

Richard Jordan Family of Isle of Wight & Surry Counties

(See Chronology for a complete set of citations and speculations)

1. **Richard Jordan I** (? - 1687) His origins are a mystery. Although there are at least four other Jordans in the general area where he first appears, there is no evidence linking him to any of them. He does not appear in the 1624/5 Jamestown musters, nor among the headrights in Virginia patents.¹ His first appearance is as a witness to a deed on 25 March 1639/40 in Isle of Wight County.² The Isle of Wight records are only partially preserved in this time period, and there are few references to him in the surviving records. Other than an incidental mention of him in 1650³ the next record is his purchase of 50 acres on Cypress Creek (then called Pagan Bay Creek) in Isle of Wight on 21 December 1653.⁴ The will of Christopher Reynolds, dated a few months later on 1 May 1654, devises to one of his sons a piece of land “on the southerly side of the freshet swamp that Richard Jordan now liveth upon.”⁵ This land was surely near the land he had purchased, for the freshet swamp was a stream feeding Cypress Creek.

On 25 November 1657, Christopher Reynolds Jr., the son of the above Christopher Reynolds, received a patent for two separate parcels of 100 and 250 acres, which was entered into the patent book with the marginal note that it was “renewed in Richard Jordan’s name the 18 March 1662 to whom it is assigned by the said Reynolds.”⁶ The assignment from Reynolds to Jordan actually took place in late 1657 or early 1658, for a later patent notes that Richard Jordan had sold the 100 acre portion back to Christopher Reynolds Jr. on 18 May 1658.⁷ The remaining 250 acres was retained by Richard Jordan, and was apparently the land on which he lived for the next twenty years.

By 11 January 1661/2 a Richard Jordan Jr. begins to appear in the records, perhaps his son, and some subsequent records for Richard Jordan are as “Richard Jordan Senior”.⁸ By 1673 that person had moved into Surry County, while Richard Jordan I remained in Isle of Wight, appearing several times as a juror, appraiser, and witness through 1679. He may have participated in Bacon’s Rebellion in 1676, or at least was publicly sympathetic to Bacon’s cause. Following that rebellion, the King sent three commissioners to investigate its causes and assess the concerns of the colonists. Richard Jordan (as “Senior”) and six other residents of Isle of Wight signed a petition dated 5 March 1676/7 to these commissioners listing twenty-six “grievances” with their government.⁹ Less than a month later, on 27 March, they recanted the petition and appeared in court on 9 April to apologize for “all the false and scandalous reflection upon Governor Sir William Berkeley, contained in a paper presented to

¹ It is possible that he does, in fact, appear as a headright in a 1679 patent, several decades after his arrival. See Chronology for the details.

² Isle of Wight County Deed Book A, p99

³ Isle of Wight County Deed Book A, p27.

⁴ Isle of Wight County Deed Book A, p93.

⁵ Isle of Wight County Deed Book A, p46.

⁶ Virginia Patent Book 4, p243-4.

⁷ Virginia Patent Book 6, p684.

⁸ Boddie, p566 (two citations on the same page) dated in 1672 and 1673, and several records following 1673.

⁹ *British Colonial Papers Collection*, Library of Virginia. Reproduced in Boddie, pp150-157 and several other sources.

the commissioners and promise never to be guilty again of the like mutinous and rebellious practices.”¹⁰

In 1679 he sold his lands in Isle of Wight County and sometime in 1680 or 1681 moved several miles west into Surry County, where his son Richard Jordan Jr. had settled several years earlier. On 30 March 1679 he and his wife Alice Jordan gave 100 acres to his son John Jordan, though how he acquired that land is unclear.¹¹ A few months later, on 10 May 1679, he received a patent renewing his old 250 acres and adding 113 acres of adjoining waste land.¹² Six months later, he sold that patent to Joseph Woory.¹³ Woory later sued him over breach of contract, perhaps relating to this sale.¹⁴ On 29 September 1679 he bought land in Surry County near his son Richard Jordan Jr., being separated from him by a single parcel.¹⁵ In the same year, he apparently posted a bond in Isle of Wight for maintenance of his wife Alice.¹⁶ Alice Jordan had released dower in the sale to Joseph Woory, and appears to have moved with Jordan in Surry County, so it’s not clear how to interpret this record.

From 1681 through 1686, Richard Jordan Sr. appears in the Surry County tithables. He died sometime after June 1686, when he last appears as a tithable, and 3 May 1687 when Richard Jordan Jr. was granted administration “on the estate of his dec’d father Rich. Jordan.”¹⁷ (Note that this was the first court meeting in more than two months, meaning he could have died somewhat earlier.) The inventory was recorded on 5 July 1687 by his son.¹⁸ Richard Jordan’s wife Alice evidently outlived him by a matter of a few days or weeks.¹⁹ At the same 3 May 1687 court, the nuncupative (oral) will of Alice Jordan was proved and Charles Savadge, the executor, relinquished his role. The court neither appointed a replacement, nor ordered an appraisal, a strong indication that the will disbursed no property.²⁰ In fact, the will itself was not recorded, suggesting that it perhaps dealt with burial wishes, personal clothing, or some other request unrelated to property.²¹

¹⁰ *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Volume II, p390.

¹¹ Isle of Wight Will & Deed Book 1, no page given, abstracted by Boddie, p581

¹² Virginia Patent Book 6, p684.

¹³ Isle of Wight County Deed Book 1, no page given, abstracted by Boddie, p583. Boddie gives the year as 1672, but the text of the deed clearly indicates he was selling the land patented in 1679, thus indicating the date was actually 1679.

¹⁴ Surry County Court Orders 1671-1691, p364.

¹⁵ Surry County Deed Book 2, p246.

¹⁶ Isle of Wight Will & Deed Book 1, no page given, abstracted by Boddie p587.

¹⁷ Surry County Court Orders 1671-1691, p561.

¹⁸ Surry County Court Orders 1671-1691, p574. The inventory is in Deed Book 3, p86.

¹⁹ A married woman could not make a will, so Alice Jordan must have been a widow when she made her own will. Nuncupative wills (oral wills made on a deathbed) were valid only if immediately recorded, so she must have died just before the court session in which the will was proved. The fact that the court appointed no administrator, nor ordered any appraisal, is a good indication that her will did not disburse property beyond what the law called “personal paraphernalia” such as clothing. As the widow of an intestate husband, she would not have inherited any property. She would have had a dower right in property, but the dower right would disappear with her own death and could not be bequeathed in her own will.

²⁰ Surry County Court Orders 1671-1691, p565, 567. Note that the witnesses were adjoining landowners to Richard Jordan Sr. in Surry County, indicating that Alice Jordan must have been living on his land when she made her deathbed will.

²¹ It is quite peculiar that the executor could immediately relinquish his post, without a replacement appointed. That suggests there was no duty left to perform. Note that the executor had the power to bury the deceased before

There is one additional tantalizing record which may possibly bear on the immigration of Richard Jordan. On 30 May 1679 a patent was issued to Nicholas Sessums, an adjoining landowner, for transportation of 11 persons, including “Rich. Jordane & wife” and a second “Richd. Jorden.”²² This may refer to the original importation and, if so, suggests that Richard Jordan and his wife arrived in Virginia with his son already born. The importer would not have been Nicholas Sessums of course; he clearly had purchased the headrights from someone else, as he did for several other patents.²³ He may, in fact, have purchased the rights from Richard Jordan Sr. himself. The delay of perhaps 40 years in the use of the rights is not necessarily significant, for Sessums claimed his own headright more than 45 years after his arrival.²⁴

Although there were probably one or more daughters, only two sons can be identified, Richard Jordan II and John Jordan.

1.1. **Richard Jordan II** (c1640 - 1699) The Sessums patent suggests the possibility, however faint, that he was born prior to his father’s first appearance in 1640. It is likely that he was of age by 11 January 1662 when a “Richard Jordan Jr.” witnessed a deed for land formerly owned by Christopher Reynolds.²⁵ Presumably the same person witnessed the will of a neighbor as “Richard Jordan Jr.” on 11 March 1667.²⁶ Other clues as well are consistent with a birth within a few years of 1640.²⁷ That he was his father’s eldest son is clear, since he inherited the land of his intestate father.²⁸ He is likely the Richard Jordan who married Elizabeth Reynolds, daughter of Christopher Reynolds of Isle of Wight County, most likely sometime in the mid or late 1660s, as their earliest known child was born about 1668. Elizabeth Reynolds was under fifteen

proving the will, which suggests that the will dealt with that subject rather than with property. The fact that the court did not order an appraisal or even bother to record the deed is nearly certain evidence that the will did not deal with property.

²² Virginia Patent Book 6, p688.

²³ A separate analysis of Surry Headrights during this period shows that about 75% of headrights claimed in patents were actually imported by someone else; that is, that the patentee purchased the rights. Nicholas Sessums is known to have used numerous headrights for people who arrived in Virginia before he himself did, as well as using headrights decades after their actual arrival. In fact, in 1711 he claimed a headright for himself and we know he arrived in Virginia in 1665.

²⁴ My own analysis of all 17th century headright certificates in the records of Surry and Lower Norfolk counties shows that patent dates lagged headright certificates by about 5-6 five years, on average, but it was not uncommon for some to be used several decades later. And, of course, the certificate itself was typically granted years after the actual arrival, so that the lag between importation and patent averaged perhaps as much as ten years in all. Sessums, however, seems to have routinely utilized very old rights. His patents use names which had appeared in Surry records decades earlier.

²⁵ Isle of Wight Will & Deed Book 1, abstracted in Seventeenth Century Isle of Wight County Virginia, John Bennett Boddie (reprint Heritage Books, 1993), p541 and again on p554.

²⁶ Boddie, p548.

²⁷ A birth year of 1640, give or take a few years, is a reasonable guess. His first (so far as we know) child was born in 1668 or early 1669, suggesting a marriage date within a few years of 1668. Virginia-born men in the mid-1600s were typically marrying in their mid 20s [see Kulikoff, p49], suggesting a birth date of around 1640, but no later than 1645. His wife, to have born children as early as 1668/9 and as late as 1684/5, must have been born sometime in the 1640s, consistent with Elizabeth Reynolds being under 15 in 1654.

²⁸ Surry County Deed Book 4, p107.

when her father wrote his will in 1654²⁹, but was married to Richard Jordan by the 11 March 1669 will of her brother John Reynolds, which left a bequest to his sister “Elizabeth Jordan and her son Richard Jordan.”³⁰ That son was probably Richard Jordan III who, by other evidence, was born within a year or so of the date of that will. (For more on this, see the separate paper on which Richard Jordan married Elizabeth Reynolds.)

He preceded his father into Surry County by several years. By 1673 Richard Jordan Jr. had moved several miles southwest of his father, into Lawnes Creek parish of Surry County. He appears in the Surry County tithables as a head of household each year from 1673 through 1698, becoming Richard Jordan “Senior” after the death of his father in 1687. His first purchase of land in Surry County, a parcel nearly on the Isle of Wight border in Lawnes Creek parish, was made on 16 December 1676.³¹ He and his wife Elizabeth sold that land in 1684, apparently to move about eight miles west into Southwarke parish.³² He had bought part of a patent to Bartholomew Owen on Johnchecohunk Swamp sometime prior to 1684³³ and on 20 April 1684 was issued a patent for 260 acres adjoining it.³⁴ By 1685 he was living on that land, for he appears in the tithables for Southwarke parish from 1685 until his death. After his father’s death, he and his wife Elizabeth sold his father’s land in Lawnes Creek parish in 1688.³⁵ He increased his landholdings on Johnchecohunk Swamp with a patent for 200 acres in 1688³⁶ and another for 568 acres in 1689³⁷ (which included the 1688 patent) giving him a contiguous parcel of roughly 1000 acres on the north bank of Johnchecohunk Swamp. In 1695 he made gifts and sales of most of this land to his son Richard (330 acres) and son-in-law John Fort (300 acres).³⁸ He retained his original plantation, consisting of most of the original patent and the adjoining purchase, eventually transferring this remaining land to his younger sons in his will.

Richard Jordan died sometime in late 1698 or 1699, apparently some months prior to the proving of his will.³⁹ He appears in the 1698 tithables but not in 1699, when his son appears sans the “Jr.” adjective. His will, dated 24 September 1695 and proved 7 November 1699, names nine children and his wife Elizabeth. It split the remaining

²⁹ Isle of Wight County Will Book A, p46.

³⁰ Isle of Wight County Will Book 2, p62.

³¹ Surry County Deed Book 3, p12.

³² Surry County Deed Book 3, p12.

³³ This may be the land transferred to Richard Jordan by William Foreman (who had bought the land from Owen in 1674) in an undated deed recorded in 1696. See Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 5, p100. Jordan must have occupied the land by early 1684, for his patent of 1684 describes the land as “beginning at the mouth of a branch which branch parts this land from sd Jordan’s own land, being part of Mr. Owen’s dividend.” From later deeds, this purchase does indeed seem to be the westernmost 150 acres of a 1673 patent to Bartholomew Owen. Several other deeds of parts of that patent by the heir of Bartholomew Owens make it possible to plot the parcel quite accurately as being on the Swamp on the east side of Richard Jordan’s later patents.

³⁴ Virginia Patent Book 7, p369.

³⁵ Surry County Deed Book 4, p107.

³⁶ Virginia Patent Book 7, p691.

³⁷ Virginia Patent Book 8, p4-5. This included the 200 acres patented the year before.

³⁸ Surry County Deed Book 5, pp62-64.

³⁹ See the Chronology for several clues that he may have died as early as late 1698.

plantation between sons Robert and Charles, entailing the land in the process, and provided clues to the ages of those sons. Six daughters, two of them married, were given livestock. (See the Chronology for more details.) His widow Elizabeth Jordan last appears in the records on 7 May 1700 when she presented the inventory.⁴⁰

1.1.1. **Richard Jordan III** (1668/9 – c1751) He first appears as a tithable of his father in 1685, indicating a birth date after June 1668 but before March 1669 when he was apparently the child mentioned in the will of his uncle John Reynolds.⁴¹ He appears in each tithables list thereafter, being listed separately from his father in 1688, and then listed separately from 1690 continuously through the last available tithables list in 1703. His appearance in the tithables as a separate taxpayer from 1690 seems further indication that he reached 21 about that time. On 10 September 1695 his father gifted him with 130 acres and sold him another 200 acres, at least one parcel of which was entailed.⁴² He appears as a freeholder in court records beginning in late 1694.⁴³ He purchased the 300 acres his father had sold to John Fort in 1709 and added an adjoining patent of 390 acres in 1725.⁴⁴ Like his father, he amassed a considerable amount of land on Johnchecohunk Swamp, selling only one parcel of it. Later records show that he apparently broke the entail on the land given to him by his father and sold it to his son Joseph Jordan in 1737.⁴⁵ He appears fairly frequently in Surry records through 15 May 1728 when he is mentioned as a processioner.⁴⁶ Oddly, he appears in no further Surry records until his death more than twenty years later. His will, dated 27 November 1749 and proved 19 November 1751, distributes his remaining land, a total of 900 acres, among his sons William, Benjamin, and Joseph Jordan but mentions no other children.⁴⁷ His wife's name does not appear anywhere in the records, nor are there any clues to possible daughters. The Surry records do not suggest the existence of any sons other than the three named in his will. There are no clues to the ages of the three sons, and few clues to their order of birth, so the birth dates and sequence below are just guesses.

1.1.1.1. **William Jordan** (c1695-1705? – 1758) He is listed here as the eldest child based on his being the executor of his father and the recipient of the greatest amount of land. His first appearance in the records may have been his witness to a neighbor's deed in 1728.⁴⁸ Due to the presence in Surry of two William Jordans of about the same age, the first record of him we can be certain of is his 1737 patent for land

⁴⁰ Surry Orders 1691-1713, p209.

⁴¹ The 1680 tithables law in effect at this time had made all males tithable if they had reached the age of 16 by June 9 of the year. Foreign-born Christian male servants were tithable at 14, and black males at 12.

⁴² Surry County Deed Book 5, pp63-64.

⁴³ Surry Orders 1691-1713, p117.

⁴⁴ Virginia Patent Book 12, p180-1.

⁴⁵ Surry County Deed Book 7, p156 and Surry County Deed Book 10, p249 both reference this sale recorded at the General Court. See Chronology for an explanation.

⁴⁶ Surry County Deed Book 7, p825.

⁴⁷ Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 9, p760.

⁴⁸ Surry County Deed Book 7, p936.

adjoining his father.⁴⁹ Oddly, the patent adjoined both his father's 1724 patent and this father's portion of the Richard Jordan II 1689 patent, but the survey names the occupier of those lands as William Jordan himself, not his father, suggesting that his father had previously installed him on those lands. He evidently did not hold title, for those lands were left to him in his father's will of 1749. On 18 March 1739, he sold half of his 1737 patent, with no wife releasing dower.⁵⁰ He appears in a number of records thereafter, most of no particular genealogical value other than his father's will. William Jordan evidently died unmarried and without issue, for his will, dated 18 January 1758 and recorded on 16 May 1758, leaves his estate to his brother Joseph Jordan and to Joseph's sons Henry, Stephen and Jesse Jordan.⁵¹ His remaining land, some 400 acres, was left to his nephews Henry Jordan and Stephen Jordan who sold it outside the family a few years later.

1.1.1.2. **Benjamin Jordan** (c1695-1705? – ?) He first appears in the Surry records on 12 July 1732, when he bought land just south of Johnchecohunk Swamp on the north side of the Blackwater.⁵² Subsequent references to him are consistent with residence there. He appears in several Surry records, with his penultimate appearance being in 1751.⁵³ He had received 250 acres in his father's will and, as Benjamin Jordan of Sussex County, he sold that inherited land in 1756.⁵⁴ He had apparently moved south of the Blackwater into the part of Surry which had become Sussex County in 1754. I did not track him in Sussex County records, but he seems highly likely to be the Benjamin Jordan with a wife Mary, for whom the birth and baptism of two sons, **Benjamin** (in 1744) and **Thomas** (in 1745), were recorded in the Albemarle parish register.⁵⁵ The godparents of those two sons were both neighbors and names which appear with Benjamin Jordan in several Surry records. Whether he remained there or moved elsewhere is unclear. It is possible that he was the same Benjamin Jordan who settled in Pitt County, North Carolina in the 1760s.

1.1.1.3. **Joseph Jordan** (? – 1770) He was probably not the eldest son. If he were, there would be little reason to break an entail on land he would have received anyway. He first appears in the records on 16 January 1736 witnessing a deed.⁵⁶ As mentioned above, his father deeded him

⁴⁹ Virginia Patent Book 17, p358.

⁵⁰ Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 9, p37.

⁵¹ Surry County Will Book 10, p140.

⁵² Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 9, p207.

⁵³ Surry Orders 1749-1751, p299.

⁵⁴ Surry County Deed Book 7, p288.

⁵⁵ Register of Albemarle Parish, Surry and Sussex Counties 1739-1778, Gertrude R.B. Richards (DAR, 1958), p13 and p73.

⁵⁶ Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 8, p557

the entailed land the following year. He appears very frequently thereafter in Surry records. He perhaps had more than one wife. One wife may have been the daughter of a neighbor named William Cooper, whose 1756 will named **Jesse Jordan** and **Jane Jordan** as grandchildren.⁵⁷ Among the daughters mentioned was one named Hannah, who may have been Jordan's wife. The first record of a wife is the release of dower by "Joanna" less than two years before his death, a name that seems likely to be a mistranscription of Hannah. His will, dated 11 October 1770 and proved 20 November 1770, names his wife Hannah, sons Richard, William, and Stephen Jordan, and refers to "all my children" who are otherwise unnamed.⁵⁸ His brother William Jordan's will had named two more sons: Henry and Jesse. The widow Hannah Jordan released her dower interest in a land sale two years later, but is not mentioned again.⁵⁹ However, she may be the "mother" mentioned in the Revolutionary pension of Richard Jordan below.

1.1.1.3.1. **Jesse Jordan** He may have been the Jesse Jordan named as a grandson by William Cooper's will in 1756.⁶⁰ He is named a son of Joseph Jordan in the 1758 will of his uncle William Jordan.⁶¹ Though he appears in no other Surry records, he may be the same Jesse Jordan who, with wife Priscilla, later appears south of the Blackwater in the records of Sussex County. The Albemarle parish register mentions the birth of **John Jordan** in 1773 and **Benjamin Jordan** in 1775.⁶² A Jesse Jordan also appears in the 1789 Sussex tax list. I did not look at any other Sussex County records.

1.1.1.3.2. **Stephen Jordan** He inherited land in the 1758 will of his uncle William Jordan. On 18 September 1770, he and his brother Henry sold their inherited land as a single parcel.⁶³ In 1780, he bought land about a mile south of the original Richard Jordan II plantation.⁶⁴ Anthony Adkins' will of 1781 named him a brother-in-law.⁶⁵ He was administrator of his brother Henry Jordan's estate in 1782.⁶⁶ He appears

⁵⁷ Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 10, p215.

⁵⁸ Surry County Will Book 11, p114.

⁵⁹ Surry County Deed Book 10, p249.

⁶⁰ Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 10, p215.

⁶¹ Surry County Will Book 10, p140.

⁶² Register of Albemarle Parish, Surry and Sussex Counties 1739-1778, Gertrude R.B. Richards (DAR, 1958), p154, p244.

⁶³ Surry County Deed Book 10, p77.

⁶⁴ Surry County Deed Book 11, p128.

⁶⁵ Surry County Will Book 11, p203.

⁶⁶ Surry County Order Book 1775-85, p138.

in the 1782 state census as head of a household of 7 whites. I did not track him further.

- 1.1.1.3.3. **Henry Jordan** (c1740? - 1782) He inherited land from his uncle William Jordan, and sold it in 1770 (see above). He was married to Mary Amiss by 4 January 1763 when the will of Sylvester Amiss named his daughter Mary Jordan.⁶⁷ Henry and Mary Jordan were later among the Amiss heirs who sold her father's land in 1767.⁶⁸ Both Henry and his wife were dead by 26 November 1782 when his brother Stephen Jordan was granted administration of his estate.⁶⁹ The following year **Mary Jordan**, orphan of Henry Jordan chose her uncle Lewis Pully (who had married Mary Amiss' sister) as her guardian.⁷⁰ He apparently had two sons, **James Jordan** and **Randolph Jordan**. In 1792 Randolph Jordan, as "heir at law" of James Jordan, sold land he described as descended from Henry Jordan to James Jordan.⁷¹
- 1.1.1.3.4. **Richard Jordan** His father's will left a gun to his son Richard Jordan, who is not mentioned again in any Surry records. He may be the Richard Jordan (c1759 – c1835) who applied for a Revolutionary War pension from Pitt County, North Carolina in 1832, giving his age as 72 or 73 and birthplace as Surry County.⁷² His pension mentions that he left his discharge with his mother, perhaps Hannah Jordan, and also mentions a brother-in-law named Burwell Edwards (apparently the one from Isle of Wight County). His widow Anna applied for a widow's pension in 1834.
- 1.1.1.3.5. **William Jordan** (9 January 1762 – c1850) As the orphan of Joseph Jordan, he was bound out on 21 April 1772.⁷³ He seems to be the same William Jordan who applied for a Revolutionary War pension in 1835 while living in Newton County, Georgia stating that he was born in Surry County, Virginia on 9 January 1762, and served from Edgecombe County, North Carolina.⁷⁴ The pension was rejected and a second application filed in 1844 from Randolph County

⁶⁷ Surry County Will Book 10, p346.

⁶⁸ Surry County Deed Book 8, p343.

⁶⁹ Surry County Order Book 1775-85, p138.

⁷⁰ Surry County Order Book 1775-85, p160.

⁷¹ Surry County Deed Book 1, p21.

⁷² Pension file #R7087.

⁷³ Surry County Order Book 1764-74, p290.

⁷⁴ Pension file #R5770.

Georgia.⁷⁵

- 1.1.2. **Charles Jordan** (1677/8 – c1695/6) He first appears as a tithable of his father in 1694 and 1695, and as a witness to his father's deed to John Fort in 1695.⁷⁶ He is last mentioned in his father's will of 1695, which indicates that he was not yet 20. He appears in no further records, including the tithables lists of 1696-1703. All subsequent references in Surry and Isle of Wight to a Charles Jordan can be shown to refer to the son of George Jordan, who was unrelated to this particular Jordan family. Charles Jordan almost certainly died shortly after his last appearance in the records in late 1695, evidently unmarried and without heirs. Under the terms of his father's will, the land that he was to have inherited would have reverted to his brother Robert Jordan. Later records make it clear that Robert Jordan did, in fact, own that land.⁷⁷
- 1.1.3. **Robert Jordan** (1684/5 - 1710) He was under 16 when his father wrote his will, and was apparently about 11 or so. He makes his first appearance in the tithable lists in 1701 through 1703 in his brother's household, thus suggesting a birth date in late 1684 or early 1685. He is also on a November 1701 militia list, confirming that he was 16 by that year.⁷⁸ He was not listed among the 1704 quit rents, likely because he was not yet 21 (meaning that his guardian probably paid the quit rent on his inherited lands). In fact, he is not mentioned again in any record until 7 November 1710, when his wife Martha Jordan was granted administration of his estate.⁷⁹ She presented his inventory a few months later.⁸⁰ Robert Jordan inherited land from his father and, under the terms of the will, also inherited the land of his brother Charles Jordan. These parcels, which were entailed, were later owned by a younger Robert Jordan, presumably his son. Though his widow would surely have remarried, what became of her is unknown.
- 1.1.3.1. **Robert Jordan** (c1706 - 1761) He is first mentioned in 1735.⁸¹ On 21 March 1738/9, Robert Jordan "aged 32" deposed that he had known John Person for 26 years before his death and knew his handwriting.⁸² [John Person, or Parson, was the immediate neighbor to the portion of the Richard Jordan II plantation inherited by Robert Jordan.⁸³] Further

⁷⁵ Pension file #R5773.

⁷⁶ Surry County Deed Book 5, p62.

⁷⁷ Surry Orders 1744-1749, p462-3. It is fairly simple to identify the land left to Charles Jordan, and this record identifies the owner of that land in 1747 as Robert Jordan, son of Robert Jordan.

⁷⁸ *Virginia's Colonial Soldiers*, Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck (1988), p221

⁷⁹ Surry Orders 1691-1713, p351.

⁸⁰ Surry County Deed Book 6, p42.

⁸¹ Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 9, p938.

⁸² Surry County Deed Book 9, p51.

⁸³ Under his father's will, Robert Jordan Sr. inherited the "upper end" of his father's plantation, presumably meaning the northwestern, or upstream, portion. If his brother Charles Jordan died without heirs (which apparently happened), Robert Jordan Sr. would also inherit the southeastern, portion of the plantation, which his father had bought from Owen. In 1695 Robert Owen, the son, sold 110 acres of the same patent to Joshua Proctor [DB 5, p89] describing it as adjacent to Richard Jordan. This means Proctor's land bordered the Jordan plantation to the east, on

confirmation that he owned the old Richard Jordan plantation is found in a 1747 court record regarding a mill spanning Johnchecohunk Swamp.⁸⁴ Likewise, the land which had earlier been owned by Robert and Margaret House (and which bordered the land left to Robert and Charles Jordan) eventually came into the hands of William Dewell, when it was described as adjoining Robert Jordan.⁸⁵ His apparently died in Surry County in 1761, for his widow Margaret Jordan was granted administration of his estate on 21 October 1761.⁸⁶ The inventory was presented on 17 November 1761.⁸⁷

1.1.3.1.1. **William Jordan** (? – by1771) was apparently the eldest son of Robert Jordan. The William Dewell land mentioned above, which adjoined Robert Jordan in 1759, was described in 1766 as bordering William Jordan.⁸⁸ A 1771 deed of the dower interest in this land by Margaret Jordan (perhaps the widow of Robert Jordan) seems to confirm the existence of a son William, though it also indicates that he was dead.⁸⁹

1.1.3.1.2. **James Jordan** A related deed suggests he was a younger son.⁹⁰

1.1.4. **Elizabeth Jordan**, probably the eldest daughter, married John Fort, who was deeded part of Richard Jordan's 1689 patent on 10 September 1695.⁹¹ John Fort's will, dated 21 October 1724 and proved 10 March 1725, names nine children: sons Richard and Thomas (minors); sons John, William, George, and Elias; daughters Hannah Phillips, Mary (Bynum), and Sarah.⁹² See separate Fort document for more detail.

the north bank of the Johnchecohuk Swamp. Joshua Proctor left this land in his 1718 will to his son Nicholas Proctor. When Nicholas Proctor sold the land, on 16 April 1746, he described it as land on Johnchecohunk Swamp adjacent Robert Jordan [DB 1741-6, p415]. So it would appear that this same Robert Jordan owned the old Richard Jordan plantation in 1746. This made him an adjacent neighbor to John Person, who owned the land on the direct opposite side of the swamp.

⁸⁴ Surry Orders 1744-1749, p462-3. Because we can identify the other land in this record, it is clear that Robert Jordan owned the land devised to Robert Jordan by Richard Jordan II's 1695 will.

⁸⁵ Surry County Deed Book 7, p480.

⁸⁶ Surry County Order Book 1757-63, p306.

⁸⁷ Surry County Will Book 10, p287.

⁸⁸ Surry County Deed Book 8, p315. Note that the land devised in the Richard Jordan II will entailed this land, meaning that each generation owned only a lifetime interest. At the death of the grandson Robert Jordan in 1761, the land would have fallen to his own heir (or heirs) as defined by the succession law. This would have been the eldest son, if there was one.

⁸⁹ Since this is a complicated issue, please see the lengthy discussion of this subject in the Chronology pages.

⁹⁰ Surry County Deed Book 10, p137. See also the Chronology pages.

⁹¹ Surry County Deed Book 5, p62.

⁹² Surry County Will Book 7, p532.

- 1.1.5. **Margaret Jordan** (c1670? - ?) She had married Robert House Jr. as his second wife by the time of her father's will. Robert House Jr. was probably considerably older, as he had appeared in the tithables in 1674 and was married to Martha Spilltimber, the only daughter of Anthony Spilltimber, by early 1682.⁹³ They had only one child, a daughter named Mary who was born circa 1684.⁹⁴ Robert House Jr., who may have been a carpenter, had probably remarried to Margaret Jordan by 1693, according to a November 1693 court record which mentions his pregnant, but unnamed, wife.⁹⁵ He had perhaps married Margaret as early as 1 March 1690/1 when he purchased land from Nathaniel Roberts adjacent to Richard Jordan II.⁹⁶ His father having died in the interim, he was Robert House "Senior" when he and his wife Margaret sold the land on 10 September 1695.⁹⁷ Two weeks later, Robert Jordan's will left a breeding sow to his daughter "Margarett House".⁹⁸ Robert House died by 7 March 1699, when his widow Margaret was granted administration of the estate.⁹⁹ A year later, on 7 May 1700, Margaret House was indicted for having a bastard child, and several months later identified the father as Richard Holliman.¹⁰⁰ She may have married him, for Richard Holliman had acquired a wife named Margaret by 1 May 1703 when she released dower in two deeds.¹⁰¹ Richard Holliman's will, dated 6 January 1711 and proved 20 June 1711, left a lifetime interest in his "manor plantation" to his wife Margaret and divided his land among his minor sons Richard, William, Thomas and Samuel Holleman.¹⁰² The sons may all have been Margaret's. Apparently they reached majority by 1727, when they began selling interests in their inherited land.¹⁰³ There seems to be no record of the child born in 1694, who likely died young, or of any other child from her marriage to Robert House.
- 1.1.6. **Rachel Jordan** (c1677 -) She was apparently over 16 but not yet married when her father's will was written. She may well have been married by the time the will was proved. I found no further record of her.

Of the three youngest daughters, I note that there is no record of guardians being chosen or appointed, nor is there a record of any accounting of the estate. Since they were to receive their property at 16, this suggests that all three daughters

⁹³ Surry Orders 1671-1691, p367.

⁹⁴ Surry Orders 1691-1713, p208. Mary Howse, orphan of Robert Howse, chose Mathew Swann as her guardian. She had to be 14 or older to choose a guardian, thus could not have been the child mentioned in the record below. A later record (see chronology) establishes that she was Martha House's only heir, at least as of 1706.

⁹⁵ Surry Orders 1691-1713, not paginated, at court of 21 November 1693. See chronology for details.

⁹⁶ Surry County Deed Book 4, p255.

⁹⁷ Surry County Deed Book 5, p65.

⁹⁸ Surry County Deeds & Wills Book 5, p183.

⁹⁹ Surry Orders 1691-1713, p215.

¹⁰⁰ Surry Orders 1691-1713, p258, 261, 264.

¹⁰¹ Surry County Deed Book 5, p284 and p285. The abstracted deeds by Hopkins do not mention the release of dower, but the deed books contain them. Surry County Orders 1691-1713 mention both releases by "Margaret wife of Richard Hallemon (sic)" on p242

¹⁰² Surry County Deed Book 6, p62.

¹⁰³ Surry County Wills & Deeds Book 7, p692.

may have reached 16 by the time their father's will was proved and the inventory recorded. A closer look at the inventory itself might help to clear this up.

1.1.7. **Hannah Jordan** (aft1679 -) No further record.

1.1.8. **Mary Jordan** (aft1679 -) No further record. The only reference to a Mary Jordan in later records can be shown to have been a different person.

1.1.9. **Sarah Jordan** (aft1679 -) No further record.

1.2. **John Jordan** (c1650? - 1687) He first appears as a witness in Isle of Wight to an undated record recorded in 1673.¹⁰⁴ As noted above, his father gave him 100 acres in 1679. On 7 March 1682, his wife Jane gave a power of attorney to claim her rights in that gift.¹⁰⁵ Beyond these few citations, he does not seem to appear in Isle of Wight records until his death sometime before 10 October 1687, when his wife Jane was granted administration of the estate.¹⁰⁶

1.2.1. **John Jordan** (c1680? - ?) He is apparently the John Jordan who appears on the 1704 quit rent roll with 100 acres, evidently his inherited land. Like his father, he apparently married a woman named Jane. On 9 November 1704, John Jordan and his wife Jane sold the 100 acres given to his father by Richard Jordan Sr., describing it as having descended to him as the heir of his father John Jordan.¹⁰⁷ He does not seem to appear later in Isle of Wight or Surry records. [By his generation, there was another contemporary John Jordan, and the subsequent records are difficult to differentiate.¹⁰⁸] He may have moved to Chowan County, North Carolina, where a John Jordan and Jane Jordan witnessed a deed in 1716¹⁰⁹ and another deed in 1725.

¹⁰⁴ Isle of Wight Will & Deed Book 1, p276.

¹⁰⁵ Isle of Wight Will & Deed Book 1, no page given, abstracted by Boddie p591. Jane Jordan was apparently claiming her dower right to the income from the property.

¹⁰⁶ Isle of Wight Administrations and Probates Book, p62. [Abstracted by Chapman.]

¹⁰⁷ Isle of Wight County Deed Book 2, p6.

¹⁰⁸ I'm referring here to John Jordan, the son of Thomas Jordan of Nansemond and Isle of Wight, who was born 17 August 1663 according to Quaker records. He and some of his brothers also named sons John.

¹⁰⁹ *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography* 2:619.