

Documenting President Barack Obama's Maternal African-American Ancestry: Tracing His Mother's Bunch Ancestry to the First Slave in America

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Most people will be surprised to learn that U.S. President Barack Obama has African-American ancestry through his mother. His father's Kenyan origins are well known, but most people do not realize Obama's mother, Stanley Ann Dunham, has ancestors among the first African-American settlers of Colonial Virginia. These early settlers were the Bunch family and theirs is a curious story.

Some members of this Bunch family passed for white and stayed in Virginia—they are President Obama's ancestors. This Virginia branch intermarried with local white families and, for all intents and purposes, was eventually perceived to be white. They initially resided in Virginia's York and New Kent counties, moved to what became Hanover County, and then relocated further upstream to Louisa County, Virginia. President Obama's Bunch ancestors eventually migrated to Tennessee. Even in contemporary generations there was some awareness about mixed race in the maternal branch of Obama's family.¹

Another branch of this Bunch family left Virginia for the Carolinas early in American history; they were frequently recorded as “mulatto” in early records.² The North Carolina branch intermarried with families of other races, and their descendants spread across the South. Many

¹ Obama related the belief that his maternal grandmother, Leona McCurry, had a “distant ancestor [who] had been a full-blooded Cherokee,” but the “lineage was a source of considerable shame” to Leona, who “blanched whenever someone mentioned the subject and hoped to carry the secret to her grave.” Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*, 2d ed. (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2004), page 18.

² H.R. McIlwaine, *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia*, vol. 3 (1 May 1705–23 October 1721) (Richmond: Davis Bottom, 1928), pages 28, 30–31. In the earliest decades of Virginia, the term mulatto was frequently used for the child of one white parent and one black parent but also came to simply refer to mixed race. Other terms, like quadroon (one-fourth), octoroon (one-eighth), or even hexadecaroon (one-sixteenth), might be used in the Caribbean or sometimes in the Carolinas. Descendants of Paul Bunch (of Hanover County, Virginia, and Bertie County, North Carolina) were recorded as mulatto or “persons of color” in probate records and tax lists.

descendants of the North Carolina Bunches already know about their multi-racial background.³ These individuals are the president's distant cousins.

The common origin of these two related Bunch families points to an early African progenitor—a man brought (as an indentured servant or as a slave) to Virginia from Africa in the colony's early days. In Virginia's earliest decades, intermarriage between the races was not the shock it became later. The question that follows is, "Who was this early progenitor?" All evidence gathered to date offers persuasive arguments that point to John Punch, the first African in Colonial Virginia sentenced to a lifetime of servitude—the first slave. This article sets out the reasons for concluding that the United States' first African-American president, Barack Obama, descends from the first African enslaved in the American colonies.

From Obama's Mother Back to John Bunch II⁴

Stanley Ann Dunham's maternal grandmother, Leona McCurry, was born 7 May 1897, in Peru, Chautauqua County, Kansas.⁵ Leona was the daughter of Margaret Bell Wright (1869–

³ Descendants of the North Carolina Bunch family were part of the group of multi-racial settlers who settled on the North Carolina-Virginia frontier. Other multi-racial families interacting with the Bunch family in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina include members of the Collins, Gibson and Goins (Gowen) families. The Bunch family is included in sources like Tim Hashaw, *Children of Perdition: Melungeons and the Struggle of Mixed America* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2006). The Bunch family is also part of the Melungeon DNA Project, "Melungeon Core DNA Project," *FamilyTreeDNA* (Online: Genealogy by Genetics, 2012), <http://www.familytreedna.com/public/coremelungeon/default.asp?section=ycolored>, accessed 23 Mar 2012. Virginia Easley DeMarce wrote several informative articles dealing with the mixed race of these families. "Verry Slitly Mixt': Tri-Racial Isolate Families of the Upper South—A Genealogical Study," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, 80 (1992), pages 5-35; "Looking at Legends—Lumbee and Melungeon: Applied Genealogy and the Origins of Tri-racial Isolate Settlements," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, 81 (1993), pages 24-45; "Review Essay: The Melungeons," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, 84 (1996), pages 140-9.

Paul Heinegg has made the study of the origins of free African Americans a lifetime endeavor. Anyone interested in the origins of free African Americans should study his work, some of which is freely available online. Heinegg also hypothesizes that the Bunch family traces back to Colonial Virginia, possibly to the John Bunch who received a patent in New Kent County in 1662/3. His account of the Bunch family focuses mainly on those who went to North and South Carolina, though he did mention Samuel Bunch, son of John Bunch who patented land on Taylors Creek. See Paul Heinegg, *Free African Americans of North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina from the Colonial period to About 1820* (Baltimore, Maryland: Clearfield, 2005), vol. 1, pages 219-223. Our study was entirely independent of his work, but matches with his interpretation of the evidence.

⁴ See Appendix A, "Relationship of Barack Hussein Obama to John Punch," for a chart illustrating the generations from President Obama back to John Punch.

⁵ Leona McCurry died at Winfield, Kansas, on 23 March 1968, having married, at Independence, Kansas, 28 December 1921, Rolla Charles Payne (born Olathe, Kansas, 23 August 1892, died Winfield, Kansas, 15 October 1968). "World War I Draft Registration Cards 1917–1918," *Ancestry.com* (Online: Ancestry.com, 2012) [from World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards 1917–1918, National Archives micropublication

1935),⁶ whose mother, Frances Allred (1834–1918),⁷ was the daughter of Anna Bunch. Anna Bunch was born in Overton County, Tennessee, on 27 March 1814 and died 21 June 1893.⁸ Her father, Nathaniel Bunch, was born in Louisa County, Virginia, on 23 April 1793 and died in

M1509], for Rolla Charles Payne, <http://www.ancestry.com>, accessed 8 May 2012; “Social Security Death Index,” *Ancestry.com* (Online: Ancestry.com, 2012) [from U.S. Social Security Administration], for Rolla Payne, <http://www.ancestry.com>, accessed 8 May 2012. “Leona Belle McCurry Payne,” *FindAGrave* (Online: Find A Grave, Inc., 2009), memorial no. 32646557, Highland Cemetery, Winfield, Cowley County, Kansas, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=32646557>, accessed 23 May 2012. “Rolla Charles Payne,” *FindAGrave* (Online: Find A Grave, Inc., 2009), memorial no. 32646541, Highland Cemetery, Winfield, Cowley County, Kansas, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=32646541>, accessed 10 Jul 2012. Their daughter Madelyn “Toot” Lee Payne was born at Peru, Chautauqua County, Kansas, on 23 October 1922 and married Stanley Armour Dunham at El Dorado, Butler County, Kansas, on 4 May 1940.

⁶ Margaret Bell Wright was born 22 July 1869 at Dry Fork, Carroll County, Arkansas, and died 28 November 1935. “Margaret Belle Wright McCurry,” *FindAGrave* (Online: Find A Grave, Inc., 2007), memorial #19179611, Peru Cemetery, Chautauqua County, Kansas, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=19179611>, accessed 23 May 2012. T.C. McCurry, age 34, married Margaret B. Wright, age 15, on 11 March 1885, according to *Howard and Chautauqua County Marriage Licenses, 1870–1899* (Sedan, Kansas: Chautauqua County Historical and Genealogical Society, 2000), entries 2089 and 3523, but the marriage date was 13 March 1885 according to Charlotte Bennett, *Chautauqua County, Kansas Marriages, Books A through D* (Wichita, Kansas: Midwest Historical and Genealogical Society, 1994), page 33 (this source indicates that the original is found in Book C, page 160). Thomas Creekmore McCurry died 19 July 1939, per *Funeral Home Death Listing Index* (Sedan, Kansas: Chautauqua County Historical and Genealogical Society, 2002), page 71, entry for Thomas C. and Margaret McCurry. T.C. McCurry was granted administration on the estate of Frances Allred Wright in Chautauqua County, Kansas, on 6 November 1919, posting a bond of \$700 with A.J. Wright and F[?].D. Wright. Chautauqua County, (Kansas), Administration Bonds, Book C, estate of Frances Wright, Family History Library, Salt Lake City (FHL), microfilm 2406082.

⁷ Frances Allred was born 1 March 1834, died 25 May 1918, and was buried at Hardrock Cemetery in Chautauqua County, Kansas. “Frances Ann Allred Wright,” *FindAGrave* (Online: Find A Grave, 2009), memorial 34142395, Hardrock Cemetery, Chautauqua County, Kansas, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=34142395>, accessed 23 May 2012. Frances Allred (recorded as Frances A. Bunch) was living with her grandparents (and next door to her parents) in the 1850 U.S. Federal Census, Newton County, Arkansas (Population Schedule), Osage Township, Page 20b, Dwelling 282, Family 282, Nathaniel Bunch household and Dwelling 283, Family 283, Samuel Allred [*sic*, Allred] household, .jpeg image, *Ancestry.com* (Online: Ancestry.com, Inc., 2012) [National Archives microfilm publication M432, roll 28], <http://www.ancestry.com>, accessed 23 May 2012.

Richard Haney Bunch, “The Bunch Family” typescript (filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1983), pages 62, 65–66, FHL microfilm 1035522 Item 4. This publication was compiled from correspondence with family members, Bibles, and other records of the Allred family. The account of the Allred family on pages 62, 65, and 66 does not include exact dates, indicating that Richard H. Bunch obtained the information about the family groups from living relatives through correspondence. The family of Frances Allred (daughter of Samuel Allred and Annie Bunch) and her husband, Joseph Wright, is given on page 65, and lists eleven children.

⁸ “Anna Bunch Allred,” *FindAGrave* (Online: Find A Grave, 2005), memorial #12553614, Liberty Cemetery, Dinsmore, Newton County, Arkansas, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=12553614>, accessed 23 May 2012. There are also markers for Nathaniel Bunch and his wife Sarah Wade (Ray) at the cemetery, but the monument is modern.

Newton County, Arkansas, on 16 February 1859.⁹ His father, Charles Bunch, married Mary Bellamy in Louisa County, Virginia, on 9 January 1792.¹⁰

Charles's father, Samuel Bunch, was born circa 1720 in Hanover County, Virginia, and died leaving a will that was proved in Louisa County, Virginia, on 9 June 1783.¹¹ Although Samuel Bunch and his family likely appeared to be white by this time, yDNA evidence proves that Samuel Bunch, his descendants, and his ancestors have sub-Saharan (African) origins.¹²

Samuel's father, John Bunch III, obtained several land patents in Hanover and Louisa Counties, Virginia, and died testate not long before 1742. John Bunch III was styled "Jr." in his patent dated 18 February 1722/3,¹³ which suggests that his father, John Bunch II,¹⁴ was still alive

⁹ R.H. Bunch, *Bunch Family*, page 62, provides an account of the family of Nathaniel Bunch, which includes exact dates of birth, marriage, and death for Nathaniel Bunch and exact birth dates for all of his children, indicating there had been a family Bible. The information survives in the pension application of Nathaniel Bunch's widow, Sarah (Ray), who submitted the information in 1873 and was allowed a pension on 19 August 1873 as a resident of Carroll County, Arkansas. Nathaniel Bunch had volunteered in Overton County, Tennessee, as a private in the Tennessee Militia on 4 October 1813 and served until 2 March 1814 in an expedition against the Creek Indians. Sarah (Ray) Bunch, Widow's Pension, application WC-5995 for the service of Nathaniel Bunch (Pvt., Capt. Abel Willis's Co., Tennessee Militia, War of 1812), consolidated with bounty-land warrant files 26602 and 43708; Case Files of Pension and Bounty-Land Applications Based on Service in the War of 1812 [Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C.]

Mrs. Ada (Marrs) Hill, of Harrison, Boone County, Arkansas, wrote Richard H. Bunch providing some of the family information in 1938. (Ada was daughter of Nancy Allred, Frances Allred's sister, so she most certainly knew her cousins.) Ada stated that Nathaniel Bunch's parents were "Charles and Mary Bunch of Virginia, whose children were Nathaniel, Charles and Susan," as quoted in Alice Crandall Park, *Park/e/s and Bunch on the Trail West with Allied Families* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1975), page 223.

¹⁰ Louisa County (Virginia), Marriage Bonds, 1766-1853, page 57, FHL microfilm 32190.

¹¹ Louisa County (Virginia) County Court, Wills 1767-1783, Book 2, page 474, Will of Samuel Bunch, proved 9 June 1783, FHL microfilm 32192, item 2.

¹² The Bunch family DNA results and lineages of the tested descendants are online at "y-Results," *The Bunch y-DNA Project* (Online: WorldFamilies.net, 2012), <http://www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/bunch/results>, accessed 24 May 2012.

¹³ Patent by John Bunch, 400 acres, dated 18 February 1722. Virginia Secretary of the Colony, Patents 1623-1774, in 42 vols., Patents, vols. 10-11, 1710-1724 (Richmond: Filmed by the Virginia State Library, 1949), vol. 11, pages 162-163, for John Bunch Jr., FHL microfilm 29327; also available online at, "Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants," *Library of Virginia* (Online: Library of Virginia, 2012), Patent Book 11, pages 162-163, .tif image, http://image.lva.virginia.gov/LONN/LO-1/010-2/010_0666.tif and digital image and http://image.lva.virginia.gov/LONN/LO-1/010-2/010_0667.tif.

¹⁴ There is no direct statement that John Bunch "Jr." was son of John Bunch "Sr.," but no other Bunch family is known anywhere in the region, except for Paul Bunch, who is accounted for. (Paul Bunch also had a son John who was named in his will and had moved to North Carolina at about the time Paul did.)

at this time. John Bunch II is first mentioned in 1704, when he was taxed on 100 acres of land in New Kent County, Virginia.¹⁵

Even though almost all early colonial records for this region were destroyed, yDNA results permit research to project another generation or two further into the past and prove that the Bunch family has African origins. Every Bunch family of early Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, was researched in surviving records, in order to reconstruct family relationships. After family reconstruction, research used yDNA to extend beyond the paper trail.

DNA

Descendants of President Obama's ancestor, John Bunch II, have a yDNA profile that matches descendants of Paul Bunch, who settled early on in Bertie and Chowan counties, North Carolina.¹⁶ Thus, there is *no doubt that John Bunch II and Paul Bunch share a common ancestor*. One of John Bunch II's 5th great-grandsons (through his son David Bunch, Samuel's brother) has a yDNA profile that matches all but two of 67 markers, with a 5th great-grandson of Paul Bunch. This is a very tight match. Furthermore, descendants the president's ancestor, Samuel Bunch, have yDNA profiles that similarly match descendants of David Bunch, son of John Bunch III.

These matching yDNA profiles, combined with the fact that the Bunch surname in Virginia and North Carolina is practically unique, proves that John Bunch II and Paul Bunch share a single, common male ancestor in early Virginia—an immigrant ancestor whose haplogroup E is Sub-Saharan. Their subclade, E1b1a, has a high frequency in west Sub-Saharan Africa, although it has also spread into central, eastern, and southern Africa. The specific tested deep-clade result of this Bunch family, E1b1a8a, is highly concentrated in Cameroon, which is

¹⁵ Louis des Cognets Jr., *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1981), page 164.

¹⁶ The Bunch family DNA results and lineages of the tested descendants are online at "y-Results," *The Bunch y-DNA Project* (Online: WorldFamilies.net, 2012), <http://www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/bunch/results>, accessed 24 May 2012. The yDNA profile of this Bunch family is consistent through 67 markers. There is no doubt of the common origin. Of those 67 markers, one descendant of John Bunch Jr.'s son David (I.D. #B-04 [Kit #N24239, ySearch ID #3E8S2]) differs from a descendant of Paul Bunch (B-28) by only two steps (at markers CDYb and DYS464d). The Bunch yDNA triangulates in several important places. Charles Bunch, son of Samuel, has two sons whose descendants have matching yDNA profiles (B-02, a descendant of Charles's son Nathaniel; and B-08 and B-23, descendants of Charles's son, Charles). These are also a match with a descendant of David Bunch (B-04), Samuel Bunch's brother, triangulating in David and Samuel's father, John Bunch II. This matches the descendant of Paul Bunch's grandson Gideon Bunch (B-28), as well as descendants of a cousin named Henry Bunch (B-01 and B-34).

possibly the Bunch family's place of origin. However, this deep-clade result also occurs at lower frequencies in Gabon and Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire).¹⁷

The triangulation of these different branches of the Bunch family therefore points to a common African ancestor in Virginia prior to John Bunch II and Paul Bunch. Studying and understanding the chronology of John Bunch II and Paul Bunch is critical in reducing the number of candidates who might be their father and discovering the identity of the original Bunch progenitor.

The Implications of Chronology—Projecting Beyond Lost Records

Burned-record counties are a common fact and hard reality in Southern States research. A few years of deeds or court orders may sometimes survive in a record book that happened to escape flame or flood. Virginia's New Kent, Hanover, and Gloucester counties (where the Bunch family lived for many years) were among those jurisdictions where almost nothing survives for the early colonial period. Most early Virginia records kept at a colony-wide level were also lost. Faced with a dearth of surviving sources, the question then becomes, can something useful be made of the few scraps that do survive?

Often, knowing the implications of law and what would normally be expected allows an argument to be formulated based on negative disproof.¹⁸ Studying the chronology of life events for various Bunch individuals is also vitally important in drawing final conclusions, and helping to project back in time beyond what does survive. The two key prongs in our triangulation concern the earliest proved Bunch relations in the paper trail—Paul Bunch (born bef. 1658) and John Bunch II (born bef. 1660).

¹⁷ Valeria Montano, et al., "The Bantu Expansion Revisited: A New Analysis of Y Chromosome Variation in Central Western Africa," *Molecular Ecology*, 20, no. 13 (2011): 2, pages 693–708; Nicolas Brucato, et al., "The Imprint of the Slave Trade in an African American Population: Mitochondrial DNA, Y Chromosome and HTLV-1 Analysis in the Noir Marron of French Guiana," *BMC Evolutionary Biology* 10 (2010), pages 314–32.

¹⁸ "Negative disproof" means eliminating or disproving alternative hypotheses, often based on the argument of what does not occur in a record. Conclusions about the Colonial South are often reached by building cases from a body of evidence, rather than finding one document that conveniently "proves" a point. Elizabeth Shown Mills is an author of books and articles that demonstrate case-building and evidence analysis. See, for example, "Applying the Preponderance-of-Evidence Principle to a Southern Frontier Problem: William Medders of Alabama," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 82 (March 1994), pages 32–49, digital version, Historic Pathways <http://www.historicpathways.com/download/applypoeprinciple.pdf>, accessed May 2012.

The Chronology Concerning Paul Bunch

Establishing Paul Bunch's approximate birth year was vital to understanding how he fit into Bunch families from earlier generations. Records concerning his children and grandchildren (details to follow) suggest that Paul Bunch was likely born sometime within the decade before 1659.

Paul Bunch was taxed for 150 acres in King William County, Virginia, in 1704, when John Bunch II was taxed for 100 acres in New Kent County¹⁹ (see figure 1). King William County was created in 1701 (the county now immediately north of New Kent and Hanover counties, separated from them by the Pamunkey River).²⁰ Most of the early records of King William County were destroyed by fire in 1885. The early records of Hanover County were destroyed during the Civil War. To compound those losses, the colonial records of New Kent County were destroyed by fires in 1787 and 1864. In spite of that, what does survive provides tantalizing evidence of earlier ancestry.

¹⁹ des Cognets, *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records*, page 157 (King William County) and page 164 (New Kent County).

This is the 150 acres near Sweet Hall Road that Paul Bunch purchased from John Claiborne on 29 July 1695, apparently part of the land that Col. William Claiborne gave his son John on 10 November 1676. Malcolm Hart Harris states that the tract was between Cohoke Creek and Pamunkey River (part of John Claiborne's land was at the mouth of Cohoke Creek). "Old New Kent County [Virginia]: Some Account of the Planters, Plantations, and Places," *Google Books* (Online: Google, Inc., 2012) [written by Malcolm Hart Harris and originally published West Point, Virginia by Malcolm Hart Harris, 1977], vol. 1, page 608, <http://books.google.com/books?id=Hxs0ePxNBjoC>, accessed 24 May 2012. This page does not appear to have been microfilmed (many pages in the original book are in fragments or the edges lost). Malcolm Hart Harris was an extraordinarily careful researcher, so there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of his statement. U.S. Geological Survey maps show Cohoke Creek and marsh on the neck of land in King William County just east of the neck that has been designated the Pamunkey Indian Reservation just a few miles inland from West Point.

The man from whom Paul Bunch purchased his land was either John³ Claiborne or his father John² Claiborne, of St. John's Parish, New Kent County (King William County after it was created), son of the immigrant William¹ Claiborne (Treasurer and Secretary of Virginia and Surveyor of the Colony). John Frederick Dorman, *Adventurers of Purse and Person: Virginia, 1607–1624/5*, 4th ed., 3 vols. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2005-2007), vol. 1, pages 593–96, 599. The Claiborne or Claibourne family was part of Virginia's aristocracy. John² Claiborne was apparently dead by 1704, when John³ Claiborne was taxed on only 50 acres of land in King William County in 1704, having recently sold almost all of his inheritance (although Col. William "Claibourne" was taxed for 3000 acres and Capt. Thomas "Claibourne" was taxed for 1000 in King William County in that year). des Cognets, *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records*, page 157.

²⁰ The South Anna and North Anna Rivers join to form the Pamunkey River, which flows southeasterly past the Pamunkey Indian Reservation. The Pamunkey River converges with the Mattaponi River at West Point to form the York River.

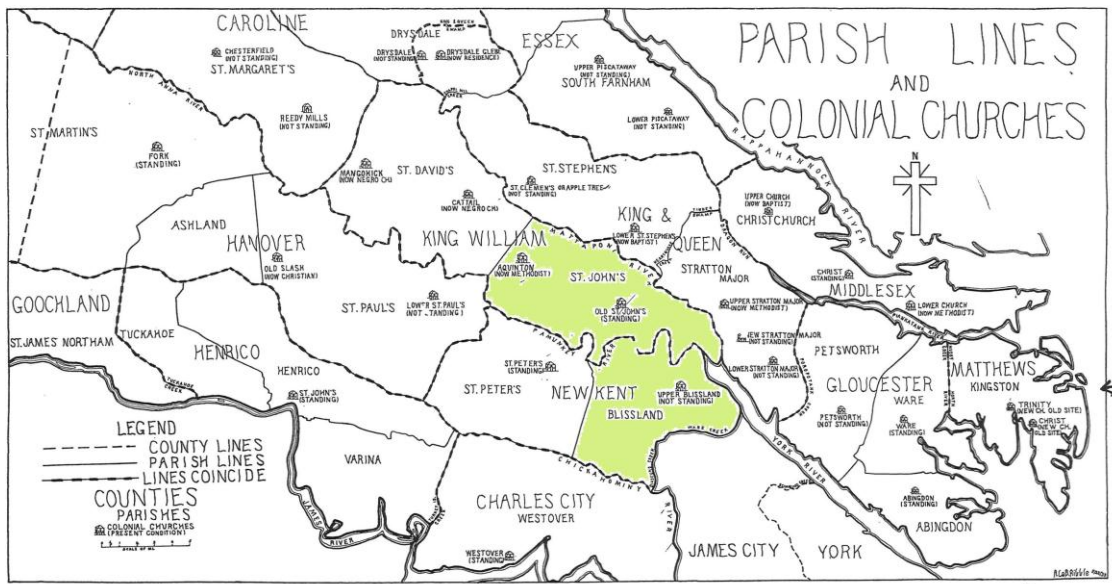


Fig. 1. Parishes in Early Virginia, showing Blisland and St. John’s parishes, where John Bunch I, John Bunch II, and Paul Bunch owned land. From C. G. Chamberlayne, *The Vestry Book of Petsworth Parish, Gloucester County, Virginia, 1677–1793* (Richmond: Library Board, Division of Purchase and Printing, 1933), front piece, highlights added.

Fortunately, the records of North Carolina survive fairly well for the period when Paul Bunch settled there. Those records helped document descendants of Paul Bunch and subsequently, indicate his approximate birth year. Paul’s son, John Bunch, had a son named Gideon. Gideon Bunch and his son, Micajah, were taxed in Lunenburg County, Virginia in 1749.²¹ Micajah Bunch married Mrs. Sarah Adams in Chowan County, North Carolina, by bond dated 10 August 1747.²² Micajah was therefore probably born *circa* 1725–26, if not a few years earlier. Projecting backwards in time, Micajah’s father, Gideon, was probably born in or before 1704–5. Thus, Gideon’s father, John Bunch, would be born by 1678–83 (see figure 2). Clues

²¹ Their names are recorded as Gedion Bunch and Cage Bunch. “William Howard’s List of Tithables 1749,” Landon C. Bell, *Sunlight on the Southside Lists of Tithes Lunenburg County, Virginia* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), page 114; also online at Thomas Walter Duda, trans., “William Howard’s List of Tithables 1749,” (Online: U.S. GenWeb Archives, 2012) [originally compiled by Landon C. Bell in *Sunlight on the Southside Lists of Tithes Lunenburg County, Virginia*, page 114], <http://files.usgwarchives.net/va/lunenburg/census/sun003.txt>, accessed 23 May 2012.

²² J.R.B. Hathaway, ed., *The North Carolina Historical and Genealogical Register* (Edenton, NC: [n.p.] [n.d.]), 1, page 237; Genealogical Society of Utah, *Chowan County, North Carolina Marriage Bonds* (Salt Lake City: by the society, 1943). “North Carolina, County Marriages 1762–1799,” *FamilySearch* (Online: Intellectual Reserve, 2012), for Micajah Bunch and Sarah Adams, digital folder 4639054, image 977, <https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/V58S-JDK>, accessed 23 May 2012. Micajah Bunch joined William Lewis in securing the bond for his own marriage on 10 August 1747 (Micajah acted as a legal adult), signing with a mark that looks like “W.”

from the life of this John Bunch's descendants, as well as those of his sister, Elizabeth, narrowed down the birth range for their father, Paul Bunch, to 1652-58.

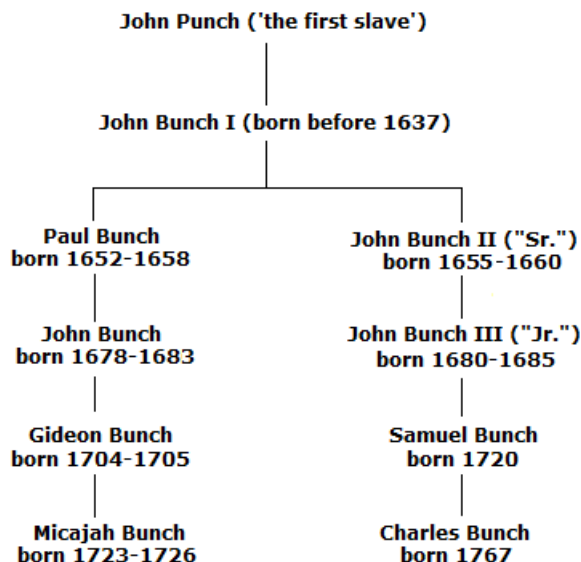


Fig. 2. Descendants of John Punch.

Paul Bunch bequeathed his daughter Russell one shilling in his will.²³ She appears to be the Elizabeth Russell to whom Paul granted the personhood of John Russell in 1701 (meaning Paul purchased John Russell and immediately assigned him to Elizabeth).²⁴ Paul Bunch paid a

²³ It was the custom of the common law that to preclude any future claim or dispute a child could make on an estate, the testator needed to specifically bequeath them one shilling. Paul Bunch's bequest would normally imply that he had already laid out money for this daughter Russell sometime before he made his will. Although her first name was not given in his will, the rarity of the surname Russell attached directly to Paul Bunch in both King William County, Virginia, and in North Carolina suggests that Elizabeth Russell was Paul Bunch's daughter and that the large sum he outlaid for the freedom of John Russell counted as her share of his inheritance. It is possible that Paul just happened to decide to leave the sum of one shilling to a daughter, but specialists in this time period would hold to the first explanation. In his will, Paul Bunch also gave one shilling to an Elizabeth Bunch, but did not state a relationship. This Elizabeth Bunch might have represented the heir of one of Paul Bunch's children or been his daughter-in-law. Paul certainly had a daughter who married a Russell (or was known by that name) by the time he made his will as he mentioned his "daughter Russell." It would not be as likely at that time that Paul named two daughters Elizabeth; but we cannot escape the fact that Paul outlaid such a large portion of his estate to procure John Russell's being and then freely gave him to Elizabeth Russell. If the Elizabeth Russell to whom Paul granted the person of John Russell was actually his mother, the instigating cause would still be that Paul freed the man to marry his daughter. It is tragic that Paul did not state his daughter's first name in his will, since that would have clarified this point.

²⁴ King William County (Virginia), Record Book 1, pages 129–30, recorded 20 Aug 1703, FHL microfilm 1987186. Paul Bunch also witnessed a deed of John Claiborne before the King William County Court on 20 May

substantial amount to free John Russell. It is not likely that he was casually freeing a friend or neighbor out of kindness—it seems more likely he was releasing a family member, such as a son-in-law, from bondage. This would indicate that in 1701 Elizabeth (Bunch) Russell was free and of legal age (and apparently already married to John Russell), and thus born *circa* 1680.

The chronology of these two children of Paul Bunch suggests that Paul was married by 1680, possibly several years earlier. He would then be expected to be born some years before 1659. The chronology of this branch of the Bunch family is crucial because triangulating it with the other branches helps anchor the chronology for the generation that precedes John Bunch II and Paul Bunch.

The Chronology Concerning John Bunch II

Tragically, many records where the Bunch family lived in Virginia no longer exist, resulting in less certainty about the chronology of the Bunch family in Virginia before 1720. However, some key documents help establish a workable chronology.

In 1705 a man of color named John Bunch intended to marry Sarah Slayden, a white woman, in Blisland Parish, New Kent County, Virginia.²⁵ This man was John Bunch III, President Obama's 8th great-grandfather, and son of John Bunch II. John Bunch III, the intended groom of Sarah Slayden, was more than half white, so he was not technically a mulatto (the legal term used in the statute forbidding mixed marriages at that time).²⁶ As a result of this petition and

1704 (page 167), signing with a mark that might resemble the letter “P” each time. This has been briefly abstracted in Beverly R. Conolly, *King William County, Virginia Records, 1702–1806, Record Books 1–5, Including Surviving Fragments* (Athens, Georgia: New Papyrus Publishing, 2006), page 9; and Ruth and Sam Sparacio, *King William County, Virginia, Record Books, 1702–1705* (McLean, Virginia: Antient Press, 1996), pages 49 and 66 (the Sparacio's misread the surname as Banck [*sic*, Bunch]).

²⁵ John Bunch and Sarah Slayden, a white woman, petitioned the Council of Virginia on 16 Aug 1705 to allow them to marry because the Minister of Blisland Parish had refused to marry them because of the minister *believed John Bunch a mulatto* (emphasis added). The Council was undecided on the issue since “the intent of the Law (was) to prevent Negroes and White Persons intermarrying.” John K. Nelson, *A Blessed Company: Parishes, Parsons, and Parishioners in Anglican Virginia 1690–1776* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); and McIlwaine, *Executive Journals of the Council*, vol. 3, pages 28, 31.

²⁶ “Hening's Statutes at Large,” *Virginia GenWeb* (Online: Virginia GenWeb, 2012) [originally compiled by William W. Hening, and published in New York in 1823 in vol. 3, page 87, covering 1691], http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol03-06.htm#page_87, accessed 23 May 2012. A statute forbidding a white man or woman from marrying “a negro, mulatto or Indian man or woman, bond or free” and those that did were banished from the Colony. This was amended in 1705 fining any minister performing such a marriage and sentencing the newlyweds to six months in prison and a fine of £10 (pages 453–54).

the quandary it caused the court, the following month the General Court of Virginia issued a decree that defined the term “mulatto” in Virginia as any person who had a black parent, grandparent, or great-grandparent (one-eighth black).²⁷ This legal definition would stand for two more centuries; *it was the direct result of President Obama’s ancestor attempting to receive the same legal benefit offered to white people.*

The children of John III are more securely documented than earlier generations. His son, Samuel (Obama’s ancestor), was born about 1720. The birth date for one of John’s younger sons, David Bunch (born 24 June 1722), survives in a family Bible.²⁸ The eldest child of John III was probably born circa 1708. Thus John Bunch III probably married and established his household about 1707.²⁹

There is no way of knowing how many siblings John Bunch III might have had—how many there were or how many of the children might have died young. In fact, it is socioeconomic status, location of land holdings, yDNA, and the extraordinary rarity of the surname that connects John Bunch III to his father. Since John Bunch III married between 1704 and 1707, then he was likely born circa 1680–85. That implies that John Bunch II was born circa 1655–60. Due to the paucity of records, the chronology of this branch is based on educated deductions. The chronology concerning John Bunch II matches well with the chronology for Paul Bunch

The status of John Bunch being more than half white tells us that not only was his mother white (or at least part white), his grandmother (mother of Paul and John Bunch II) would also be at least part white. If the mother of Paul and John Bunch II had fornicated with one of the few hundred men of color in Virginia and given birth to a bastard in York County, we would expect to find reference to it in the records of York County, as we do in the cases of Alice Miles, whose case was brought before the court on 10 March 1661/2. York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders, and Wills, Book 3, pages 151 [301] and 159 [318], FHL microfilm 34403. Also, note the now famous case of Elizabeth Banks in 1683. York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders, and Wills, book 6, page 498, FHL microfilm 34404. This silence argues for the legitimacy of John Bunch II and Paul Bunch, and the legal marriage of John Bunch I to a white woman.

²⁷ William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large ...* (Charlottesville, Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1969), vol. 3, pages 250-2. Chronology does not allow John Bunch III to be less than one-eighth white (the great grandchild of an African), but he either passed himself off as being a great-great grandson, or he was not allowed to marry Sarah Slayden according to the General Court’s interpretation of the law by statute. If he were determined to be the great-grandson of a black man, then his children would still be free to marry who they wished. We cannot now determine what the decision of the court concerning John Bunch’s status was. If he were not allowed to marry Sarah Slayden, then it would suggest that his wife Rebecca had some distant mixed blood ancestry herself.

²⁸ Park, *Park/e/s and Bunch on the Trail West*, page 208, photograph of the original Bible entries.

²⁹ This suggested scenario would help explain why John Bunch II was not designated senior *or* junior in the 1704 Quit Rent of New Kent County (because if John III were of legal age and had established a family, then the 1704 document might have designated the elder John as “John Sr.” to differentiate between two adult men).

indicating that they belong to the same generation. These matching chronologies, combined with matching yDNA profiles, imply that John Bunch II and Paul Bunch were brothers. The question then arises, who was the father of Paul and John Bunch II?

The Father of Paul Bunch and John Bunch II in Virginia

The brothers, Paul and John Bunch II, became respectable land owners. John Bunch II's descendants intermarried with neighboring white families. The land upon which Paul Bunch settled in Hanover County, Virginia, became known as "Bunch's Quarter." All of these facts indicate the family had a prominent foothold in that area. Socioeconomic status frequently carried from one generation to another, particularly for families who stayed in the same region. Thus, it would be expected that their Bunch father also patented or seated some type of land in that same specific region. So, do surviving records of the area where John II and Paul Bunch first lived include any man of that surname who owned land during the time period one would expect John II and Paul to have been born?

Fortunately, land grants survive in an almost complete run for Colonial Virginia. There is one Bunch who is traceable in that period and who also happened to live in the immediate vicinity where John II and Paul Bunch resided. He also bore the name John Bunch and lived in York and New Kent Counties.

Debunking Former Claims

Decades ago, early attempts to trace the Bunch family origins led descendants to jump to wildly speculative claims that the progenitor of the family was a man who emigrated from Scotland to Gloucester County, Virginia, as a headright³⁰ of Gervase Dodson, and then settled in York County.

³⁰ To encourage settlement, in 1618, the headright system was introduced in Virginia. A headright was represented by 50 acres. The colony granted two headrights (two tracts of 50 acres each) to colonists already living in Virginia. New settlers who paid their own passage to Virginia were granted one headright (one fifty acre tract). Colonists could accumulate headrights by paying for the passage of individuals; most who arrived in Virginia under this arrangement came as indentured servants. These rights could be collected over a period of years, sold, or assigned to other people. There were many misuses of the system.

There is no factual foundation for any claim that John (or any Bunch immigrant) hailed from Scotland.³¹ Further, the Gloucester County, Virginia, immigrant named John Bunch died early (see Appendix B), so he was not the man of this name who lived in York or New Kent counties.

The origin of this story appears to be the first published genealogical account of the Bunch family of Virginia. This genealogy's researcher and author, the well-intentioned and fairly careful Richard Haney Bunch—admittedly no expert in the origins of Colonial Virginia immigrants—was “informed that the family was first known in Flanders and migrated to Scotland during [the] time of religious uprising and were known to have lived there for 400 years.” Richard H. Bunch was also told by his father that “there were two different families of Bunches who came from England to America, one settling in Virginia and the other in Carolina.”³² Note that the family tradition specified that the immigrant was *from England* (not Scotland). This family tradition story was preceded by general information about the surname, without any factual connection to the Virginia immigrant, but people remembered the first story and dropped the second. In spite of the fact that the sources cited here have been readily available for decades, these false claims have passed, unquestioned, into other published accounts and spread across the Internet.

³¹ There are actually only thirteen Bunch christenings and three Bunch marriages before 1700 in the Old Parochial Index of surviving Scottish church records, most pertaining to one family in the parish of Airlie, Angus. No probate records for the Bunch surname were found at ScotlandsPeople.com prior to 1800. There were only thirty-three Bunch baptisms and sixty-eight Bunch marriages listed among extracted entries of parish records in the DOS version of the *International Genealogical Index* of England and Wales between 1538 and 1700, so even in England the surname is relatively rare at that early period. There were only six Bunch wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury before 1700. Even in the 1851 England and Wales census, only 209 individuals of the Bunch surname are listed out of more than 18 million individuals counted (online at *Ancestry.com*). The rarity of the surname in England would help explain why so few Bunch immigrants actually are found in records for any time period.

³² R.H. Bunch, *Bunch Family*, page 1. Park, *Park/e/s and Bunch on the Trail West*, page 203, also relates the story, with a citation to S. Baring Gould, *Family Names and Their Story* (London, 1910), page 237, that the surname Bounce and Bunce came from “the name of the Frenchman De Pons [*sic*], whose four sons went to England at the time of the Conquest.” That assertion is factually absurd, and Park noted that it did not look logical, but few family historians are expert in medieval English genealogy. Park did an admirable job compiling information on descendants of the Virginia Bunch family.

Identifying the True Father of Paul Bunch and John Bunch II

The father of Paul Bunch and John Bunch II of New Kent County, Virginia, was certainly born before 1637, either in Africa or as the son of a man born in Africa.³³ This precludes any claim that Paul Bunch and John Bunch II were sons of the John Bunch of Gloucester County, who was claimed as a headright by Gervase Dodson,³⁴ or of a *white immigrant* named John Bunch claimed in headrights who settled in York County.³⁵ Rather, there is good reason to conclude that Paul and John II's father was a free man of color named John Bunch (herein styled John Bunch I) who patented 450 acres on both sides of Richahock Path in New Kent County on 18 March 1662/3, which bordered land owned by Richard Barnhouse in what became Blisland Parish.

The tract John Bunch I purchased in New Kent County, Virginia, was originally granted to Thomas Meredith on 25 February 1658/9 and sold to Phillip Freeman, who assigned the tract to John Bunch I.³⁶ This land, on Burchen Swamp next to Richard Barnhouse's patents, appears to be near the border where New Kent County intersects today with Charles City County and James

³³ As discussed earlier in this article, yDNA results for living descendants of Paul Bunch and John Bunch II prove that these two men share a common ancestor with Sub-Saharan origins.

³⁴ See Appendix B, which documents the death of the John Bunch claimed as a headright by Gervase Dodson.

³⁵ Edward Hill listed a "Joh[n] Bunch" (or Burch, the handwriting is difficult to read) among fifty-five headrights claimed on 20 September 1683. "Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants," *Library of Virginia* (Online: Library of Virginia, 2012), Patent Book 7, page 323, .tif image, http://image.lva.virginia.gov/LONN/LO-1/007/007_0326.tif, accessed 23 May 2012. This is clearly part of the list of headrights claimed by Gervase Dodson of Gloucester County in 1656 (see Appendix A). The list of headrights Dodson claimed included John Newman, Thomas Priors, John Bunch and Thomas Habe or Hake; John Newman, Thomas Hagg, John Bunch, and Thomas Prior occur at the end of the list claimed by Edward Hill. It is not certain how Hill obtained those names, but that represents 250 acres he should not have been granted.

Sometimes headrights were not claimed until years after the event, or purchased or assigned from another man. There was also a great deal of what we would consider fraud or inflation with false names (John Bunch's name occurs near the end of this list, and is difficult to read). Also, not all names of those claimed in headrights are recorded, and sometimes people traveled abroad after arriving in Virginia, their headright being rightfully claimed more than once. The only other Bunch headright claimed before 1666 was for a William Bunch, claimed by Ralph and Thomas Blagg of Westmoreland County on 22 March 1665/6, and there is no evidence he has descendants. Nell Marion Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, 3 vols. (Richmond: Virginia Genealogical Society, 1977), vol. 1, pages 343, 546.

³⁶ To Thomas Merridith, 450 acres in New Kent County on both sides of Rockahock Path and bounded beginning at white oak corner by Burchen Swamp then W NW 160 poles to 3 marked trees by the aforesaid path then SW 72 degrees 132 poles thence S by E ½ 80 poles to an oak thence S SE 72 degrees E 100 poles to Mr. Richard Barnhouse's land thence E with E 80 degrees and SE by E 100 poles by the said Barnhouse's land to Burchen Swamp to the place where it began. For importing 9 people. "Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants,"

City County. Burchen Swamp is the key because neighbors to these tracts included Richmond Terrell,³⁷ Robert Meredith, Warrony Creek (today known as Wahrani Swamp), Timber Swamp, John Barnard (son of Richard Barnard), Richard Barnhouse, Mr. Henry Duke, and Sir John Ayton.³⁸ Warrony Creek is a small branch and swamp near the old chapel of Blisland Parish. The tract of 100 acres in New Kent County for which John Bunch II was taxed in 1704 was listed only two entries before Richard Barnhouse, who was taxed on 1,600 acres in New Kent County in 1704 (the 100 acre tract in 1704 was likely a remnant of the 450 acres patented in 1662/3).³⁹

In order to act as a legal adult in 1662/3, John Bunch I must have been born before 1641/2 (21 years old, or older). That would correspond with a man of color who was born before 1637 and who began fathering children before 1659 (the approximate years when Paul Bunch and John II would have been born). Parsimony—the simplest and best fit of the evidence—would suggest that the father of Paul and John II was the man named John Bunch (hereafter styled John Bunch I) found in records of that decade.

It is easily possible that John Bunch I of New Kent County, whose land was in Blisland Parish, was identical to the John Bunch found in several records in York County. The latter John Bunch was non-suited⁴⁰ by the York County Court on 17 November 1658,⁴¹ thus, he was born

Library of Virginia (Online: Library of Virginia, 2012), Patent Book 4, page 355, Thomas Merridith, grantee, dated 25 Feb 1658, .tif image, http://image.lva.virginia.gov/LONN/LO-1/004/004_0370.tif, accessed 23 May 2012.

³⁷ Richmond Terrell is also known as Richmond Tirrill and Terrill, and he is President Obama's ancestor through another line.

³⁸ Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, vol. 2, page 44 (Thomas Maples & William Hitchman, 200 acres on branches of Warrany Creek beginning on Burchen Swamp and Sir John Ayton's line), page 96 (Richmond Tirell, 600 acres on branches of Chickahominy Swamp adjacent Thomas Meredith and George Smith), page 169 (Theo. Hone, Jr., and Thomas Hone, 736 acres on branches of Warrany Creek on the Burchen Swamp in Sir John Ayton's line on the horse path and Timber Swamp), page 200 (Henry Hartwell, same description), pages 206, 354 (William Edwards, 200 acres on branches of Warany [*sic*] Creek on the Burchen Swamp in Sir John Ayton's line, along the horse path to Timber Swamp), page 387 (Henry Duke, 200 acres on branches of Warrony Creek and Birchin Swamp in Sir John Ayton's line on the horse path to Timber Swamp), and page 387 (John Young, 376 acres near a branch of Warrany on the west side of old Rockahock Path).

³⁹ des Cognets, *English Duplicates of Lost Virginia Records*, page 164.

⁴⁰ A non-suit ruling by the judge in a lawsuit can occur when the plaintiff does not proceed to trial at the appointed time or has presented all evidence, and, in the judge's opinion, there is no evidence which could prove the plaintiff's case. "Nonsuit," *The Free Dictionary by Farlex* (Online: Farlex, Inc., 2012), <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/nonsuit>, accessed May 2012.

⁴¹ A non-suit and 50 lbs. tobacco damages is granted to John Bunch vs. John Ripley attorney of Christopher Abbott, being arrested and now prosecuted made to be paid. York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders, and Wills, Book 3, 1657-1662, page 40 (80), FHL microfilm 34403.

before 1637. He was also brought before the York County Court on 24 August 1659 for a bill of 429 pounds of tobacco, the said John “suffering the loss of his crop the year following” so the bill was ordered to be canceled.⁴²

On 10 March 1661/2 in York County, a non-suit and fifty pounds of tobacco were granted to John Bunch because he had been ordered to court on the claim of Dr. Francis Haddon, who did not show up to the trial.⁴³ On 19 April 1671, Francis Haddon of York County sold Josias Moody (Haddon’s stepson) 200 acres *on the Mattaponi River* that was “*now in the occupation of John Bunch* at the expiration of the lease granted by Haddon to Edward Greene”⁴⁴ (emphasis added). This indicates that the John Bunch occurring in records of York County had initially (perhaps by 1661 when Haddon first brought suit against Bunch) settled a few miles northward in the sparsely populated region on the Mattaponi. It follows that he was the same John Bunch I of New Kent County—father of Paul and John Bunch II.

The 1661 suit for which Haddon did not show up to court, and the knowledge that his lease on the land would eventually expire, might have provided the impetus for John Bunch I to patent his own tract a few miles away. These records show that John Bunch I initially lived near the Mattaponi River, and not far from the place that Paul Bunch is first recorded. John I then patented land in what became Blisland Parish, where his grandson, John Bunch III, intended to marry Sarah Slayden. All these associations are remarkably suggestive because John Bunch I, born before 1637, is the only known or available candidate to be the father of John Bunch II and Paul Bunch. Given the extraordinary rarity of the surname Bunch in England and Scotland, it is not likely that there were other unrelated Bunch men living in this same thirty-mile radius in the 1650s and 60s.

⁴² York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders, and Wills, Book 3, 1657-1662, page 61 (122), FHL microfilm 34403. This entry is transcribed and analyzed in the second part of this article along with images of the original entries from the York record book.

⁴³ York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders, and Wills, Book 3, 1657-1662, page 150, FHL microfilm 34403.

Haddon was one of the few early surgeons in Virginia. Kathy Merrill, trans., “Colonial Attorney-Generals of Virginia,” *Virginia USGenWeb Archives* (Online: U.S. GenWeb Project, 2012) [originally published in the *William and Mary College Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 1], <http://files.usgwarchives.net/va/schools/wmmmary/quarterly/v10n1/pg31-35.txt>, accessed 23 May 2012.

⁴⁴ York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders, and Wills, Book 4, 1665-1672, page 342, FHL microfilm 34403.

With John Bunch I established as the only known person who could be the father of John Bunch II and Paul Bunch, these questions then follow: Was there anyone in Virginia with the Bunch surname in the previous generation who might have come from Africa and fathered a free child by a white woman? How many candidates were there?

The African-American Bunch Progenitor

The black population of Virginia was surprisingly small in 1650. A contemporary reporting from 1649 stated that there were about “300 persons of African descent in Virginia” that year.⁴⁵ Philip Alexander Bruce and Lyon Gardiner Tyler, two of the greatest Virginian historians, accepted this as an accurate estimate, and it has since been the population benchmark published in recent compendia on Colonial Virginia and slavery. The 1650s is the very decade when Paul and John Bunch II were born, and there were only three hundred Africans living in Virginia.

An exhaustive analysis of headright claims in the Virginia patent books supports the estimate (see Appendix C). The African population in Virginia had only grown to about 2,000 by 1671.⁴⁶ In the reply to questions his British overlords posed in 1670, Governor Berkeley reported that *only two or three slave ships were brought to Virginia during the previous seven years*

⁴⁵ “[T]here are in Virginia about fifteen thousand English, and of the negroes brought thither, three hundred good servants.” *A Perfect Description of Virginia: Being a Full and True Relation of the Present State of the Plantation...the Number of People [etc.] There Having Been Nothing Related of the True Estate of Virginia These 25 Years. Being Sent from Virginia, at the Request of a Gentleman of Worthy Note, Who Desired to Know the True State of Virginia as it Now Stands* (London: R. Wodenothe, 1649), page 1, British Library, Thomason Tract 76:E.474[15].

⁴⁶ An estimation of the population of Virginia survives among the General Court, Inquisitions 1665 to 1676, resulting from a list of interrogatories (questions) sent out in 1670, answers received in 1671: 2,000 slaves, 40,000 total population, 6,000 servants. “[Question] 15. What number of planters, servants and slaves...?” Answer: “We suppose, and I am sure we do not much miscount, that there is in Virginia above forty thousand persons, men, women and children, and of which there are two thousand *black slaves*, six thousand *Christian servants*, for a short time, the rest are born in the country or have come in to settle and seat, bettering their condition in a growing country.” “[Question] 16. What number of English, Scots or Irish have for these seven years past [1664–70] come yearly to plant and inhabite [*sic*] within your government; as also what *blacks* or *slaves* have been brought in within the said time?” Answer: “Yearly, we suppose there comes in, of servants, above fifteen hundred, of which most are English, few Scotch, and fewer Irish, and not above two or three ships of negroes in seven years.” “Hening’s Statutes at Large,” *Virginia GenWeb* (Online: Virginia GenWeb, 2012) [originally compiled by William W. Hening and published in 1823, vol. 2, pages 511–17, covering 1660-1], <http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol02-25.htm>, accessed 23 May 2012.

(1664–70).⁴⁷ This indicates that the African slave trade to Virginia did not become an earnest endeavor until *after* 1670, when slavery was encoded into Virginia law.⁴⁸ There were only twenty-two “Negros” in Virginia in 1624 according to the muster of surviving inhabitants of Virginia.⁴⁹ Philip Alexander Bruce estimated that there were only 150 Africans in Virginia in 1640.⁵⁰ Thus Virginia’s African population from 1619 to 1671 looks something like this:

Year	African Population
1619	32
1624	22
1640	150
1649	300
1671	2000

Slavery in the earliest decades of Virginia did not exist in the same way that it did at the time of the Civil War. Many scholars believe that persons in bondage and servitude in Virginia were initially treated as indentured servants who eventually attained freedom after a period of labor. Presuming there were only about three hundred Africans in Virginia in 1650, and many of them were women, then the famous story of John Punch becomes immediately relevant to the origin of the Bunch family and must be taken into account.

⁴⁷ “Hening’s Statutes at Large,” *Virginia GenWeb* (Online: Virginia GenWeb, 2012) [originally compiled by William W. Hening and published in New York, vol. 2, page 283, covering 1670] <http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol02-14.htm>, accessed 23 May 2012. All non-Christian servants brought into Virginia on ships were to serve for life.

⁴⁸ Slavery was officially encoded into Virginia law in 1670. The Act of 3 October 1670 stated that non-Christian “servants” imported by ship were declared to be slaves, but those brought by land were to serve until age thirty (if boys or girls) or for the period of twelve years (if men or women). This 1670 act was repealed by another act in 1682, stating that all “servants” not Christians when purchased (even if converted later) were to be slaves whether brought by land or sea and that all Indians sold by neighboring Indians or others were to be slaves. “Hening’s Statutes at Large,” *Virginia GenWeb* (Online: Virginia GenWeb, 2012) [originally compiled by William W. Hening and published in 1823, vol. 2, pages 490-92, covering 1682], <http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol02-24.htm>, accessed 23 May 2012. In 1662, the assembly legislated that children of negro women were to be bond or free according to condition of mother. “Hening’s Statutes at Large,” *Virginia GenWeb* (Online: Virginia GenWeb, 2012) [originally compiled by William W. Hening and published in 1823, vol. 2, pages 170, covering 1660-1], <http://vagenweb.org/hening/vol02-09.htm>, accessed 23 May 2012.

⁴⁹ See Appendix C.

⁵⁰ “In 1640, when the black population of Virginia probably did not exceed one hundred and fifty persons, an African adult commanded about twenty-seven hundred pounds of tobacco, and a female about twenty-five hundred; this amounted to an average price of about eighteen pounds sterling a head.” Philip Alexander Bruce, *Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: MacMillan, 1896), vol. 2, page 89.

John Punch: The First-Known Slave in Virginia

John Punch is the first African documented to be enslaved for life in what would eventually become the United States.⁵¹ Little is known of John Punch's life. Tragically, most of the early records of Virginia kept at the colony-wide level perished during the evacuation of Richmond on the night of 2nd and 3rd April 1865.⁵² There is only one surviving account that certainly pertains to John Punch's life, a brief paragraph in the Journals of the Executive Council dated 9 July 1640:

Whereas Hugh Gwyn hath by order from this Board brought back from Maryland three *servants* formerly run away from the said Gwyn, the court doth therefore order that the said three servants shall receive the punishment of whipping and to have thirty stripes apiece one called Victor, a [D]utchman, the other a Scotchman called James Gregory, shall first serve out their times with their master according to their Indentures and one whole year apiece after the time of their service is Expired ... the third being a Negro named *John Punch* shall serve his said master and his assigns for the time of his natural Life here or elsewhere.⁵³ (emphasis added)

This surviving document tells us that John Punch arrived in Virginia before 1640. He and two other men fled for freedom but were captured in Maryland and returned to their master Hugh Gwynn⁵⁴ of York (later Gloucester) County, Virginia.

There was no standardized spelling in Virginia, the Americas, or England in the colonial period. Names of illiterate individuals were recorded as they were heard by the record keeper. In

⁵¹ H.R. McIlwaine, *Minutes of the Council and General Court of Colonial Virginia* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1979), pages vii, ix. "The Practise of Slavery," *Virtual Jamestown* (Online: Crandall Shifflett, 1998), <http://www.virtualjamestown.org/practise.html>, accessed July 2012; also "Slavery at Shirley Plantation," *Shirley Plantation* (Online: Shirley Plantation, 2011), <http://www.shirleyplantation.com/slavery.html>, accessed July 2012; also, "African Americans at Jamestown," *National Park Service* (Online: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012), <http://www.nps.gov/jame/historyculture/african-americans-at-jamestown.htm>, accessed July 2012.

⁵² "Lost Records Localities: Counties and Cities with Missing Records," *Library of Virginia* (Online: Archives Research Services, 2012), http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/guides/rn30_lostrecords.pdf, accessed June 2012.

⁵³ McIlwaine, *Minutes of the Council and General Court of Colonial Virginia*, page 468. This was published earlier in "Decisions of the General Court," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 5 (1898), page 236.

⁵⁴ Hugh Gwynn was a justice and one of the few members of the House of Burgesses of that period, representing York County in 1639/40 and 1646. He patented large tracts of land. He was a resident of Gloucester County when it was created in 1651, serving as burgess again in 1652. Lyon G. Tyler, "Historical and Genealogical Notes," *William and Mary Quarterly*, series 1, 18 (1910), page 60. William W. Hening *Statutes at Large* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1969), vol. 2, pages 323, 371, and 374. Cynthia Miller Leonard, *The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619-January 11, 1978* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1978), pages 18, 25, 29, and 30. Even evidence of Hugh Gwynn's children is problematic because of the destruction of records, despite the fact that he represented one of the most prominent citizens in the colony.

fact, it was not uncommon for a clerk to record a surname with two or three different spellings in the same record. Uncommon surnames are often spelled in any phonetically similar way. Thus “Punch” could easily be a phonetic spelling of the surname “Bunch.”

There was little standard spelling of names or words, until Samuel Johnson published his *Dictionary of the English Language* in 1755. It was a tricky thing for clerks to write an unfamiliar name in the period before standardized spelling. It was not unusual for letters that fall into the same Soundex group (familiar to most genealogists) to be transposed from time to time. For instance, a waterway close to the patent John Bunch I made in 1662/3 is now called Diascund Swamp, but is recorded as both Diascan [*sic*] and Tyascon [*sic*] Swamp many times in early records.⁵⁵ Further, in 1675, when Phillip Gowen (former servant of Amy Barnhouse) petitioned the general court and his name was reported to be “Cowen” [*sic*] no one doubted that the surname was one and the same or had been recorded with both spellings.⁵⁶ In both of these instances, we see the letters D/T and C/G being transposed.

This is similar to the Soundex system familiar to most genealogists where the letters B and P are coded in the same group. It is not surprising to find examples of surnames beginning with either B or P being confused or recorded in both ways in this same period of colonial Virginia. The surname of Anthony “Parckhurst” was also recorded as “Barckurst.”⁵⁷ Two patents by Charles Scarburgh in 1652 record a headright as Phillip “Barricole” and Phillip “Parricoat.”⁵⁸ Thomas “Prickett” was referred to as Thomas “Brickett” in the 1651 patent of

⁵⁵ Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, vol. 1, lists Diascan Swamp on seven different pages and Tyascun Swamp on six different pages in the first volume alone (pages 342, 360, 386, 403, 409, 411, 464, 470, 505, 506, 513, 548, 741 and 742; on page 470 the swamp is called “Tyascun” and “Diascan” in the same 1662 patent by Charles Edmonds). The persons and lands involved make it clear that these instances refer to the same small waterway that runs from New Kent County into James City County.

⁵⁶ See the article following this one titled “Obama-Bunch Descendancy,” page 10, footnote 42. citing Paul Heinegg, *Free African Americans*, page 543. The original petition of Phillip Gowen with a full transcription is now online at “Petition of Phillip Gowen,” Virginia Memory (Online: Library of Virginia, 2012), online at http://www.virginiamemory.com/online_classroom/lesson_plans/petition_of_phillip_gowen, accessed 26 May 2012. The original appears to read “G” instead of “C.”

⁵⁷ Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, vol. 1, pages 130, 185 and 344. Anthony’s surname is very clearly spelled Barckurst at least twice in the original 1649 patent of John Thomas on Queen’s Creek in York County. “Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants,” *Library of Virginia* (Online: Library of Virginia, 2012), Patent Book 2, page 188, .tif image, http://image.lva.virginia.gov/LONN/LO-1/002-1/002_0222.tif, accessed 26 May 2012.

⁵⁸ Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, vol. 1, pages 264 and 286.

Henry Hust.⁵⁹ Headrights duplicated in the headright lists of patents by Stephen Hamelin in 1650 and Henry Chichley in 1656 list one headright as William “Pylar” in the first instance and “Byler” in the second.⁶⁰ The important point here is that there is no reason to believe there were any white planters or immigrants named Bunch or Punch in Virginia in 1640.⁶¹ Those surnames were rare in England at that period and virtually unknown in Virginia. The clerk recorded what someone heard during a period when there was no real standardized spelling. It was not an established surname in Virginia.

Could John Punch be the Bunch family immigrant and progenitor? To answer that, research needs to step back to Paul and John Bunch II. Their father would be an adult in the 1660s (based on the previously mentioned triangulation of chronology and yDNA).

John Bunch I, who patented land near Richard Barnhouse, New Kent County, Virginia, in 1662/3, is an ideal (and the only available) candidate to be their father. However, John Bunch I is not specifically stated to be “Negro” or mulatto in the patent.⁶² Even so, the 1662/3 patent is important for another reason; it associates John Bunch I with the Barnhouse family, who had a familial connection to Hugh Gwynn, the very man to whom John Punch was enslaved for life in 1640.

⁵⁹ Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, vol. 1, page 211 (Prickett on pages 207, 373 and 475). “Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants,” *Library of Virginia* (Online: Library of Virginia, 2012), Patent Book 2, page 305, .tif image, http://image.lva.virginia.gov/LONN/LO-1/002-1/002_0331.tif, accessed 26 May 2012.

⁶⁰ Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, vol. 1, pages 203 and 334. Other surnames found in this volume that might easily be confused include Banton/Panton, Barcroft/Parcroft, Bartin/Partin, Beach/Peach, Beckett/Peckett, Bedwell/Pedwell, Bembridge/Pembridge, Benton/Penton, Berriman/Perriman, Bersey/Persey, Binion/Pinion, Bord/Pord, Bound/Pound, Bowes/Powes, Burden/Purden and Burser/Puser.

⁶¹ Elizabeth Blanch, age twenty, embarked for Virginia on the ship *Alice* in 1635. Her name as it appears in the original document was transcribed correctly as “Eliz: Blanch” by John Camden Hotten, *The Original Lists of Persons of Quality, 1600–1700* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2003), page 109, and as “Elizabeth Blanch” in Peter Wilson Coldham, *The Complete Book of Emigrants, 1607–1660* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1987), page 156. Her name was incorrectly transcribed as “Eliz: Bunch” by Horatio Gates Somerby, who was renowned for his frauds (for a discussion, see Paul C. Reed, “Two Somerby Frauds, Or, ‘Placing the Flesh on the Wrong Bones,’” *The American Genealogist* 74(1999), pages 15-30). In this case Somerby was not perpetrating a fraud, just sloppy in his transcription. The handwriting in the original passenger list is clear and distinct, and definitely reads “Blanch” (The National Archives [UK], E 157/20, folio 49v).

⁶² One would not particularly expect a patent to style the grantee mulatto or some other descriptive of a person of color. The few incidental entries for John Bunch in the York County record books do not evoke the expectation that one should expect a descriptive term other than the name, as none of the entries pertain to any state of servitude.

In a document recorded 25 October 1657, Amy Barnhouse, widow of Richard, freed Mihill Gowen from servitude; she also stated that Christopher Stafford was her brother.⁶³ Amy's brother, Christopher, had a son named Humphrey Stafford.⁶⁴ The Stafford connection with the Gwynn family was recorded in September 1681 when Humphrey Stafford and his attorneys, Humphrey Gwynn and John Gwynn,⁶⁵ petitioned the court claiming they were "nearest allied" (nearest kin) of Col. John Burnham, deceased.⁶⁶ This record implies some blood relation between the Staffords and the Gwynns, although it is not specific. It would be usual for this time and place for families to migrate and settle near families with whom they are already well acquainted. Thus, it is curious that John Bunch I settled near Amy (Stafford) Barnhouse, whose nephew, Humphrey Stafford, was kin with the family of Hugh Gwynn.⁶⁷ It is likely that John Bunch I was already well acquainted with the Stafford and Gwynn families prior to his settling near Richard Barnhouse in 1662/3.

John Bunch I would be expected to be born some years before 1637. John Punch was sentenced to a lifetime of servitude in 1640. Chronology does not allow John Bunch III, who petitioned to marry Sarah Slayden in 1705, to be more distantly related than great-grandson of a black immigrant. Yet his children freely intermarried with leading white families in Virginia even after laws were passed forbidding mixed-race marriages. If John Bunch II were half black (instead of only a quarter), then it would be unlikely that his family would remain in Virginia, to seamlessly integrate into the local population, at the same time that Paul Bunch and others had to leave for the Carolinas.⁶⁸

The men who made up the General Court of Virginia in 1705 certainly had some idea of how many generations had occurred since the first slaves in Virginia began to have children.

⁶³ York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders and Wills, etc., Book 3, page 16, FHL microfilm 34403.

⁶⁴ York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders and Wills, Book 2, 1657-1662, page 19, FHL microfilm 34402.

⁶⁵ Humphrey and John Gwynn were children of Hugh Gwynn.

⁶⁶ "Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents: Notes," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 2(1895), pages 314-315.

⁶⁷ For more detail regarding Amy (Stafford) Barnhouse and her connection to the Gwynn family, refer to pages 8-11 of the Bunch Descendancy entitled, "Descent of the Bunch Family in Virginia and the Carolinas."

⁶⁸ It is likely that Paul Bunch married a woman of mixed race (of Native American or African origins). His common-law child was called mulatto in North Carolina and his grandchildren were sometimes recorded as mulatto in records.

They would have taken that knowledge into account when they issued the 1705 statute that answered the question posed to them about the status of John Bunch III. His children married into white families. Working backwards from John Bunch III, to his father John II, and then his grandfather John I, we arrive at the generation of his great-grandparent—the generation that would have legally forbidden John from marrying the white Sarah Slayden in 1705 (but would allow his children freedom to marry white women). This rationale, coupled with the yDNA evidence (which cannot be denied), leads to the conclusion that the father of John Bunch I was African.⁶⁹

Because of the above court case, research has to assert that John Bunch I's mother was white. This alone is extraordinary, because it means that *President Obama descends from the first known black and white couple who left traceable descendants.*⁷⁰ That alone is remarkable. Taking into account that there were probably fewer than 100 African males in Virginia when John Bunch I was born and that John Punch resided in the same county that John Bunch I first appears in records as a youth, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that President Obama descends from John Punch, *the first documented African to be enslaved for life.*

Conclusion: The Bunch Progenitor and Immigrant

Due to the destruction of records, no one can definitively prove or disprove the conclusion that John Punch was President Obama's immigrant ancestor. One can only come to the most logical conclusion based on the evidence that does survive and compare that conclusion

⁶⁹ We present a detailed discussion and analysis of this in the second part of this article.

⁷⁰ Paul Heinegg includes almost all families who can trace descent from the earliest African-Americans in Virginia (in his *Free African Americans*). The earliest African-American families in Virginia who have traceable descendants include Archer (see pages 58-9), Cane (pages 250-1), Carter (pages 254-5), Chavis (pages 282-3), Cornish (pages 354-5), Dale/Dial (pages 391-2), Driggers (pages 425-6), George (pages 519-20), Gowen/Goins (pages 543-5), Harman (pages 604-5), Johnson (pages 705-7), Kersey (pages 734-5), Longo (pages 786-7), Mongom/Mongon (pages 839-40), Mazingo (pages 871-2), Payne (pages 915-16), Sisco (pages 1058-9), Tann (page 1113) and Webb (page 1220). None of these had children believed to be born in Virginia before 1640, except Anthony Johnson of Northampton County, whose wife and children were black, not mixed-race, and Emmanuel Driggers, whose daughter Elizabeth was age eight in 1645 (born 1637), but again Emmanuel's wife and children were black, not mixed-race. If Mihil/Michael Gowen were born in Virginia in 1635, his parents would both be black as well, as he was described as a "negro" servant (see the discussion on pages of Heinegg as cited in this note). J. Douglas Deal, *Race and Class in Colonial Virginia: Indians, Englishmen, and Africans on the Eastern Shore During the Seventeenth Century* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993), pages 217-50, 265-388, and 399-406 also has accounts of Anthony Johnson, Francis Payne, Emanuel Driggus, Sebastian Cane, Philip Mongon, Anthony Longo, the Carter and George families, and Jane Webb.

to possible alternative explanations. Parsimony is the first basis that should be used to determine a final conclusion.

Research was conducted with the highest standards, exhausting what has survived, properly interpreting it in the light of the law, correlating the whole, and resolving conflicting data. There is no substitute for the expertise decades of experience working with the same families and records in this period provides. Short of finding John Punch's body, digging it up and conducting yDNA tests, one could never be 100 percent certain of relationship.

Of what can research be absolutely certain? *It is certain that Paul Bunch and John Bunch II are brothers who had a father of Sub-Saharan heritage who resided in Virginia in the 1650s.* It is also certain that the Virginia Bunch progenitor was among the first Africans who settled in the Virginia colony,⁷¹ *and was among the first hundred or so Africans brought to the shores of Virginia.*


Taking the whole into account, exhaustive research in surviving records justifies a conclusion that John Punch was the progenitor of the Bunch family. He is the *only known African man of that time and place* with a name in any way equivalent to Bunch, an extraordinarily rare surname in England and America. He lived in the same locale as Paul and John Bunch II at a time the African-American population was extremely small. It just happens that he is also the first known African-American male sentenced to servitude for life. Only history could assert such irony in a profoundly powerful way—that the first African-American President, Barack Obama, would also be the 11th great-grandson of the first African to be enslaved for life in America.

⁷¹ Given that a large number of the first few hundred Africans in Colonial Virginia are supposed to have been transported from Angola, DNA helps further narrow the pool of possible progenitors and the period in which they arrived.


Appendix A: Relationship of Barack Hussein Obama to John Punch

John Punch is the 11th great grandfather of Barack Hussein Obama


11th great grandfather

	John Punch	Unknown
	b: d: Living, 1640, York Co., Virginia	b: d:


10th great grandfather

	John Bunch I
	b: Bef. 1637 d: Living 1663, New Kent Co., Virginia


9th great grandfather

	John Bunch II "Sr."
	b: Bet. 1655–1660, New Kent Co., Virginia d: Living 1704, New Kent Co., Virginia


8th great grandfather

	John Bunch III "Jr."
	b: Bet. 1680–1685, New Kent Co., Virginia d: Circa 1742, Louisa Co., Virginia


7th great grandfather

	Samuel Bunch
	b: Abt. 1720 Hanover Co., Virginia d: 09 Jun 1783 Louisa Co., Virginia


6th great grandfather

	Charles Bunch
	b: 1767, Louisa Co., Virginia
	d: 1804-1813, Grainger Co., Tennessee


5th great grandfather

	Nathaniel Bunch
	b: 23 Apr 1793 Louisa Co., Virginia
	d: 16 Feb 1859 Newton Co., Arkansas


4th great grandmother

	Anna Bunch
	b: 27 Mar 1814 Overton Co., Tennessee
	d: 21 Jun 1893 Arkansas


3rd great grandmother

	Frances Allred
	b: 01 Mar 1834 Tennessee
	d: 25 May 1918 Kansas


2nd great grandmother

	Margaret Bell Wright
	b: 22 Jul 1869 Dry Fork, Carroll Co., Arkansas
	d: 28 Nov 1935 Kansas


Great grandmother

	Leona McCurry <hr/>
	b: 07 May 1897 Peru, Chautauqua Co., Kansas d: 22 Mar 1968 Winfield, Cowley Co., Kansas


Maternal grandmother

	Madelyn Lee Payne <hr/>
	b: 23 Oct 1922 Peru, Chautauqua Co., Kansas d: 2 Nov 2008 Hawaii

Mother

	Stanley Ann Dunham <hr/>
	b: 29 Nov 1942 Wichita, Sedgwick Co., Kansas d: 07 Nov 1995 Honolulu, Honolulu Co., Hawaii

Self

	Barack Hussein Obama <hr/>
	b: 04 Aug 1961 Honolulu, Honolulu Co., Hawaii

Appendix B: John Bunch of Gloucester County (Headright of Gervase Dodson)

The headright of an immigrant named John Bunch was claimed by Gervase Dodson on 3 March 1656/7 in his grant of six hundred acres in Lancaster County, Virginia, adjacent to land of Tobias Horton next to Haddaways Creek.⁷² But this John Bunch was *not* the person of that name who settled in York County.

On 6 June 1654, the Lancaster County Court ordered that John Bunch and Henry Rye appear at the next court to give evidence concerning the case against Toby Horton for lending a gun to the Indians.⁷³ John Bunch was dead by 1 April 1657, when entries in the Lancaster County Order Books state that he made a nuncupative will leaving everything to Eppey Bonnison,⁷⁴ to whom the court granted administration on his estate.⁷⁵

Henry Rye sold Eppey Bonnison 550 acres on Haddaways Creek at Fleet's Bay by deed on 30 November 1658. Henry Rye and Domingo Bras⁷⁶ witnessed Eppey Bonnison's power of attorney and deed of sale on 25 January 1658/9.⁷⁷ Toby Horton had interests in land on Haddaways Creek, when Gervase Dodson was ordered to survey the land, thus completing the circle of associations concerning John Bunch of Lancaster County.⁷⁸

⁷² "Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants," *Library of Virginia* (Online: Library of Virginia, 2012), Patent Book 4, page 119-120, .tif image, http://image.lva.virginia.gov/LONN/LO-1/004/004_0133.tif and http://image.lva.virginia.gov/LONN/LO-1/004/004_0134.tif, accessed 23 May 2012.

⁷³ Lancaster County (Virginia), Deeds and Wills Book 1, 1652–1656, page 146, FHL microfilm 32131, item 2.

⁷⁴ Eppey Bonnison was also known as Ebby, Ebbey, Abya, and Abiah.

⁷⁵ Lancaster County (Virginia), Order Book 1656–1666, pages 8 and 12, FHL microfilm 32140, item 1. It is curious that Abiah Bonnison disappeared from the region for a time, and was declared dead so that his wife could manage his estate and care for his children. He returned.

⁷⁶ Domingo Bras appeared in this one instance as Domingno Cras [*sic*, Bras]; he was also known as Domingo Bras, Brass, and Brasse. At least three Africans named Domingo were claimed in headrights before 1650—see Appendix C. Domingo Brasse and Domingo Demeras were among seven headrights claimed by Ebbey Bonnison on 30 Mar 1659. Lancaster County (Virginia), Order Book 1656–1666, page 86, FHL microfilm 32140. Domingo Bras/Brass appeared in several other records in early Lancaster County. Thomas Chetwood and George Haselock also claimed those seven headrights near the end of a longer list on 9 July 1663. Nell Marion Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patens and Grants*, 3 vols. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1977), vol. 1, page 459.

⁷⁷ Lancaster County (Virginia), Deeds and Wills Book 2 1654-1702, pages 174–75, FHL microfilm 32130, item 2.

⁷⁸ Lancaster County (Virginia), Order Book 1656–1666, pages 8, FHL microfilm 32140, item 1.

John Bunch, an apparently white immigrant, whose headright was claimed by Gervase Dodson and settled in Gloucester County, Virginia, *died in Gloucester County in 1657*.⁷⁹ The records do not indicate any estate was left to pass to a relict with dower rights (dower rights could not be extinguished without a widow's express consent), nor were any children bound out or occur in later generations. Every indication is that this white immigrant named John Bunch died single, leaving no descendants.

⁷⁹ A nuncupative will was normally made on one's deathbed and reported to court soon thereafter.

Appendix C: Africans in Virginia, 1619–1650

This appendix includes, first, the Africans who arrived in Virginia up to 1625—with a complete listing of those recorded among the living and dead inhabitants in the 1623/4 and 1624/5 musters enumerated after Indian attacks. This is followed by an exhaustive listing of Africans recorded among the headrights through the year 1650.

The 1619 census of Virginia was a numerical tabulation, rather than listing inhabitants by name. At that time there were fifteen men and seventeen women from Africa in Virginia.⁸⁰ The 1623/4 muster counted twenty-two Africans; the 1624/5 muster counted twenty-three. These musters imply that at the very least 40 percent (but perhaps more than 70 percent) of Africans brought to Virginia between 1619 and 1624 died. The 1619 census also indicates that the black population at that time was almost equally divided between men and women. In 1623/4, nine of the twenty-two surviving Africans listed in the muster were not named. The next year, fifteen of the twenty-three who survived were not named.

Surviving patents specifically note 298 (or 303)⁸¹ African immigrants claimed as headrights through 1650. At least thirty-five of the headrights were women (although the names of many headrights were not given, so their sex is not known).⁸² Adding the twenty-three known to be living in 1624/5 to the number claimed in headrights through 1650 brings the total to about

⁸⁰ William Thorndale, “The Virginia Census of 1619,” *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy* 33 (1995), pages 155–170. The date of the census is debated. It was begun the end of March 1619 and took two months (March–May). Before 1752, however, the year began on Lady Day, March 25 (not January 1). It is not clear whether the date of the census is March 1618/19 [by modern reckoning 1619] or March 1619/20 [our 1620]. Only seven white inhabitants were specifically named. Thorndale concluded in his article that the proper dating was 1619 [March 1618/19]. Martha W. McCartney concludes that it was a year later, in 1620 [March 1619/20]. Martha W. McCartney, *A Study of the Africans and African Americans on Jamestown Island and at Green Spring, 1619–1803* (Williamsburg, Virginia: National Parks Service, 2003), page 8; also “A Study of the Africans and African Americans on Jamestown Island and at Green Spring, 1619–1803,” *National Park Service* (Online: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012), <http://www.nps.gov/jame/historyculture/upload/African%20Americans%20on%20Jamestown%20Island.pdf>, accessed May 24, 2012.

If the census was actually tabulated in March 1619, with 32 non-Christian Africans, the more than twenty (21+) Africans who arrived in August 1619 would have pushed the total number of Africans to more than fifty-three in 1620. If that is indeed the fact it would indicate a horrific mortality rate during the five years that followed, when only 22 Africans were still found alive in 1623/4. For the purposes of this paper we will refer to the date of this census only as 1619 (noting that Bill Thorndale is an extraordinarily careful researcher who laid out all of his conclusions in a clear, scholarly way; we await publication of McCartney’s rationale so it can be compared).

⁸¹ The discrepancy in number depends on whether five names are duplicated, claimed by different two men.

⁸² At least thirty are definitely female, plus two more names that may be the feminine form of Spanish or Portuguese given names, plus two more of those are not duplicates.

321 (not factoring in the births and deaths of African Americans that occurred in Virginia during that period).⁸³ This sum total is not far off from the 300 or so Africans reported to be in Virginia in 1649/50.

Given that some of the immigrants of African origin would have died between 1624 and 1650, perhaps 100–200 of the Africans were born in Virginia by 1649 (possibly including John Bunch I). The 1619 census and the 1623/4 and 1624/5 musters (which serve as censuses for those years) indicate that about half the black population in Virginia in the first decade was male and half were female. If this trend continued, one might estimate that less than 200 of the 300 black inhabitants of Virginia in 1649 were men, making John Punch one of *fewer than 200 possible candidates to be the Bunch progenitor* and the only one known to bear a surname that was even roughly equivalent to Bunch.

John Punch should theoretically be one of the 298 African headrights listed below. There was a black immigrant named John who was claimed as a headright in 1638 (in York County), but 195 of the black headrights were listed only as unnamed Africans. Some of them were probably also given the common Christian name John. John Pedro, who arrived in 1623 after a brief stint in New England, might be the free man of that name owning land in Lancaster County by 1650 when his land was mentioned (his surname may have eventually become Pedros and later Peatross).⁸⁴ There was also a John Phillip who testified before the General Court of Virginia on 30 November 1624. The record stated he was “A negro Christened in England 12 years [*sic*] since,” or baptized in England about 1612.⁸⁵ This indicates that although a large portion of the Africans brought to Virginia before 1630 were from the region of Angola, others lived for a time

⁸³ It appears that at least a few of the survivors listed in the muster were later claimed as headrights.

⁸⁴ Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pages 283–84; Virginia Davis, *Tidewater Virginia Families: A Social History* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1989), pages 127–56; “Tidewater Virginia Families,” *Ancestry.com* (Online: Ancestry.com, 2012), <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=49380>, accessed 23 May 2012. Eugene Aubrey Stratton, *Plymouth Colony: Its History & People, 1620-1691* (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing, Inc., 1986), page 188. He had apparently resided in the Earl of Warwick’s colony at Westco. Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), page 283.

⁸⁵ “The Practise of Slavery,” *Virtual Jamestown* (Online: Virtual Jamestown, 2012) [abstracted from H. R. McIlwaine, *Minutes of the Council and General Court of Colonial Virginia*, published in Richmond by the Virginia State Library, 1979, page 33], <http://www.virtualjamestown.org/practise.html>, accessed 23 May 2012.

in England. The Virginia merchant George Menifee stated that he brought about twenty-three “negros” from England when he claimed their headrights in 1638 (see below).

The first reference to Africans actually landing in Virginia is in a letter John Rolfe (the man Pocahontas saved and married) wrote to Sir Edwin Sandys. Rolfe reported that the Dutch ship *White Lion* arrived at Point Comfort in April 1619. They traded more than twenty Africans (“20 and odd Negros”) for provisions needed to continue their voyage.⁸⁶ The *Treasurer* arrived three or four days later with additional Africans, but they did not disembark in Virginia (the ship sailed on to Bermuda).⁸⁷ The Africans who arrived in Virginia in August 1619 had been captured from a Portuguese ship en route to unload its cargo in Vera Cruz. That ship, the *São João Bautista* (St. John the Baptist), was laden with a cargo of captives believed to have come from a narrow strip of land near Luanda, Angola.⁸⁸

The muster of March 1619 included thirty-two Africans, fifteen male and seventeen female, implying that others might have arrived before August 1619. The thirty-two listed in the 1619 census were enumerated in the category “Others not Christians in the Ser[v]ice of the English...Negros in the service of se[ver]all planters.”⁸⁹ The loss of 40–70 percent of the first African Americans in the country in only five years would be a horrific mortality rate by any

⁸⁶ “The First Africans to Virginia—1619,” *FamilySearch* (Online: Intellectual Reserve, Inc., 2012) [originally compiled by Susan M. Kingsbury, ed., *Records of the Virginia Company, 1606–26*, Volume 3, Documents I, 1607–1622, and published Bowie, Maryland by Heritage Books, Inc., 1995, page 243], https://dcms.lids.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE113549, accessed 24 May 2012. “About the latter end of August, a Dutch man of Warr of the burden of a 160 tuñes arriued at Point-Comfort, the Comando^{re} name Capt Jope, his Pilott for the West Indies one M^r Marmaduke an Englishman. They mett wth the Trer in the West Indyes, and deternyned to hold consort shipp hetherward, but in their passage lost one the other. He brought not any thing but 20. and odd Negroes, wth the Governo^r and Cape Marchant bought for victualle (whereof he was in greate need as he p^tended) at the best and easyest rate they could. He hadd a lardge and ample Comysion from his Excellency to range and to take purchase in the West Indyes.”

⁸⁷ Engel Sluiter, “New Light on the ‘20. and Odd Negros’ Arriving in Virginia, August 1619,” *William and Mary College Quarterly*, third series, 54, no. 2 (April 1997), pages 395–98. The Portuguese were contracted to transport 3,500–5,000 black slaves per year through the ports of Vera Cruz and Cartagena.

⁸⁸ John Thornton, “The African Experience of the ‘20. and Odd Negroes’ Arriving in Virginia in 1619,” *William and Mary College Quarterly*, vol. 55, no. 3 (Jul 1998), pages 421–434; also available online, “The African Experience of the ‘20. and Odd Negroes’ Arriving in Virginia in 1619,” *JSTOR* (Online: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2012), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2674531>, accessed 23 May 2012. He concludes that the Africans transported came from a narrow strip of land and were likely urban.

⁸⁹ Thorndale, “The Virginia Census of 1619,” page 168.

standard.⁹⁰ Those brought in 1619 are stated to be from Angola, as are others who arrived in 1628 in Virginia on the *Fortune*, commanded by Captain Arthur Guy.⁹¹ Their yDNA profile would not be expected to match the Bunch family DNA.

A few of the earliest arrivals are believed to have left descendants. For example, Antonio and Mary married, attained freedom, and are believed to have taken the surname Johnson. They resided on the Eastern Shore in Northampton County, Virginia, where they and their children became landowners before moving from Virginia to Maryland in the 1660s.⁹² Antonio named one of his tracts Angola (44 acres). They relocated to Sussex County (allegedly Angola Neck). Francisco (claimed in 1637) apparently became known as Francis Payne.⁹³

The 1619 census of Virginia did not list the names of the individual Africans; it was almost entirely a simple numerical tabulation. The musters that follow (below) are the first records to provide individual identities of the earliest African immigrants who were brought to Virginia.

⁹⁰ There were only twenty-three surviving Africans in the 1624/5 muster (including one infant born in Virginia and one child), but since Antonio arrived in the James in 1621, Mary in the Margrett & John in 1622, and John Pedro in the Swan in 1623, at least thirteen of the African immigrants living in 1619 had died by 1624/5. There were 32 Africans in the 1619 census, but only 23 in 1624/5 (the muster that includes a child born the previous year, and possibly another child born after 1619). So by also subtracting Antonio and Mary who arrived after 1619 (some scholars conclude that John Pedro arrived in the Bautista, went to New England for a year and then returned to Virginia), we are able to roughly calculate the mortality rate of the African immigrants between 1619 and 1624/5.

⁹¹ Captain Guy, who had captured them from a Portuguese ship, exchanged the captives for eighty-five hogsheads plus five butts of tobacco. “The Fortune has taken an Angola man [called a “Spanish Frigate” in the inventory of goods captured] with many negroes, which the captain bartered in Virginia for tobacco, which has come home in a ship called the Plantation [*sic*].” John Ellzey to Edward Nicholas, dated 13 May 1628, Southampton, England, *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Charles I, 1628–1629* (London: 1859), page 110 (no. 85); abstracted in “Virginia in 1628,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 7 (1900), page 265; also published in *Calendar of State Papers, Colonia, America and West Indies, Volume 9, 1675–1676 and Addenda 1574–1674* (London: 1893), addenda, page 69. Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pages 40–41 and 271. Philip Alexander Bruce, *Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: MacMillan, 1896), vol. 2, page 73, provides the statement about the amount of tobacco for which the Africans were exchanged.

⁹² Paul Heinegg, *Free African Americans of North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina From the Colonial Period to About 1820, Volume II*, 5th ed. (Baltimore: Clearfield Company, 2005), pages 705–06. Alden T. Vaughan, “Blacks in Virginia: A Note on the First Decade,” *William and Mary College Quarterly*, third series, 29, no. 3 (July 1972), pages 469–78.

⁹³ Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*, pages 282–83; Heinegg, *Free African Americans*, pages 915–16.

Africans in the Virginia Muster Dated 16 February 1623/4⁹⁴

“At flourdieu hundred...Living...

vj [6] Negors”⁹⁵
 Anthony[,] } Negors men”
 William[,] }
 John[,] }
 Anthony }
 “an Negors woman”⁹⁶

“At James Cittye and wth the Corporacon thereof⁹⁷

“Negro”[,] } women”⁹⁸
 “Negro” }
 Angelo “a Negar”⁹⁹

“Living in Jam[e]s i[s]land...y^e neck of land”

Edward “a Negro”¹⁰⁰

“At y^e Plantacon` o[v]er ag[ains]t James Cittie”

Jiro “a Negro”¹⁰¹

“At Warwick Squeake” [Isle of Wight]

Peter[,]
 Anthony[,]
 Franc[i]s[,]
 Margrett } “negres”¹⁰²

⁹⁴ John Camden Hotten, *The Original Lists of Persons of Quality, 1600–1700* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2003) [List entitled “A List of Names; of the Living in Virginia february [sic] the 16 1623[/4]”], page 169; also, Peter Wilson Coldham, *The Complete Book of Emigrants, 1607–1660* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1987), pages 35–46, citing The National Archives (Kew, England), CO 1/3/2.

⁹⁵ Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 172; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 37.

⁹⁶ Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 172 (the woman listed immediately following the four men); Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 37.

⁹⁷ Listed at the end of the list of Sir George Yeardley, Knight.

⁹⁸ Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 173; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 38.

⁹⁹ Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 174; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 38.

¹⁰⁰ Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 178; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 35.

¹⁰¹ Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 179; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 40.

¹⁰² Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 182; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 42. Tim Hashaw, *The Birth of Black America: The First African Americans and the Pursuit of Freedom at Jamestown* (New York: Carol and Graf, 2007), page 169, states that Margaret came on the *Bautista* and was later known as Margaret Cornish, who was matriarch to a large Southern clan. Hashaw also reports that some researchers claim that Mihill Gowen, ancestor of the Gowen/Goins family of the South (who lived next to and migrated with the Bunch family), was son of Margaret

“more at Elizabeth Cittie” [in the list including Captain William Tucker]

Anthony[,] } “Negres”¹⁰³
 Issabella }

“A List of the Names of the Dead in Virg[i]n^a since Aprill last February 16: 1623[/]4”

“At west and Sherlow Hundred”

“one Negar” [dead]¹⁰⁴

Africans in the 1624/5 Muster of Virginia

The list of surviving inhabitants in Virginia in 1624/5 includes twenty-three black individuals (at least one of whom was born in Virginia): eleven men, one male child, ten women, and one child whose sex is not given.¹⁰⁵ The child bearing the baptized name William, son of Anthony and Isabel (servants of William Tucker), was born between the two musters. It cannot be determined whether the “young child” of Abraham Piersey’s servant was born in Virginia or abroad.¹⁰⁶

Piersey’s Hundred [20 January 1624/5] [Abraham Piersey’s servants include]:

4 unnamed “Negro” men

“*Negro Woman*”

“*Negro Woman*” and

Cornish by John Graweere. But if Graweere were from Angola, it would not seem likely he fathered Goin because descendants of that family bear the same deep subclade (E1b1a8a) as the Bunch yDNA. “Melungeon Core DNA Project,” *FamilyTreeDNA* (Online: Genealogy by Genetics, 2012), <http://www.familytreedna.com/public/coremelungeon/default.asp?section=ycolored>, accessed 23 Mar 2012 and “Goins DNA Project – yDNA Colorized Chart,” *FamilyTreeDNA* (Online: Genealogy by Genetics, 2012), <http://www.familytreedna.com/public/goins/default.aspx?section=ycolored>: accessed 23 May 2012. John Graweere’s name is frequently recorded beginning “Gr,” which would not be a consonant easily dropped to form Gowen, as people have theorized in attempting to make him father of Mihil Gowen.

¹⁰³ Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 185; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 43

¹⁰⁴ Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 190; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 36.

¹⁰⁵ The twenty-three African Americans belonged to seven households, Abraham Piersey (who had a total of 40 servants, 7 of them black), Governor Yeardley (36 servants, 8 black), William Tucker (18 servants, 3 black), William Pierce (17 servants, 1 black), Edward Bennett (12 servants, 2 black), Francis West (6 servants, 1 black), and Richard Kingsmill (4 servants, 1 of them black). Irene W. D. Hechte, “The Virginia Muster of 1624/5 as a Source for Demographic History,” *William and Mary College Quarterly*, third series, 30, no. 1 (January 1973), pages 65–92.

¹⁰⁶ One could argue that young children would not have been put on a voyage displacing adults who would have brought more in money or trade.

“a yo[u]ng Child of hers.”¹⁰⁷

“**The Muster of the Inhabitant’s [sic] of James Cittie taken the 24th of January 1624[/5]**”

“The Muster of S[i]r George Year[d]ley K[nigh]t &ct.”

“Negro Men. 3.”

“*Negro Woemen [sic]. 5.*”¹⁰⁸

“**The Muster of Cap^t William Pierce**” “Servants”:

Angelo[,] “a Negro Woman [immigrated] in the *Treasurer*”¹⁰⁹

“**The Muster of the Inhabitant’s [sic] of the Neck-of-Land neare James Citty taken Febr, the 4th 1624[/5]**” “Servants”:

Edward “a Negro”¹¹⁰

“**The Muster of the Inhabitant’s [sic] at Wariscoyack [Isle of Wight] taken the 7th of Febr 1624[/5]**”.¹¹¹

Antonio “a Negro [arrived] in the *James* 1621”

Mary “a Negro Woman in the *Margrett & John* 1622”

“**Elizabeth Cittie...Capt William Tucker his Muster**”.¹¹²

Antoney “Negro”

Isabel “Negro” and

William “theire Child Baptised [sic]”

“**A Muster of the Inhabitente [sic] of Elizabeth Cittie beyond Hampton River. Beinge the Companyes Land.... Capt Francis West his Muster**”.¹¹³ “Servant’s”

John Pedro “a Neger aged 30 [arrived] in the *Swan* 1623”

¹⁰⁷ John Frederick Dorman, ed., *Adventurers of Purse and Person: Virginia, 1607–1624/5*, 4th ed., 3 vols. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2005–07), vol. 1, page 24; Hotten, *Original Lists*, pages 217–18; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 50. Neither age nor sex of this child is given. The child among William Tucker’s servants is frequently stated in modern sources to be the first African-American child born in Virginia.

¹⁰⁸ Dorman, *Adventurers of Purse and Person*, page 29; Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 222; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 54.

¹⁰⁹ Dorman, *Adventurers of Purse and Person*, page 31; Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 224; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, 55. The year is not given. Immigrants stated to have arrived on the *Treasurer* came in 1613, 1614, 1617, 1618, and 1624.

¹¹⁰ Dorman, *Adventurers of Purse and Person*, page 36; Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 225; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 58.

¹¹¹ Dorman, *Adventurers of Purse and Person*, page 48; Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 241; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 62.

¹¹² Dorman, *Adventurers of Purse and Person*, page 51; Hotten, *Original Lists*, page 244; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 63.

¹¹³ Dorman, *Adventurers of Purse and Person*, page 64; Hotten, *Original Lists*, pages 257–58; Coldham, *Complete Book of Emigrants*, page 67.

African Headrights 1624–1650

The names of females in this list are given in *italic* font. Page numbers refer to Nell Marion Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants—Volume One: 1623–1666* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1977). At least some of the headrights claimed in 1635 and thereafter were for transportation in the previous decades, including some Ancient Planters.

Immigrant	Claimant	County of grant	Page
1635:			
Aug[us]t[us] ¹¹⁴	Richard Bennett	Nansemond	23
<i>“1 Negro woman”</i>	David Jones	Charles City	25
Anthon[io] ¹¹⁵ <i>Mary</i>	John Upton ¹¹⁶	Isle of Wight ¹¹⁷	25
Solomon Dorillios	Thomas Phillipps	James City	26
Alexander Anthony Sebastian <i>Polonia</i> <i>Jane</i> <i>Palatia</i> ¹¹⁸ <i>Cassanga</i> John	Charles Harmer	[York]	28
<i>Mary</i>	George Ke[i]th	York	30
Bashaw ¹¹⁹ <i>Juliana</i> <i>Andrea</i> <i>Maydelina</i> Cessent ¹²⁰	Francis Eppes	Charles City	31

¹¹⁴ This is duplicated in 1637.

¹¹⁵ They appear to be the Antonio and Mary listed in the musters of Warrisqueake, Isle of Wight County, in the 1624/5 muster of surviving inhabitants in Virginia (above).

¹¹⁶ This is duplicated in 1637.

¹¹⁷ Warrisqueake is converted into Isle of Wight County for the purposes of the table, and Charles River is rendered as York County.

¹¹⁸ The inventory of William Stafford of York County, dated 3 March 1644/5, included a black man named Anthonio [*sic*], and black women named Palassa and Couchanello, as well as a black girl names Mary who was age four, a black girl named Elizabeth, age three, an unnamed black boy age one, and a black boy two weeks old. York County (Virginia), Deeds, Orders and Wills, Book 2, 1645-1649, page 185, FHL microfilm 34402. They may have been purchased from Charles Harmer, because the name Palassa/Palatia is extraordinarily rare.

Immigrant	Claimant	County of grant	Page
Anthony	William Gany	Northampton ¹²¹	31
Solon	John Moone	Isle of Wight	32
“2 Negroes, a man & a woman” ¹²²	Thomas Harris	Henrico	33
Mary Mathias ¹²³	John Cheeseman	York	35
“2 Negroes” ¹²⁴	James Knott	Elizabeth City	37
1636:			
“2 Negroes” “all servants”	Robert Hollom	Henrico	41
“1 Negro Woman”	John Chew ¹²⁵	York	45
“2 Negroes”	Elizabeth Packer, widow of William Sharp ¹²⁶	Henrico	45
“ <i>Thomasin</i> , a maid, his negroe [in spite of the wording, the number of persons claimed in this entry indicates that “his negroe” is unnamed]	John Wilkins ¹²⁷	Northampton	46
“1 Negro”	Walter Hacker	Charles City	49
“ <i>Margt.</i> a Negroe” ¹²⁸	Richard Cocke	Henrico	54

¹¹⁹ A Bashaw Fernando was a resident of Northampton County who testified on 30 December 1652 that he and Emmanuel Driggers purchased cattle while they were servants of Francis Pott. Heinegg, *Free African Americans*, page 425.

¹²⁰ It is not clear if Cessent is female (but that seems probable). She is claimed again in 1638, when a statement is made that at least one of the headrights came in the Spanish frigate in 1629 (or 1621).

¹²¹ Here we render the shire called Accawmak (or Accomack) as Northampton County so it is not confused with Accomack County (created from Northampton in 1663).

¹²² This is duplicated in 1639.

¹²³ Mary and Mathias are claimed again in 1637.

¹²⁴ Part of this list is duplicated in the claim he made in 1637.

¹²⁵ His list specifically includes his own transportation, once in 1622 and again in 1623, so those claimed may have arrived years before 1636.

¹²⁶ This is duplicated in part in 1637.

¹²⁷ This list is duplicated in 1637 when Thomasine was referred to as someone’s wife, depending on the interpretation of the wording. People have taken the wording to indicate that Thomasine was black, and that she married Rowland Rayne. When Rayne died a few years later, his widow was actually named Mary (perhaps a second wife).

¹²⁸ Part of this list is duplicated in 1640.

1637:			
“ <i>Thomasin</i> his wife, A Negro” ¹²⁹ [In this entry, in spite of the wording, a count of the claimed headrights indicates that <i>Thomasin</i> was not black, but a woman who occurs before the claim for a black person.]	John Wilkins	Up. Co. of New Norfolk	56
“2 Negroes” ¹³⁰	William Cotton	[Northampton]	59
“2 Negroes”	Francis Osborne	Charles City	60
“2 Negroes, 1 Negroe more”	Francis Osborne	Charles City	61
Mingo [Domingo] Fran[cis]. Fr[ancis]. Anth[ony] Alexander Jo[h]n “ <i>twoe women Negroes</i> ”	Henry Bowne	James City	61
“2 Negroes”	Leonard Yeo	Elizabeth City	62
“ <i>1 Negro woman.</i> ”	John Chew	York	63
“2 Negroe serv[an]ts to Serj[ean]t W[illia]m Sharp” ¹³¹	Elizabeth Packer, widow of William Sharp	Henrico	65
Austin ¹³² [“Augt”]	Richard Bennett	Up. Co. of New Norfolk	66
“2 Negroes” ¹³³	James Knott	Upper County of New Norfolk	66
Anthony ¹³⁴ <i>Maria</i>	John Upton	Isle of Wight	69
<i>Mary</i> ¹³⁵ Mathisas	John Cheesman	York	69

¹²⁹ Nell Marion Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, 3 vols. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1977), vol. 1, pages 46, 56.

¹³⁰ Note William Cotton’s claim in 1639 (below).

¹³¹ This appears to duplicate her claim in 1637.

¹³² See 1635.

¹³³ Part of this list is a duplication of the claim he made in 1635, apparently including these two persons.

¹³⁴ See 1635.

Immigrant	Claimant	County of grant	Page
“3 Negroes” ¹³⁶	Adam Thorogood	Lower County of new Norfolk	70
“3 Negroes” “1 Negro”	John Howe	Northampton	73
Francisco ¹³⁷	Phillip Taylor	Northampton	74
Andolo ¹³⁸ <i>Maria</i>	Argoll Yeardey	Up. Co. of New Norfolk	81
1638:			
“1 negro”	Arthur Smith	Isle of Wight	83
Bashaw ¹³⁹ <i>Jabina</i> <i>Andrea</i> <i>Magdilina</i> <i>Cesent</i>	Francis Epes	Charles City	84
Bas Anthony William <i>Mary</i> John Jacob	William Bannister	York	94
<i>Maria</i>	Randall Crew	Up. Co. of New Norfolk	94
“1 Negroe”	Thomas Iles	York	96
“2 Negroes”	John Moore Rowland Burnam	James City	97
“5 Negroes”	Thomas Mathews	Henrico	109
“Negroes I brought out of England ” [apparently 23] ¹⁴⁰	Georg[e] Mynifie	Porrenger’s Creek	118

¹³⁵ See 1635.

¹³⁶ Sarah Gookin, late wife of Captain Adam Thoroughgood, claimed “one Negro woman named Mary “as her dower out of his estate on 16 June 1645. Alice Granbery Walter, *Lower Norfolk County, Virginia, Court Records, Book “A”1637-1646 & Book “B”1646-1651/2* (Baltimore: Clearfield Publishing Co., Inc., 1994), Book A, page 176.

¹³⁷ Francisco became Francis Payne of Northampton County. Heinegg, *African Americans of Virginia and North Carolina*, pages 915-16.

¹³⁸ Compare this with the claims by John Upton. Argall Yeardeley was the eldest son and heir of the governor whose household is enumerated in the musters.

¹³⁹ These persons were claimed earlier in 1635. A note at the end after four more names reads “in the Spanish fr[i]gate in 1629 (or 1621).”

¹⁴⁰ The grant is dated 19 April 1638, but “Due by order of court at James City, May 9, 1635.”

1639:			
Joe ¹⁴¹ Samboe	Christopher Wormeley	York	99
Domingo Saconyo	William Cotton	Northampton	101
“2 Negroes—a man & a woman” ¹⁴²	Thomas Harris	Henrico	101
“1 Negroe” “2 Negroes”	John Robins	James City	102
“1 Negroe”	Stephen Hamblyn	York	102
Francisco Mingo [Domingo] Maria Mathew Peter Cosse Old Greene Bass Young Peter Paule Emmanuell	Richard Kemp	[James City]	104
Tonie Gereene	Richard Kemp	[James City]	105
Joan	William Davis	James City	112
Thom Jane	Edward Sanderson	Chickahominy Riv 1 mile above Pyny Point	112
“3 Negroes”	Thomas Grey (Gray)	James City	113
Anthony	Thomas Symons	James City	115
1640:			
“a Negro”	John Maior	Northampton	119
“4 Negroes bought of Mr. Oldis” “2 Negroes bought of Randall Holt” “9 Negroes bought of Mr. Constable”	George Minifye	York	120
Peter George ¹⁴³	Nathaniel Littleton	Northampton	

¹⁴¹ They were claimed in the “1st year” of a list that also includes those brought in the “2nd year.”

¹⁴² This duplicates a list he claimed in 1635.

¹⁴³ Peter George established a family in Northampton County. Paul Heinegg, *Free African Americans*, vol. 1, page 519. No headright was claimed in a patent, but the date of immigration is inferred in court testimony.

Immigrant	Claimant	County of grant	Page
“3 Negroes adv[anced] the 1 st y[ea]r to Chiskiake” ¹⁴⁴	Richard Townsend	York	120
“a Negro woman” ¹⁴⁵	Richard Cocke	Henrico	120
“2 Negroes (adv. To Cheskiake)” “a Negro woman”	Nicholas Martia[u]	York	121
1641:			
“7 Negroes”	John Gookin	Norfolk	129
1642:			
“5 Negroes”	John Broach	York	130
“5 Negroes” ¹⁴⁶	William Prior	North side of York River down Priors Creek	132
<i>Emanualla</i>	William Ireland Robert Wallis	York	133
“12 Negroes bought of S[i]r John Harvey, Kn[igh]t., Anno 1639... These in the ship Dove of London Capt Bicking [Gurling?] M[aste]r 1638” ¹⁴⁷	Henry Perry	Charles City County	128
Francis	Bertram Hobert	[Gloucester?]	135
“Capp Hanna a Negro”	William Cannoe	[Gloucester]	136
Jacob	Daniel Gookin	North side of Rappahannock	139
<i>Cattalina</i>	Thomas Guyer	[mouth of Lawnes Creek near Snelleetts]	141
Tony	Hugh Gwyn	Gloucester	141

¹⁴⁴ The Governor and Council had authorized the English to colonize the Indian lands at Chiskiake on the Pamunkey River on 8 October 1630, and Captain Nicholas Martiau attempted settlement there. Dorman, *Adventurers of Purse and Person*, vol. 2, page 503.

¹⁴⁵ This appears to be a duplication of his claim made in 1636.

¹⁴⁶ York County records in 1646 give the names “fower negroes” whose headrights were claimed by William Pryor, “Peeter, John, Grace and Kathren.” Beverly Fleet, *Virginia Colonial Abstracts*, 34 volumes (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1988), vol. 3, page 48.

¹⁴⁷ Sir John Harvey was governor of Virginia. George Minifie brought suit in 1640 about provisions he had made for the *Dove* as it left the Isle of Wight, England, and met with contrary winds. The master deposed that there were also 106 passengers. Peter Wilson Coldham, *English Adventurers and Immigrants, 1609-1660: Abstracts of Examinations in the High Court of Admiralty with Reference to Colonial America* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1984), pages 100-1.

1643:			
Michaell Katherine “his wife” John Grasheare ¹⁴⁸ Mathew	William Ewins	James City	146
“4 Negroes”	Rice Hoe	[James City]	148
Peter	Benjamin Harryson	James City	152
Martin	Moore Fa[u]ntleroy	Nansemond	154
“John ye Nagro[,] his wife and Child[, and] Basteans a Nagro” ¹⁴⁹	Richard Persons	Lower Norfolk	
1644:	no claims of surviving African American headrights		
1645:			
Mingo [Domingo] France ¹⁵⁰	Justinian Cooper	Isle of Wight	158
Anthony Robert Jo[hn] ¹⁵¹ Solloman Domingo Scourgoa ¹⁵²	Zachary Cripps	Warwick	158
1646:	no claims of surviving African American headrights in the General Court		
Tony “Negro” Phillip “Negro” Mingo “Negro”	William Hawley	Northampton ¹⁵³	
“black Jack” ¹⁵⁴	Mr. Willson to Thomas Sibsey	Lower Norfolk	

¹⁴⁸ John Graweere.

¹⁴⁹ Captain Richard Persons claimed 300 acres on 24 April 1643 for the four headrights listed above, an Indian named Christopher, and his own personal transport. Alice Granbery Walter, *Lower Norfolk County, Virginia, Court Records, Book “A”1637-1646 & Book “B”1646-1651/2* (Baltimore: Clearfield Publishing Co., Inc., 1994), Book A, page 128.

¹⁵⁰ Possibly Frances?

¹⁵¹ Nugent does not place a comma between the named John and Solloman; it is possible it is one name (Juan Soloman), similar to Juan Pedro (John Pedro/Peter).

¹⁵² The ending of this name might indicate a woman if the feminine of a Latin given name.

¹⁵³ Howard Mackey and Marlene Alma Hinkley Groves, *Northampton County, Virginia Record Book, Orders, Deeds, Wills & c, Volume 3, 1645-1651* (Rockport, Maine: Picton Press, 2000), pages 82, 221.

¹⁵⁴ Black Jack was not claimed as a headright, but his transport is indicated in the record book for Lower Norfolk. Alice Granbery Walter, *Lower Norfolk County, Virginia, Court Records, Book “A”1637-1646 & Book “B”1646-1651/2* (Baltimore: Clearfield Publishing Co., Inc., 1994), Book B, page 23.

1647:			
“2 Negroes”	James Warradine	Charles City	169
<i>Elizabeth</i>	Jonathan Gills	Northampton	170
Anthony Michael <i>Mary</i> <i>Luce</i> Anthony “a child”	John Broach ¹⁵⁵	York	173
1648:			
“ <i>Sibira, Negro</i> ” ¹⁵⁶	Phillip Bennet	Nansemond	177
“1 Negro”	George Read	[Gloucester]	180
“6 Negroes”	Bartholomew Hoskins	Southwest side of Rappahannock	182
“1 Negro” ¹⁵⁷	Thomas Meares	Lower Norfolk	182
Francisco Emanuel Antonio <i>Maria</i> ¹⁵⁸	Daniel Peirce selling to Francis Yardley	Lower Norfolk	
1649:			
“Eight Negroes (Transported in Capt. Jno. Williams Shipp)” “9 Negroes”	Ralph Wormeley ¹⁵⁹	[York]	181
“1 Negro woman” “1 Negro boy” “12 Negroes” “4 Negroes”	Richard Kemp	Gloucester	182

¹⁵⁵ See 1642.

¹⁵⁶ Possibly female.

¹⁵⁷ The grant has no date but is recorded among other grants in 1648.

¹⁵⁸ They are not claimed as headrights in this year, but the record of Daniel Peirce of Barbados, captain of the *Swallowe*, selling them to Captain Francis Yardley of Linhaven on 22 February 1647/8 is preserved. Alice Granbery Walter, *Lower Norfolk County, Virginia, Court Records, Book “A”1637-1646 & Book “B”1646-1651/2* (Baltimore: Clearfield Publishing Co., Inc., 1994), Book B, page 115.

¹⁵⁹ Ralph Wormley put “six Negro servants” in trust for his intended bride in 1645, “Sanio, and Susan his wife, and greate Tony, and his wife Dorothis, Tony the younger, and Will....” Susie M. Ames, *County Court Records of Accomack-Northampton, Virginia, 1640-1645* (Charlottesville, Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 1973), page 433.

Immigrant	Claimant	County of grant	Page
“Tony & Basse 2 Negroes” [but the head count in this list is actually seven persons, rather than for six people as listed in the preamble]	Thomas Curtis	[Gloucester]	184
“5 Negroes”	Rowland Burneham	[now Middlesex]	185
“one Negro”	Ralph Barlowe	Northampton	185
“2 Negroes”	Nicho[las] Jernew	York	190
“9 Negroes”	Timothy Lodell	York	190
1650:			
“3 Negroes”	William Worleich	Gloucester	195
“2 Negroes”	Nicholas Jernew	Northumberland	199
“2 Negroe men” “one woman”	Lewis Burwell	Northumberland	199
Dick	George Pace	Charles City	199
John ¹⁶⁰	Stephen Charlton	Northampton	200
“8 Negroes”	William Plumer	Gloucester	200
<i>Sarah</i> <i>Susan</i>	Francis Townsend	Northumberland	208

¹⁶⁰ He became known as John Francisco and lived in Northampton County (Heinegg, *Free African Americans*, page 1058).