

THE
VIRGINIA MAGAZINE
OF
HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

VOL. XVII.

JULY, 1909.

No. 3

THE MORTON PATRIARCHS OF VIRGINIA, PAGE 311

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b3624046;view=1up;seq=385>

THE MORTON PATRIARCHS OF VIRGINIA.

By Daniel Morton, M. D., St. Joseph, Mo.

There were several men of the name Morton, living in Virginia prior to the year 1800, from whom have come distinct lines of descent. What relationship the heads of these families sustained to each other is unknown to me. In some instances their descendants have intermarried without any knowledge of kinship existing and really supposing that there was none. Anyone whose Morton ancestors lived in Virginia prior to 1800 is probably descended from one of these men. The information is believed to be accurate, though not all of it is documentary. If the reader can throw additional light upon the origin or relationship of these men he is requested to communicate with Daniel Morton, M. D., St. Joseph, Mo.

1. John Morton. In 1694, one, John Morton is found living in Northumberland county, Virginia, and in that year bought 157 acres of land in Richmond county from James Orchard. Presumably he then moved to Richmond county, and twenty-seven years later there is found in Richmond county, Sittenbourne Parish, one John Morton, presumably the same John, making his will and mentioning sons: 11, John; is, William; 13, Thomas; M. James; 15, Richard; wife Deborah, Mary and

312 VIRGINIA HISTORICAL MAGAZINE.

Winifred Morton, relationship not stated. One year later he died, his will being proved May a, 1722.

John and William were cut off with four shillings each, otherwise there might have been subsequent court records confirming their sonship to John Morton. On the contrary it is possible that an advancement of their share of the estate had been made during the life time of the father and that the court records will show it. It is desirable to establish more firmly the fatherhood of this man John Morton, to Captain John Morton, Jr., and to William Morton, and to this end more record searching should be done in both Northumberland and Richmond counties. There is a persistent tradition in the family to the effect that, in early colonial times and long before the creation of the District of Columbia in 1790, the Mortons owned large tracts of land upon portions of which the city of Washington now stands. The District of Columbia was cut off in 1790 from two Maryland counties, Prince George and Montgomery, and a search of these two Maryland counties should be made. This tradition seems founded in fact when it is known that King Charles II granted a large tract of land in the Northern Neck of Virginia to some of his followers among them Sir William Morton, Knight. May it not be possible that Sir William sent to America a son who represented his father's interests and became the founder of one line- of the Morton

family in America? See Calender State Papers, Charles II, Colonial Series. Lenox Library, New York City.

11. Captain John Morton, Jr., lived in Richmond county, Virginia, in 1713. He is variously spoken of as "John Morton, Jr.," "Lieutenant," "Captain," "Merchant," "Sub Sheriff," and father of Joseph Morton. After 1721, Capt. John Morton, Jr., seems to drop the suffix "Jr.," from his signature. This is easily accounted for when it is remembered that the man John Morton, 1, who is believed to be his father died at this time. Capt. John Morton, Jr., was a man of affairs as the records show and was constantly buying land. He must have been a man of energy. He died without a will as proved by his wife in court, October 2, 1728. He died a short time previously which fixes 1728 as the year of his death. He married Mary Mountjoy, daughter of Alvin Mounijoy and Mary Lane Mountjoy. The Mountjoy family seems to have had large holdings of land and to have been wealthy. Mrs. John Morton, Jr., after the death of her husband in 1728, married William Jordan. This man must have had a strong personality and been highly esteemed by his kinsman, as his name had been handed down the line ever since as a given name for the Mortons. There have been many William Jordan Mortons since that time. By her Jordan husband, Mary Mountjoy had a son, John Morton Jordan, whom she doubtless named for her first husband. John Morton Jordan died July 23, 1771, and mentions in his will his wife Dorothy and a minor son John Nesbit Jordan.

GENEALOGY. 313

Children: Morton: 4.

in. Joseph Morton, of whom hereafter, married (t) Frances Colston, m. (2) Margaret Beck with, dau. Sir Marmaduke Beckwith. 112. George Morton b. August 17, 1717, m. October 23, 1742, Lucy Baylor dau.

Robert and Frances Baylor. Justice of Peace in King George county in 1744. Will dated July 8, 1765. Mentions sons: 1121, John; 1122, George; 1123, Robert Baylor; 1124, Joseph; 1125, daughter Frances Hedgeman, wife Lucy. Besides these children, George Morton is said to have had daughters, 1126, Elizabeth; 1127, Lucy; 1128, Patsy.

113. Mary Morton b. March 22, 1719, m. Jonathan Sydenham, "late of London Merchant," no other facts.

114. Frances Morton, m. (1) Nicholas Meriwether whose will is dated January 21, 1753, proved in Goochland county, July 18, 1758, m. (2) Dr. Samuel Pryor of Goochland, marriage bond August 27, 1760. No other facts concerning Frances Morton.

William Morton, Orange County.

12. William Morton of Orange county, Va. Married Ann Mothers-head. Died 1748. Made will December 8, 1747, proved July 28, 1748, will book 2, p. 131. Witnesses George Taylor, Taverner Beale, W. Russel, J. Branham, Jr., John Smith. Appoints his wife Ann, executrix and son Elijah and son in law Andrew Bourne, executors. Mentions wife Ann, grandchild George Morton, second son Elijah Morton, grand daughter Frances Christopher. (She afterward married Francis Bourne and became ancestress to Gen. Bristow.) Mentions also the following children:

Children: Morton:

121. Son Jeremiah m. Sarah Street? Mallory? Which?

122. Son Elijah m. Elizabeth Hawkins.

123. Daughter Ann, m. Henry Bourne prior to August, 1746.

124. Daughter Elizabeth m. Thomas Newman.

125. Daughter Mary Minor? Or Morris? Which?

126. Daughter Jane, though his will does not mention her but does mention her husband Andrew Bourne.

127. Son John. Then under 21 years of age. He is believed to have married a Miss Bourne, sister of Henry and Andrew Bourne.

128. Son George. Though his name is not mentioned in will because he died before his father and prior to October 25, 1744. Will book 2, p. 7t, shows qualification of Jeremiah Morton as administrator of George Morton, died October 25, 1744, and at page 30 the inventory and appraisal of personal estate of George Morton made October, 1744, amounted to £391 16s. 19d. There was a George Morton who married Margaret Strother, April 6, 1744, in Overwharton Parish, (see register)

314 VIRGINIA HISTORICAL MAGAZINE.

and lived but a few months. Perhaps he was this man, 128, George Morton.

None of William Morton's children were of age in January, 1734-5.

Although William Morton is commonly spoken of as being "William Morton of Orange county," my record researches prove that he previously lived in Richmond county and was married to Ann Mothershead daughter of Alvin Mothershead. While living there he is found associated in business transactions with Capt. John Morton, Jr. After 1736 however, William Morton drops from the Richmond county records and is found in Orange county, where he died in 1748. Although the proof is not positive, there is a good reason to believe that this same William

Morton is identical with that William Morton who married Ann Batchellor, daughter of Thomas and Mary Batchellor of Westmoreland county Parish of Cople, lived at this latter place and had one son John. It would seem that he was twice married, one wife being Ann Batchellor, and one wife being Ann Mothershead. In 1827 at Russellville, Ky., Marmaduke Beckwith Mothershead, (a descendant of Capt. John Morton, Jr.,) and Nancy Caldwell, (a descendant of William Morton) were married, thus commingling the blood of the two men, who a century before lived side by side in Richmond county, Virginia. William Morton was an ancestor of Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, Confederate States of America. See William and Mary Quarterly Magazine, 1897- 1898.

A large amount of documentary Morton data can be found in the Virginia Magazine History and Biography, Vols, n and 12.

Thomas Morton.

I. Thomas Morton m. Elizabeth Woodson dau. Richard Woodson and Ann (Smith) Woodson. (Robert John Woodson, who emigrated to Virginia from Devonshire, England, 1624.)

Children : Morton :

II. Capt. John Morton, of "Morton Hall," Prince Edward county,

Va., b. February 9, 1730, d. ; m. Mary Anderson, in her 14th year,

b. November 19, 1736, Hanover county, Va., and dau. of an English merchant at Farmville, Va. Captain John Morton raised a company of volunteers at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, eight of his sons being members of this Company. He is supposed to have been related to Col. Wm. Morton. Among the children of Capt. John Morton were :

Children : Morton, 10 :

in. Capt. Hezekiah, received 4,500 acres land from Virginia for military service. Among his descendants are Judge Robert Hughes, Norfolk, Va., and Rev. Robert Anderson, of Roanoke, Va.

112. Capt. John A., Bordeaux, France, m. Cora Lee Henry, dau. Gov. Henry, of the Island of Hayti.

GENEALOGY. 315

113. Nathaniel, m. Miss Copeland, of Baltimore, Md. Ancestor of Charles Morton Stewart, Baltimore, Md.

114. Major James, "Old Solid Column," so called by Lafayette. Served in Continental line as lieutenant and received 3,370 acres of land from Virginia for military service. Among his descendants Rev. James Whery, of Moresville, N. C. Daughter Nancy m. Rev. Ben Holt Rice, D. D.

115. Benjamin; no facts. Among his descendants Washington Morton, New York City.

116. Richard; never married, no facts.

117. Joseph? Ancestor of Oliver P. Morton, Governor of Indiana.

118. Obadiah, Prince Edward county, Va., m. Eliza Ligon, Prince Edward county, Va. Ancestor Thos. L. Morton, Prince Edward county, Va., Farmville, Va.

119. Betsy, m. Woodson and became ancestress of Gov. Silas

Woodson, of Missouri, and Charles Morton, Pamplin City, Va.

n (10). Patty; never married. No facts.

Note. This lineage I have not verified by documentary proof. D. M.

Joseph Morton of Little Roanoke Bridge.

Joseph Morton, b. 1709, d. June 28, 1772; m. (1) Miss Goode,

m. (2) Agnes Woodson, b. February 27, 1711, d. March 10, 1802, dau. Richard Woodson and wife Agnes Micheaux, grand-daughter Abraham Micheaux and wife Susannah Rochette. Joseph Morton settled at Little Roanoke Bridge. By profession he was a surveyor. At first a staunch Episcopalian, subsequently became a staunch Presbyterian and remained so the rest of his life. He became an Elder in the Briery Church. Was gentleman Justice of Prince Edward county, Va., when county was organized January 8, 1754. Said to have come from Orange county, Va., and to have been employed by the Randolph family to survey their lands. A man named John Morton is said to have been associated with Joseph Morton in surveying. What relation existed between the two men is not known. John Morton m. Elizabeth Woodson, dau. Sanborne Woodson.

Children 1st marriage: Morton:

11. Mary, b. November, 1733.

Children and marriage : Morton :

12. Josiah, b. November 14, 1737, d. November 27, 1785.

13. Judith, b. December 27, 1739.

14. William, b. November 27, 1743, d. November 29, 1820, m. October 29, 1764, Susannah Watkins.

15. Jane, b. February 14, 1745.

16. Agnes, b. February 26, 1747.

316 VIRGINIA HISTORICAL MAGAZINE.

17. Little Joe, b. November 15, 1749.

18. Jacob, b. January 29, 1751, d. May 22, 1829, m. September 3, 1774, Jane D. Booker.

19. Elizabeth, b. May 14, 1754.

Note.— This lineage I have not verified by documentary proof. D. M.