<sup>44</sup> Robert J. Cain, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina [Second Series], Vol. VI, North Carolina Higher-Court Minutes 1724-1730* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1981), 30.

<sup>45</sup> William L. Saunders, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina, Vol. 2, 1713-1728* (1886; reprint, Raleigh, North Carolina: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1993), 602.

<sup>46</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1746-1755*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10036] image 162, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. This document was somehow misplaced and was included in 1746-1755 time group.

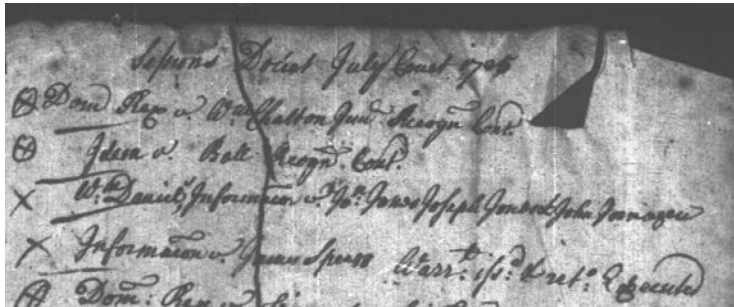
<sup>47</sup> William L. Saunders, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina, Vol. 2, 1713-1728* (1886; reprint, Raleigh, North Carolina: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1993), 607.

<sup>48</sup> *Bertie County, North Carolina Marks, Brands, and Strays, 010.908.1 1722-1741* (North Carolina State Archives: Raleigh, North Carolina), no pagination.

<sup>49</sup> Mattie E. Parker, ed., *The North Carolina Higher-Court Records 1697-1701* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1971), xvi-xvii. It was a felony not to register your stock mark because of the serious problems regulating cattle ownership.

Peace.<sup>[50]</sup> He left a will that is now missing.<sup>[51]</sup> He died in Edgecombe about 1740 and his two inventories list household items, some cotton seeds, and three slaves. Information about his son John's descendants is also available.<sup>[52]</sup>

**3. James<sup>2</sup> Spier** (*John<sup>1</sup>*) was born about 1673 in Nansemond County and died after 12 Dec 1731 in Bertie County.<sup>[53]</sup> James married **Mrs. James Spier** in Nansemond County about 1700 and she died in Nansemond County by 1720. James married next **Mrs. Ann (---) Stallings**, relict of Mr. Stallings, about 1720, in Nansemond County. Ann was born about 1674 in Nansemond County and died after 11 May 1737 in Bertie County.<sup>[54]</sup>



In the 1704 Virginia quit rents, James had 200 acres.<sup>[55]</sup> This possibly came from 100 acres from his father's estate along with his purchase dated 21 May 1700 of 100 acres in the upper parish of Nansemond County on the southeast side of Beaverdam Swamp adj. the former lands of Randall Crew.<sup>[56]</sup> It is unclear why but James was received a subpoena from the North Carolina general court in

Jul 1705 (see attached –fourth line down).<sup>[57]</sup>

James was a medical doctor in both Nansemond and Bertie Counties, although it is not known where or how he got his training. His father died when James was a young child. It is possible that he returned to England for schooling and came back to Virginia before 21 Apr 1695. There is a James Spear listed as an headright of John Murphy for land patented in Nansemond County on that date.<sup>[58]</sup> His first wife died before 1720.

<sup>50</sup>J. Kelly Turner and Jno. L. Bridgers, Jr., *History of Edgecombe County, North Carolina* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Edwards & Broughton Printing Co., 1920), 20.

<sup>51</sup> *Edgecombe County, North Carolina, Probate Records, 1730-1747*, page 36, microfilm no. [4780010] [FHL], Salt Lake City, Utah. John Webb is called an executor and reports his inventory. The following phrase is found “To the Last will & of him the sd. Jno. Spiers.”

<sup>52</sup> John A. Brayton, *Order of First Families of North Carolina Ancestor Biographies Vol. 1* (Baltimore, Maryland: Otter Bay Books, 2011), 200-201. His son John was born on 25 Sep 1693 in Nansemond County, Virginia.

<sup>53</sup> *North Carolina Will Records, Secretary of State Record Group Folder 12.96.24.2 will, James Speir, 1731* (North Carolina State Archives: Raleigh, North Carolina), no pagination.

<sup>54</sup> *Bertie County, North Carolina Inventories, 1728-1744* microfilm no. [7639713] pages 116-119, [FHL], Salt Lake City.

<sup>55</sup> Annie L Smith, ed., *The Quit Rents of Virginia 1704* (1957; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1987), 83.

<sup>56</sup> Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants, Vol. 9, 1697-1706* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018), 415-416. This land was a purchase in the Nansemond County court in 1700 rather than a patent dated 1702. The land was formerly granted to George Spivey Sr. in 1664; his son sold part of it to James Spier. The land of Randall Crew near the Nansemond River was purchased in 1640. This land was located just south and west of the current town of Suffolk, Virginia.

<sup>57</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1720-1725*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10017] image 393, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. The case was on the Sessions Docket of the July 1705 general court. The case is called “Informaion v. James Speers” implying that some misdemeanor has been committed.

<sup>58</sup> Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants Vol. 8, 1689-1695* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018), 442.

James purchased land in Bertie County on the east side of the Chowan River near Cabin Branch by 6 Apr 1722.<sup>[59]</sup> James was still of upper parish of Nansemond County when he made two additional land purchases in Bertie County from Robert Lanier and wife Sarah on 24 Jan 1723/24.<sup>[60]</sup> The first was 420 acres on Spring Branch adjoining Anthony Williams, James Sumner, and the Ahotsky Swamp. The second property was 300 acres on Ahotsky Ridge. He went on to buy and sell several properties over the next 10 years in Bertie County. James was part of a sizable migration into North Carolina in 1724 and 1725. It is reported that a thousand families moved into the colony during that period.<sup>[61]</sup>

In Jul 1726, he was called a surgeon in a court document.<sup>[62]</sup> Ann, his second wife, was also a midwife. The treatment administered by Ann to one of her patients prompted a series of legal actions in the general court in Edenton beginning in late 1725. Ann was indicted “on suspicion of felony” in the death of Patience (Cotten) Spier.<sup>[63]</sup> Patience, the wife of John<sup>3</sup> Spier son of John<sup>2</sup> (*John<sup>1</sup>*), died from complications of childbirth. Ann argued in court documents that there was “no Statute, nor any Common Law whereon to ground the Said Indictment” and wanted to present a defense.<sup>[64]</sup> Ann was acquitted in July 1726.<sup>[65]</sup> A more detailed account of some of the court proceedings is available.<sup>[66]</sup> Attachment 1 at the end of the paper showed the relationship among family members who witnessed for the Crown and those who gave evidence for Ann Spier.<sup>[67]</sup> Because of the family relationships on both sides of the case, this trial must have been a troubling family affair.

Once his wife was acquitted, James quickly took several other court actions in the general court in Edenton in July, 1726. He accused justices Barnaby McKinnie and Thomas Bryan of trespass for putting Ann in the gaol in November, 1725 for 60 days and later assaulting her at gun point when putting her in the gaol a second time in Apr 1726. James claimed that in both instances due process had not been

---

<sup>59</sup> *North Carolina, Secretary of State Land Grant Record Books, Vol. 3, 1720-1730, 1735-1738*, microfilm no. [S.108.160.1] page 98, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

<sup>60</sup> *Bertie County, North Carolina Deed Book A, 1721-1725*, microfilm no. [7510477] pages 193-200, [FHL], Salt Lake City.

<sup>61</sup> Hugh T. Lefler and Albert R. Newsome, *The History of a Southern State North Carolina 3rd Edition* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 71. This was a big change from the previous decade. It featured multiple conflicts with the native population, religious unrest, and piracy off the coast that was a consequence of the passage of several recent British maritime laws.

<sup>62</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1727-1730*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10021] image 75, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

<sup>63</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1725-1728*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10018] images 3-6, 22, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Ann performed her midwife responsibility on 12 Nov 1725 and Patience lived until 30 Nov 1725.

<sup>64</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1725-1728*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10018] images 4, 6, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. One of the witnesses was a Judith Spier. John<sup>3</sup> Spier, son of James<sup>2</sup> (*John<sup>1</sup>*), had a wife named Judith but she may be too young to be a witness. She could be a wife or sister of James<sup>3</sup> Spier son of John<sup>2</sup> (*John<sup>1</sup>*) or have another unknown family connection.

<sup>65</sup> Robert J. Cain, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina [Second Series], Vol. VI, North Carolina Higher-Court Minutes 1724-1730* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1981), 275.

<sup>66</sup> John A. Brayton, *Order of First Families of North Carolina Ancestor Biographies Vol. 3* (Baltimore, Maryland: Otter Bay Books LLC, 2017), 463-468. This source also provides a sketch of James and his family.

<sup>67</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1725-1728*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10018] images 3-6, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Three midwives were also summoned to provide testimony by the Crown and were “not capable to judg on the damage don to the Deceased partie nor to hear the Evidence” in this case dated 9 Apr 1726.

granted to his wife Ann and requested damages of 100 pounds.<sup>[68]</sup> James lost this suit.<sup>[69]</sup> In addition, James Spier and wife Ann sued John Cotten and wife Martha, parents of Patience, over Ann's good name.<sup>[70]</sup> James lost this suit and was accused of making a false suit.<sup>[71]</sup>

James was in general court a number of other times in the 1720s. On 30 Jun 1725, James Spier was accused of a "altering and dispensing a certain forged bill of three pounds" and required to appear at the general court.<sup>[72]</sup> He was discharged for want of evidence and cleared himself by his own oath of innocence. Beginning in Aug 1726, James was in a series of general court actions sought by Robert Lanier and David O'Sheal. James countersued Robert Lanier in court in Mar 1728 and used that opportunity to appeal some of the previous court findings.<sup>[73]</sup> A later complaint was brought by David O'Sheal in Oct 1729 against James Spier of Bertie County for nonperformance of his agreement dated 10 Feb 1723.<sup>[74]</sup>

During all these suits involving David O'Sheal, there was an interesting performance bond filed in general court by James. He and John Cotten filed this bond on 27 Aug 1729.<sup>[75]</sup> Both were obligated to pay John<sup>2</sup> Spier Esq. in case James did not show up for trial. John Cotten was a brother of Patience (Cotten) Spier who had died from child birth.

In his will, James gave use of his plantation to wife Ann and at her death then it was to go to daughter Mourning Spier. There is no record of this land ever being sold by either Ann or Mourning. James' inventory includes "old phisick Books & surgeons Instruments," a number of farm animals, and quite a

---

<sup>68</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1727-1730*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10021] images 45, 46, 75 and 76, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

<sup>69</sup> Robert J. Cain, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina [Second Series]*, Vol. VI, *North Carolina Higher-Court Minutes 1724-1730* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1981), 391.

<sup>70</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1725-1728*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10020] image 136, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. This suit dragged on for a couple of years. James and Ann accused John and Martha Cotten of "wicked mallice aforethought" for saying scandalous words about Ann that were heard by many of his majesty's faithful subjects.

<sup>71</sup> Robert J. Cain, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina [Second Series]*, Vol. VI, *North Carolina Higher-Court Minutes 1724-1730* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1981), 557.

<sup>72</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1725-1728*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10018] images 27, 45, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. James also provided an oath of his innocence. (Robert J. Cain, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina [Second Series]*, Vol. VI, *North Carolina Higher-Court Minutes 1724-1730* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1981), xxvii-xix.) For the prior 15 years, counterfeiting had been prosecuted in the colony because it was contributing to the devaluation of the currency.

<sup>73</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1725-1728*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10019] images 366-370, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. This document was presented by his lawyer William Little. One of his complaints was about the handling of some of the evidence. A list of jury members was provided. One of them was John Cotten who was the father of Patience (Cotten) Spier mentioned earlier.

<sup>74</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1729-1732*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10022] images 232-233, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. He had lived in the upper parish of Nansemond County when the debt was created. Robert Lanier, who loaned James the money, had later assigned the debt to David O'Sheal his attorney. James<sup>2</sup> Spier's son James<sup>3</sup> was a witness.

<sup>75</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1729-1732*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10022] images 107-109, 231, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. In this case, David was his attorney. One of the plaintiffs in this case was Thomas Spier.

lot of kitchen dishware dated 6 May 1732.<sup>[76]</sup> His wife Ann was the executrix to the estate. She may be the Ann Spier mentioned in the estate of Francis Parker dated 11 May 1737.<sup>[77]</sup>

His four children mentioned in his will were James, Mourning, Sarah, and John. They were probably from his first spouse. Also in the will, he bequeathed cattle to “daughters-in-law” Sarah Stallings and Patience Stallings. These are Ann’s daughters<sup>[78]</sup> by a previous marriage, and they appear to be under 18 years of age at the time of James’s will.

Ann may be the Ann (---) Stallings married to Nicholas Stallings of the upper parish of Nansemond County<sup>[79]</sup> who probably died after 1 Oct 1719.<sup>[80]</sup> Nicholas was also in a position of authority in Nansemond County along with Dr. John Spier’s three sons.<sup>[81]</sup> Several Stallings families, including Nicholas, were neighbors to his brother John<sup>2</sup> Spier in the quit rent rolls of 1704.<sup>[82]</sup>

**4. William<sup>2</sup> Spier** (*John<sup>1</sup>*) was born about 1678 in Nansemond County and died before 18 May 1736<sup>[83]</sup> in Bertie County. William married probably **Miss (---) Exum**, the daughter of **Thomas Exum** and **Sarah (---)**, about 1697 in Nansemond County. Miss Exum was born about 1678 in Nansemond County.

The last name of Exum for William’s wife was not found in the records. However, it can be surmised from a common naming pattern used in this area at this time. From about 1650 until the frequent usage of middle names beginning in the 1770s, a son was occasionally given the maiden name of his mother as his first name. Using this naming methodology to discover the maiden name of the spouse should only be used with caution. This approach appears useful with Exum as a first name. Exum is only found once as a first name in the early records of the area when William named his son Exum Spier.

There is other evidence to support this hypothesis. There were records in Nansemond County showing the Spier family interacting with the Exum family. There was a Thomas Exum who was a justice in Nansemond County on 13 Oct 1692<sup>[84]</sup> as well as a captain of the militia in 1698.<sup>[85]</sup> William’s brother

---

<sup>76</sup> *Bertie County, North Carolina Inventories, 1728-1744* microfilm no. [7639713] pages 31-33, [FHL], Salt Lake City. His inventory was recorded on 6 May 1732.

<sup>77</sup> *Bertie County, North Carolina Inventories, 1728-1744* microfilm no. [7639713] pages 116-119, [FHL], Salt Lake City.

<sup>78</sup> Barbara J. Evans, *A to ZAX, A Comprehensive Dictionary for Genealogists & Historians 3rd Edition* (1978; reprint, Alexandria, Virginia: Hearthsides Press, 1995), 84. The term daughter-in-law was commonly used as step-daughter at this time.

<sup>79</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina Deed Book B no. 1, 1715-1719*, microfilm no. [0018486] pages 255-258, [FHL], Salt Lake City.

<sup>80</sup> *Surry County, Virginia, Deeds, Wills, Etc. No. 7, 1715-1730*, microfilm no. [0034101] pages 258-259, [FHL], Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>81</sup> Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial America and West Indies: Vol. 20, 1702* (London, England: Privately printed, 1908), March 1702 pp. 153-170. He was also present to hear Governor Nicholson’s address to the Magistrates and Militia Officers in Mar 1701/2.

<sup>82</sup> Louis des Cognets Jr., ed., *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records* (1958; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1990), 198.

<sup>83</sup> *Edgecombe County, North Carolina Deeds, Vol. 1, 1732-1741*, microfilm no. [C.047.40001] page 149, North Carolina State Archives.

<sup>84</sup> Evelyn H. Cross, *Nansemond Chronicles 1606-1800 Virginia Colony* (No place: Privately printed, 1973), 131. The date was converted from the Quaker calendar to the Gregorian calendar.

<sup>85</sup> Edgar MacDonald, “Virginia Militia Officers,” *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy*, 23 (Nov 1985): 48-50. He was responsible for 49 militia men.

John Spier was also a justice of Nansemond County in 1699 and a captain of the militia by 1704 as well. Thomas' wife was named Sarah.<sup>[86]</sup> William was listed living next to a Sarah Exum in the quit rent rolls of 1704.<sup>[87]</sup> William traveled to neighboring Isle of Wight County to witness a land sale by Richard Exum on 9 Feb 1707/08.<sup>[88]</sup>

In Virginia, the Exum families are found only in Isle of Wight and Nansemond Counties during the late 1600s. They are all somehow related. There are three adult Exum couples who could be the parents of Miss Exum. These are Jeremiah Exum and wife Ann Lawrence, William Exum and wife Jane, and Thomas Exum and wife Sarah. Jeremiah,<sup>[89]</sup> Ann,<sup>[90]</sup> and William<sup>[91]</sup> all left wills in Isle of Wight County that documented their children. These two families do not have a daughter that could have been married to William Spier. As previously mentioned, Thomas Exum was in Nansemond County in the 1690s. He was deceased by the 1704 quit rents. His wife Sarah was listed as the property owner and was a neighbor to William Spier. It is quite likely that the parents of Miss Exum are Thomas Exum and his wife Sarah.

As pointed out earlier, William first showed up in the records holding a responsible position in Nansemond County along with brothers John and James in 1701. He owned 200 acres in the Virginia quit rents of 1704.<sup>[92]</sup> He patented another 280 acres in Nansemond County on 25 Mar 1706.<sup>[93]</sup> He was a neighbor to John Small, John King, Mr. Pugh, and Mr. Bennett on the east side of Bennett's Creek in the upper parish of Nansemond County on 16 Jun 1714.<sup>[94]</sup> William was security to Daniel Oquinn<sup>[95]</sup> in Mar 1726 for a North Carolina transaction.<sup>[96]</sup>

William may have been the last of the three brothers to leave Nansemond County. However, it is not clear when he moved from Virginia. He may have lived in North Carolina several years before he owned property there. William, brother John, and others were called into Bertie court for failure to properly

---

<sup>86</sup> *Isle of Wight County, Virginia, Deeds, Wills, Vol. 1, 1662-1715*, microfilm no. [Reel 22] page 378, Virginia State Archives, Richmond, Virginia. Thomas Exum and his wife Sarah were living in Isle of Wight County on 29 May 1678.

<sup>87</sup> Louis des Cognets Jr., ed., *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records* (1958; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1990), 200.

<sup>88</sup> *Isle of Wight County, Virginia, Deed Book No. 2 1704-1715*, microfilm no. [Reel 2], page 81, Virginia State Archives, Richmond, Virginia.

<sup>89</sup> *Isle of Wight County, Virginia, Deeds, Wills, Great Book Volume 2, Part 2 1715-1726*, microfilm no. [Reel 3] pages 21-22, Virginia State Archives, Richmond, Virginia. Dated 3 Sep 1712.

<sup>90</sup> *Isle of Wight County, Virginia Will Book 3 with Inventories and Accounts 1726-1734*, microfilm no. [Reel 23] pages 19-20 Virginia State Archives, Richmond, Virginia. Dated 3 Feb 1726/27.

<sup>91</sup> *Isle of Wight County, Virginia, Record of Wills, Deeds, Etc. Volume 2, Part 2 1661-1719*, microfilm no. [Reel 23] page 436, Virginia State Archives, Richmond, Virginia. Dated 3 Dec 1700.

<sup>92</sup> Annie L. Smith, ed., *The Quit Rents of Virginia 1704* (1957; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1987), 83.

<sup>93</sup> Louis des Cognets Jr., ed., *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records* (1958; reprint, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1990), 85. A record of his purchase was found only in English records but no land description is available. Patent records are missing from 1706 to 1710 from the Virginia records.

<sup>94</sup> Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants, Vol. 10, 1710-1719* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018), 166.

<sup>95</sup> Nell M. Nugent, ed., *Cavaliers and Pioneers Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants Vol. 3, 1695-1732* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 1979), 215. Daniel lived on Bennett's Creek in Nansemond County as well.

<sup>96</sup> Robert J. Cain, ed., *The Colonial Records of North Carolina [Second Series], Vol. VI, North Carolina Higher-Court Minutes 1724-1730* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1981), 213.

maintain the Ahotsky Road on 13 Nov 1724.<sup>[97]</sup> His first known property purchase in North Carolina was from his brother John in Bertie County on the south side of the Moratock River adjoining Cattail Marsh, Henry Walker, and William Gray on 11 Feb 1727/28.<sup>[98]</sup> His land became part of Edgecombe County when it was formed in 1732. As in his father's case, the will of William Spier existed at one time but has now been lost. On 18 May 1736, a purchase of land by his son Exum referenced the now lost will of father William Spier.<sup>[99]</sup> It is not known when William died.

Below are the children of William Spier and wife Miss Exum:

5 M i. **Exum<sup>3</sup> Spier** was born about 1697 in Nansemond County and died after 13 Dec 1740 probably in Edgecombe County.

6 F ii. **Elizabeth<sup>3</sup> Spier** was born about 1698 in Nansemond County and died after 13 Apr 1747 probably in Nansemond County.

**5. Exum<sup>3</sup> Spier** (*William<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>1</sup>*) was born in about 1697 in Nansemond County and died after 13 Dec 1740 probably in Edgecombe County.<sup>[100]</sup>

In addition to the land sale previously referenced, Exum showed up in other land records in Edgecombe County in the 1730s. There is no record of his death, his relocation elsewhere, or any marriage. The closest thing to a clue of his whereabouts comes from a suit by Edward Buxton for a debt owed in the general court dated 12 Jun 1739. Exum is called "late of Edgecombe County" and a planter when he is called into court by Edward Buxton to pay a debt he owed to Edward.<sup>[101]</sup>

**6. Elizabeth<sup>3</sup> Spier** (*William<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>1</sup>*) was born about 1698 in Nansemond County and died after 13 Apr 1747<sup>[102]</sup> probably in Nansemond County. Elizabeth married **William Coffield**,<sup>[103]</sup> son of **John Coffield** and **Ruth Vincent**, about 1717 in Nansemond County. William Coffield was born about 1695 in Nansemond County and was dead by 13 Apr 1747<sup>[104]</sup> in Nansemond County.

---

<sup>97</sup> Weynette P. Haun, ed., *Bertie County, North Carolina County Court Minutes (Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions) 1724-1739 Book I* (Durham, North Carolina: Privately printed, 1976), 16.

<sup>98</sup> *Bertie County, North Carolina Deed Book B, 1725-1728*, microfilm no. [7510476] pages 354-355, [FHL], Salt Lake City.

<sup>99</sup> *Edgecombe County, North Carolina Deeds, Vol. 1, 1732-1741*, microfilm no. [C.047.40001] page 149, North Carolina State Archives.

<sup>100</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1743-1744*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10032] image 505, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

<sup>101</sup> *Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1738-1739*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10026] image 719, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina; (*Chowan County, North Carolina, Suits Dismissed and Court Papers, General Court, 1730-1743*, microfilm no. [Y.1.10028] image 198, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.) In posting his bond, either uncle or cousin John Spier was a witness.

<sup>102</sup> Coffield and Belamy Family Papers, MS 3162 Folder 11, (Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina) no pagination. These documents are from the descendants of husband William Coffield's son Spier and include the estate papers for William Coffield as well.

<sup>103</sup> Coffield and Belamy Family Papers, MS 3162 Folder 11, (Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina) no pagination. Elizabeth was the administrator of her husband William's estate.

<sup>104</sup> Coffield and Belamy Family Papers, MS 3162 Folder 11, (Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina) no pagination. Neighbor John King was an appraiser of his estate.

Records mentioning Elizabeth and husband William Coffield are found in the Coffield and Belamy Family Papers in the Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.<sup>[105]</sup> Using the naming pattern as described previously, Elizabeth probably has a last name of Spier because she has a son named Spier Coffield. Fortunately, there is only one Spier family having children living in the general area. Given her approximate birth about 1698, she is of an age to be a granddaughter of Dr. John<sup>1</sup> Spier.

An effort was made to determine which one of the three sons of Dr. John Spier was the father of Elizabeth. Son James<sup>2</sup> left a will and had no daughter named Elizabeth. Of the other two sons, William was the more promising. Studying the land records of husband William Coffield helped provide the likely answer. William Coffield was a neighbor of John King on Red Oak Swamp near the north side of Summerton Swamp in Nansemond County on 5 Jul 1746.<sup>[106]</sup> His father-in-law William<sup>2</sup> Spier was also a neighbor of this same John King thirty years earlier on 16 Jun 1714.<sup>[107]</sup> As a result of these family proximities, Elizabeth was placed as a child of William Spier until additional information is available. Elizabeth married William Coffield in Nansemond County prior to her father William Spier's relocation to North Carolina.

William Coffield's property was used as a landing point for a ferry across the Nansemond River. In 1702, an act was passed setting up this ferry from Coffield Point to Robert Peal's property near Sleepy Hole on the Nansemond River.<sup>[108]</sup> This property was sold by the Coffields before 24 Mar 1752.<sup>[109]</sup>

William left estate papers on 13 Apr 1747 with his wife as the administrator. In his estate, he had a farm and raised a number of different types of animals and had slaves. Elizabeth and her husband never moved from Nansemond County, but their two sons did relocate to Edgecombe County. Benjamin Coffield came sometime after 26 Feb 1746/47.<sup>[110]</sup> Spier Coffield came about 22 Jan 1757.<sup>[111]</sup> Nothing further is known about Elizabeth after she administered the will of her husband William Coffield.

---

<sup>105</sup> Coffield and Belamy Family Papers, MS 3162 Folder 11, (Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina) no pagination.

<sup>106</sup> Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants 1745-1747, Vol. 25, pages 177-178* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018). John King had gotten that land from his father Michael King who was the original patent holder on 24 Feb 1675/76; (Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants, Vol. 6, 1666-1679* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018), 597) This may be the original patent for the neighboring property.

<sup>107</sup> Virginia State Archives, *Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants, Vol. 10, 1710-1719* (Richmond, Virginia: Virginia State Library, 2018), 166.

<sup>108</sup> Peter R. Neal, *A History of the Nansemond River, Virginia* (Richmond, Virginia: Privately printed, 1959), 15-16. Hening's Statutes, III, 218-219. This crossing is very near where state route 125 crosses over the Nansemond River.

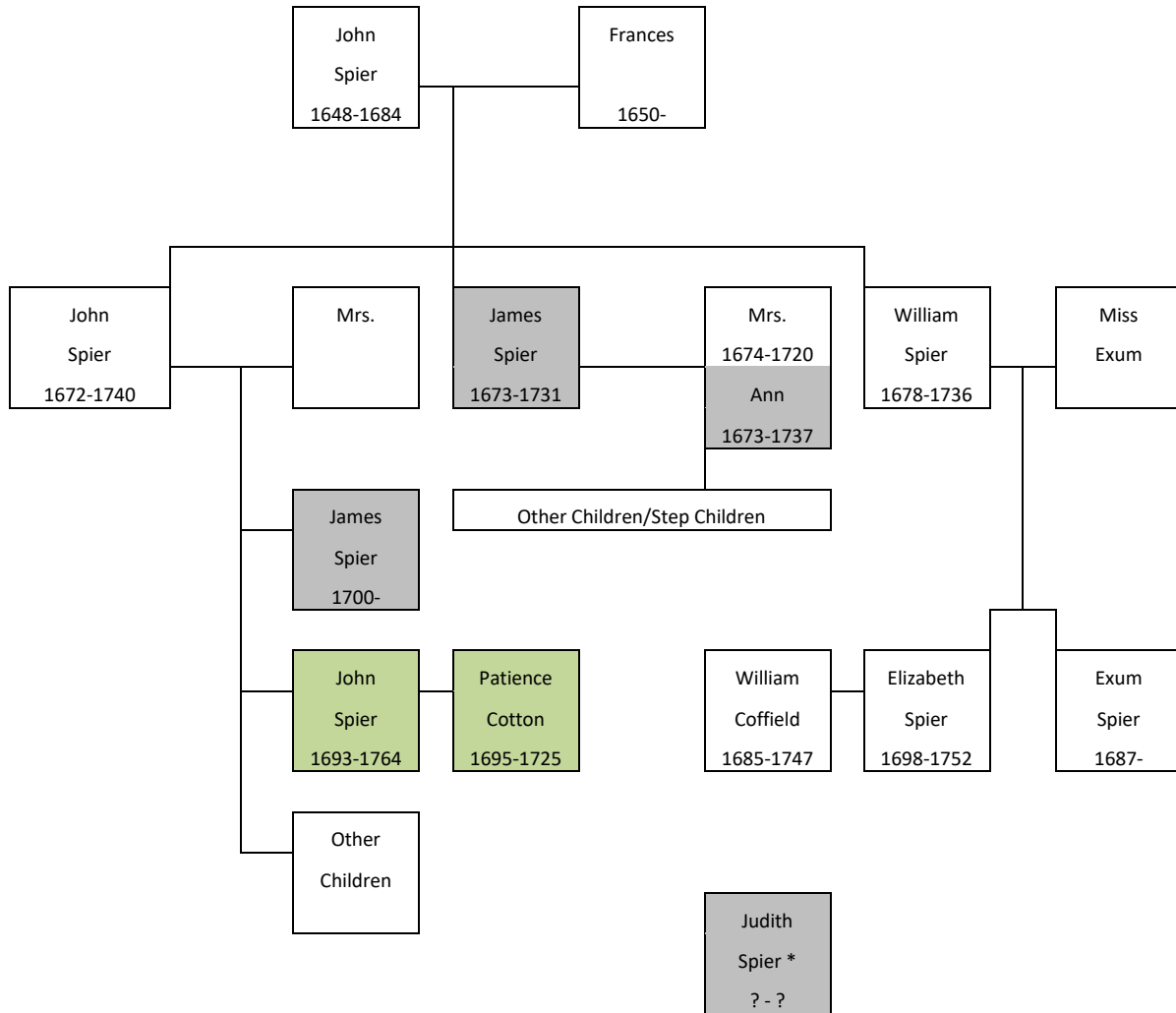
<sup>109</sup> H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia 1752-1755, 1756-1758* (Richmond, Virginia: unknown publisher, 1909), 54. He may have run the ferry as well.

<sup>110</sup> Coffield and Belamy Family Papers, MS 3162 Folder 11, (Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina) no pagination. Benjamin was of Nansemond County when he sold a slave to Thomas Brickell of Nansemond County.

<sup>111</sup> *Edgecombe County, North Carolina Deeds, Vol. 6, 1754-1758*, microfilm no. [C.047.40003] pages 144-145, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Spier Coffield was of Nansemond County.

# Attachment 1

## Witnesses Participating for Crown and for Ann Spier



\* Judith's exact relationship to the others is unknown.



Witnesses for the Crown



Witnesses for Ann Spier