

ORIGINS OF THE 7 PERRY BROTHERS OF NORTH CAROLINA
by Steve Watson

Chapter 1

PHILLIP PERRY

September 11, 2003

Dear Perry cousins,

For several years now I have been involved in research on the various Perry families of early Virginia and North Carolina with a primary goal of trying to trace the origins and antecedents of the men known commonly as the “7 Perry Brothers of North Carolina”(the 7). I am aware that many other dedicated individuals have done extensive research on this subject in the past and some are presently involved in such efforts. However, to my knowledge no one has conclusively determined the true origins and antecedents of these men. It is my hope that my efforts here may contribute to the efforts of other researchers and that at some point we may be able to conclusively prove the true origins of these 7 men. Although I do not feel that I have conclusively determined who the antecedents of these men are, I do think that I have narrowed the choices down to several possibilities, and I have satisfied in my own mind who I believe are “not” antecedents of the 7.

For clarification purposes, I am including the names and estimated death dates & death places of these 7 Perry men as follows:

Nathaniel Perry (1790 Franklin Co., NC)
Joshua Perry (1792 Warren Co., NC)
William Perry (Aft. 1807 prob. Franklin Co., NC)
Francis Perry (1813 Wake Co., NC)
John Perry (1796 Franklin Co. NC)
Jeremiah Perry (October 16, 1777 Bute Co., NC)
Burwell/Burrell Perry (1801 Franklin Co., NC)

As most of you have seen before, “Phillip Perry” has commonly been placed on genealogical charts as the father of these 7 men. I have observed many different charts that list the following Phillip Perry’s as father of the 7:

Phillip Perry & wife Grace

Phillip Perry (son of Phillip & Grace)

Phillip Perry (who died in 1751 in Perquimans County NC)

Phillip Perry (son of Phillip Perry that died in 1751 in Perquimans Co., NC)

It is my opinion that the erroneous designation of Phillip Perry as the father of the 7 began 36 years ago with the 1967 publication of the book titled “A HISTORY OF THE JOHN WESLEY PERRY JR. FAMILY” by Charles Wesley Perry. Based on my own research, and as I see it, this book contains many errors, as well as some useful information. However, I do not wish to sit

here and compose a report on the errors contained in Mr. C. W. Perry's book. I am sure that he published the book with the best of intentions, using the research tools that were available to him at that time. We have the advantage that he did not have when he compiled the data for his book in 1967 because many more of the old county records have been transcribed and published and made available, plus we also now have the "internet". Although it is not my interest to publish a book on this topic, I would prefer that 36 years from now, when many more of the old records have been transcribed and made available, someone doesn't sit down and write a report in regard to all the errors that may be contained in my own research on this subject. The only hesitation that I have in sharing what I have learned with others on this subject is this: "I consider this research project a "work in progress", meaning that I am currently actively researching this subject, and everything contained in this report is subject to change and addition and subtraction, and it is not my wish to see this information placed on someone's website or in a book and to not have the ability to correct any errors when they may be identified".

What I believe has happened over the years is that people have mixed the above mentioned different Phillip Perry's in the compilation of their charts and we have ended up with all 4 Phillip Perry's being listed on various genealogical charts as the father of the 7 Perry brothers. Often the source for this statement is "oral tradition". However, I have not found any evidence that indicates that prior to the publication of this book that a "Phillip Perry" was identified as the father of the 7. I believe that the "oral tradition" started with the publication of this book in 1967.

The following paragraph is taken from pages 68 & 69 of Charles Wesley Perry's book:

"Several of the children of Phillip Perry Sr. of Isle of Wight County, Virginia, and several of his brothers moved to Perquimans County North Carolina in 1751. I am recording this information here, as I have gathered it here and there. All of the courthouse records of Nansemond County were burned in the Civil War, so I am handicapped in getting full information and proof beyond a shadow of a doubt. However, I am quite sure and positive that Phillip Perry II was the father of Phillip Perry III, and that he and his wife Joan Hunter Perry had these other children: Jesse Perry, Mary Perry, Alice Perry, Elizabeth Perry and Sarah Perry. Phillip Perry III was the father of Jeremiah Perry, John Perry, Francis Perry, Joshua Perry, Nathaniel Perry, William Perry and Burwell Perry. These are the SEVEN BROTHERS who settled in Granville County, North Carolina, in 1746. Ree Herring Hendrick, author of her book "Lineage and Tradition," made up a "Perry Genealogical" chart. She indicated that the father of the Seven Brothers was in Nansemond County, Virginia, but she had been unable to find out the name of the father, so she left it blank on her chart. I have found the name of the Perry father, Phillip Perry, so I have had the chart photographed. It is so to speak, a picture page included in the book opposite this page, as many Perrys may be interested in looking at this chart."

It appears to me that what C.W. Perry is stating in this paragraph is that he believes that Phillip Perry II (who died in 1751 in Perquimans Co., NC) who married Joan Hunter (daughter of Isaac Hunter) was the son of Phillip Perry, Sr. (who died ca: 1669 in Isle Of Wight Co. VA) and that Phillip Perry II's son (who he calls Phillip Perry III) was the father of the 7. The Phillip Perry (who died in 1751) is whom I identify as Phillip Perry III. In my opinion he is not the son of Phillip Perry Sr., nor do I believe that he is the grandfather or father of the 7. The records show that the Phillip Perry (who died in Perquimans Co., in 1751) did have a son named Phillip Perry, who I identify as Phillip Perry IV, and I believe that he died in Perquimans Co. NC in 1809. In

my opinion Phillip Perry IV was not the father of the 7 either. (However, I do believe that Phillip Perry [who died in 1751] could be a grandson of Phillip Perry Sr., but in my opinion, he would more likely be a descendent of John Perry, the “youngest son” of Phillip Perry I).

I know that this is very confusing, and I will try to simplify it here by the addition of 2 small lineage charts below showing what I think that Mr. C.W. Perry was stating in his book, and what I believe is a more likely scenario.

C.W. Perry Chart

Phillip Perry Sr. (died abt. 1669 Isle of Wight Co., VA)

Phillip Perry II (son of Phillip Perry I; d: 1751 Perquimans Co., NC)

Phillip Perry III (son of Phillip Perry II, father of the 7 brothers)

Steve Watson Chart

Phillip Perry I (died abt. 1669 Isle of Wight Co. VA)

Phillip Perry II (son of Phillip Perry I; d: aft. 1667 prob. Nansemond Co., VA)

Phillip Perry III (b: abt. 1700 Nansemond Co. VA d: 1751 in Perq. Co. NC poss. son of John Perry)

Phillip Perry IV (son of Phillip Perry III, b: abt 1735 died 1809 Perquimans Co. NC)

(I do not have any conclusive evidence that John Perry of Nansemond Co., VA was the John Perry named as the “youngest son” in the will of Phillip Perry I. Based on the records that I have seen, there appears to have been more than 1 John Perry in Nansemond Co. in the late 1600’s. More research is needed on this subject. sw.)

In an effort to try and avoid confusion, I will refer to these 4 different Phillip Perry’s by my own identification chart listed above throughout the remainder of this report.

In regard to Phillip Perry I, I am including my notes on him below, including a transcribed copy of his Will. In reading the Will of Phillip Perry I, you can see that the only children named were sons Phillip & John. I have seen it written by others that Phillip Perry I had other sons named Joseph, James & Jacob. In my opinion it is only speculation that Phillip Perry I could have had other sons. I believe that because of his age (70 or thereabout), some researchers have assumed that Phillip Perry’s marriage to Grace was not his first marriage. I agree that this is a possibility, however I do not see how one can make that assumption with no additional evidence to back it up. I have not located any evidence that Phillip Perry I had any other children except sons John & Phillip II (although I do believe that Joseph, James & Jacob Perry’s could be grand-children of his). In Virginia at this time if a man died without a will, all real property automatically went to the eldest son as his “heir at law”. It is noticeable to me that Phillip Perry left a will naming his “youngest son” (John) as heir to his plantation. It is my speculation that Phillip Perry II may have been in poor health, and his father may not have expected him to live long. This may be why there is no record of Phillip Perry II in the few remaining records of Nansemond Co. or the Isle of Wight records. Also, based on the wording of the will, it is my opinion that these 2 sons were probably in their late teens, which would put the year of their birth prior to or very near 1650.

It is also my opinion that although Phillip Perry’s will was recorded in Isle of Wight Co., his plantation was probably located in what is now Nansemond Co. VA. He was known as Phillip Perry of “Ye Whitmarsh”. There are many references in the 7 Vols. Of “Cavaliers & Pioneers”

(which are the Abstracts of Virginia Land Grants) of a "Whitemarsh". Some of those references are to Whitemarsh's located in Surry, Essex, Gloucester & Nansemond Co's. VA, but not one is located in Isle of Wight Co. In 1674, the boundary dispute between Isle of Wight Co. & Nansemond Co. was finally settled by the Assembly (page 103 of Seventeenth Century Isle of Wight Co., Va. by John Bennett Boddie) and it is my current opinion that the area of "Whitemarsh" where Phillip Perry had his plantation then became located in Nansemond Co. In fact many of the family surnames who appear later in Perquimans Co., NC area had property that adjoined the "Whitemarsh" that was located in Nansemond Co. VA. Therefore, it appears to me that the descendents of Phillip Perry did not move from Isle of Wight Co. to Nansemond Co., but rather the county boundaries changed around them. These boundary changes were a common occurrence in these early days, and I have witnessed it time & time again while researching these early Perry families. It is a very important part of this research effort, as you will see.

NOTES FOR PHILLIP PERRY I

November 23, 1645. Isle of Wight Co., VA. Deeds, Wills, Guardian Accounts Book A 1636-1767, Page 88.

...Thomas Keerke to Richard Aldrod.... a parcel of land.

Thomas Keerke

NOTE: Also written on this deed is..... Nicholas Aldrod assigns to Phillip Pary all his Right "of the parcel of land" according to the sense of the patent.

Rec: 10 Sep. 1655

Nicholas Aldred

(SOURCE: Page 5 of ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY VIRGINIA Deeds 1647-1719, Court Orders 1693-1695 and Guardian Accounts 1740-1767 by William Lindsay Hopkins).

September 10, 1655. Isle of Wight Co., VA. Deeds, Wills, Guardian Accounts Book A 1636-1767, Page 88.

Thomas Hinson sold to William Brunt a parcel of land upon southside of John Newton between 100 acres of James Watson, and said Wm. Brunt is to have with as good assurances as John Seward hath given me. If said Wm. Brunt doth lose said land and Mr. Robert Pitt do require it, I do bind myself to pay 1000 weight in Tbc. and cask to Wm. Brunt. Dec. 1643. William Brunt assigns same to Thomas Kerrke 19 Oct. 1644. Thomas Keerke assigns same to Nicholas Aldred 23 Nov. 1645. Nicholas Aldred assigns same to PHILLIP PERRY 10 Sept. 1655.

(SOURCE: Page 528 of "Seventeenth Century Isle Of Wight County Virginia" by John Bennett Boddie.)

Will of Phillip Perry, 1667 - Isle of Wight County, Virginia Wills & Deeds Vol II, Pg 77

In the Name of God Amen, I Phillip Perry, Age seventie years or thereabout being weake in Body yet in perfect memorie praised be God, I do make and ordain this to be my last will and testament in form and manner following:/
Imprimis I bequeath my Soul to God, who gave it me and entrust my Body to the Earth from whence it came, to be buried in such a decent fort as my loving wife shall think fitt & convenient, And by touching my worldly goods, I dispose as followeth / my will is that my debts in the first place should be paid /
Imprimis I Give & bequeath unto my eldest sonn: Phillip Perry, when he comes to one & twentie years of Age a browne steere of five years old, with a mealey mouth, marked up, a swallows fork: [Bails?] in the right earr and

cropp in the left ear and a Shell in the crop. And a Cowe of the same Age and marked in the ears, as the steere aforesaid and her increase forever / Item I give and bequeath unto my youngest sonn: John Perry when he comes to one and twentie years of Age a pied heiffer, white & reddish [roulle^]: about two years old, marked with a swallow: bails in the right ear and cropt on the left ear and a shell in the crop and a black heifer, of the same Age & marked as above named, and two breeding sowes marked as the heifers above marked & their increase forever, and likewise I give unto my youngest sonn: John, After the death of my loving wife his mother, the plantation of mine to him and his lawfull heirs forever; And my wish is that my youngest sonn Jno Perry, shall give unto my eldest sonn Phillip Perry when he comes to five and twentie years of Age one thousand pound of sound ? in lease and cashe, And so: for my youngest sonn John Perry to take my plantation wholly to himself after the death of my loving wife his Mother as above said. And if in case my eldest sonn: Phillipp Perry dieth before he comes to Age this as is above mentioned that then I doe give and bequeath what is given unto my youngest sonn: Jno Perry, I leave it unto my eldest sonn: Phillip Perry, and if it please God to take both these my sonnes to his [-----] before they come to Age And my loving wife their Mother live, that then what I gave to them shall be their mothers / Item I Give unto my loving wife Grace Perry, all my Goods, moveables and unmoveables, both within doors or without doors, excepting, what I have given unto my two sonnes I do likewise make my loving wife Grace Perry, my sole and lawfull executrix of this my last will and testament. And my will is that my wife should give my two sonnes besides what she thinks meete, if she have it to spare, According to theyre obedience to her. I do nominate and appoint my friend Ralph Channell to be my overseer of this my will and testament. And also my will is that my estate shall not be praised [sic] To confirm: this my last will and testament I have [interchangeably] sett my hand and seale this six and twentieth day of November 1667.

Phillipp ----- Perry's mark

James Bagnall

Anselme A. Baylis his mark/

This will was proved by the oathes of James Bagnall and Anselmo Bailis in the open cort held for the Isle of Wight County this ninth day of October 1669 and then recorded.

[Tigh] Jno [Jeremiah] Sr [?]

October 9, 1669. ."WILLS AND ADMINISTRATIONS of ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY, VIRGINIA", by Blanche Adams Chapman. Page 67. (Original record is on page 22 of "Administration and Probates Book, Isle of Wight Co., VA records).

PERRY, PHILLIP: Ralph Channell in the right of Grace his wife and the relict of the said Perry requested probation. Oct. 9, 1669. Recorded Oct. 28, 1669. Security, Richard Penny, James Bagnall.

As for my own research in regard to Phillip Perry II (son of Phillip Perry & Grace) the only written record that I have been able to locate for him was the record of him as the under-aged "eldest son" in the Will of Phillip Perry I which was dated November 26, 1667 and recorded on page 77 of Isle of Wight Co., VA Wills & Deeds Vol. II. If anyone has any additional information on Phillip Perry II, I would love to see it.

In regard to the possibility that Phillip Perry III was the father of the 7, it is my opinion, based on my examination of the records that he did have 2 marriages and children from both marriages. I also believe that his first wife was Jean (Joan) Hunter, daughter of Isaac Hunter and that they did have the following children: Sarah, Mary, Jesse & Phillip. These are the only children of Jean Hunter Perry named in the will of her father Isaac Hunter dated April 17, 1752 as quoted from his Will as follows:

"I Give to my Grand Children, ye Sons and Daughters of my Daughter, Jean Deceast, namely Jesse, Phillip & Mary Perries & Sarah Field, to Each and Every of them the Sum of five pounds, Currant money of Virginia, to them and their heirs for Ever."

Because of the fact that these 4 children were the only children of Phillip Perry III that were named in the Will of Isaac Hunter, it is my current opinion that the other 4 children named in the Will of Phillip Perry III were probably children from his second wife Judith. This wife named Judith may have been Judith Hunter, daughter of Robert Hunter, and 1st cousin of Jean Hunter Perry. These 4 children (probably daughters from wife Judith) were named Elizabeth, Rachel, Judith and Miriam, as evidenced by the following record:

April 10, 1754, "Perquimans Co., NC Deed Book I, Division of Estates. Perry, Phillip, dec'd April 10, 1754. Heirs: wife Judith, Sarah, Mary, Jesse, Phillip, Elizabeth, Rachel, Judith & Miriam Perry. (p296)

An abstract of the Will of Robert Hunter of Bertie Co. (brother of Isaac Hunter) follows, however there is also the possibility that his daughter Judith may have been the wife of William Perry of Bertie Co. N.C who appears to have had a wife named Judith, or she may have been the wife of Jacob Perry (son of James Perry & wife Patience) who also had a wife named Judith (More research is needed on this subject).

3rd June, 1753, "Index to NC Historical & Genea. Reg. (Hathaway's Reg.) by David O. Hamrick. Vol. I." Abstracts of Wills Probated Prior to 1760, p. 47; probated August Court, 1753; ROBERT HUNTER of Bertie. Daughter Sarah Docton, Sr., son Henry, daughter Mary Gordon, daughter Judith Perry, daughter Susannah Benton, daughter-in-law Elizabeth Williams, wife of William Williams, property of my late wife Elizabeth Whitmell, son Moses; son and Thomas Whitmell executors.

The earliest records that I have been able to locate for what appears to me to be the Phillip Perry III that died in 1751 are as follows:

September 29, 1729-March 1732. State Records of North Carolina Vol. 22 Page 253. Account of the receipt of one-half of the arrears of his Majesty's Quit Rents for Albemarle County from September 29, 1729-March 1732, computed at the difference of seven for one pound sterling in the currency of this Province- 12 June, 1735.

PERQUIMANS PRECINCT

Perry, Samuel	160 acres
Perry, Philip (in part)	200 acres
Perry, Jacob	300 acres

Perry, Benjamin

500 acres

July 17, 1732. Perquimans Co., NC Deed Book C No. 55: Jacob Perry, of Perq, for f22 pd by Phillip Perry, of afore' sold 200a on Perq River. Adj Benj Perry. Land Patented for Wm Moore, & sold by him to me, July 14, 1724. Seal July 17,1732.(Page 99).

Based on the information above, it is my opinion that Phillip Perry III (who died in 1751) was probably born about 1700 (+/-). If he were to be considered as the father of the 7, it is my opinion that the 7 would all have to be children from another marriage other than Jean Hunter or Judith, and I don't believe that this is a realistic probability.

I have not yet acquired a copy of the Will of Phillip Perry III that died in 1751, but I do have an abstract of the contents which are included below. (If anyone has a copy of the original, I would very much appreciate receiving a copy for my files).

5 Jul 1751, Perquimans Co. NC 394. Oct Ct 1751 (before Edmund Hatch)
Phillip Perry "In a weake and Loe Condition" Son Jesse - 174 acres called Sandy Hook on Little River. **Son Phillip** - land where I now dwell but my wife to have use of it & my negro fellow Seaser during her widowhood **until sd son comes of age**. Daughter Sarah Field - feather bed & furniture. 5 daughters Mary, Elizebeth, Rachel, Jude & Miriam - feather bed & furniture each. 95 acres in Pasqatank to be sold & the money divided among my wife & all my daughters. Deed of sale I have for my brother John Perry's land to be recorded in Apr Ct next & sold by my executors to pay my debts & the remainder to Joseph Barber at age. Other legacies. Ex: Jacob Perry son of Jacob Perry **until my 2 sons come of age** & then they to become my executors.
Wit: Moses Field, Benjn Perry, Elizebeth(x)Perry

In my opinion this abstract is evidence that Phillip Perry IV, son of Phillip Perry III who died in 1751 could not be the father of the 7. If Phillip Perry IV was "not of-age" on July 5, 1751, then he was not yet 21 years old, which places his date of birth after July 5, 1730, and based on all the evidence that we have for the dates of births for the 7, he was probably born after all of them. And even if he was born prior to some of them, it certainly was not enough before to have then reached maturity, married and then become their father.

The following record is evidence of the issue of who I identify as Phillip Perry IV.

Feby 3, 1808, "Index to NC Historical & Genea. Reg. (Hathaway's Reg.) by David O. Hamrick. Vol. III." Abstract of Perquimans Co. Wills, p 345. May Term 1809. Phillip Perry. Son Isaac, daughter Millicent Perry, children Chloe Riddick, Seth, Christian White, Daniel, Isaac, John, Millicent Perry and Elizabeth Saunders; sons Isaac and Daniel Exrs. Test, Willis Riddick, Thomas Perry.

You may ask, (as I have) why did C.W. Perry make the statement "**Phillip Perry III was the father of Jeremiah Perry, John Perry, Francis Perry, Joshua Perry, Nathaniel Perry, William Perry and Burwell Perry. These are the SEVEN BROTHERS who settled in Granville County, North Carolina, in 1746.**" Because of the fact that he does not mention in his book (that I could find) his source or reasoning for this statement, it is purely speculation on my part as to why he made this statement, but I will speculate here a little bit on why I think that he may have made this statement. I believe that he relied heavily on statements made in Ree Herring Hendrick's book titled "Lineage and Tradition of the Herring, Conyers, Hendrick,

Boddie, Crudup, Denson and Hilliard Families” which was published in 1916. In this book on page 107 is the statement “The Perry’s of Franklin Co., N.C. are of English descent. It is their tradition the family came from Nancemond County, Va., and that there were seven brothers, who settled in Granville County about 1746. They were a reserved proud race of people. They left Virginia as they were displeased at their father’s second marriage. However, the Perry’s followed the old custom of inheritance of the eldest son, and it is tradition an elder son remained in Virginia. The names of these brothers were: Jeremiah Perry, John Perry, Francis Perry, Joshua Perry, Nathaniel Perry, William Perry, Burwell Perry”. I believe that C.W. Perry probably assumed that Phillip Perry III migrated to Perquimans Co., NC from Nansmond Co. VA (based on what I have seen, I would agree with this assumption as well). Then, C.W. Perry may have examined the 1800 census of Franklin Co., NC and noticed that there is a “Phill Perry” listed there over 45 years old which puts birth year as prior to 1755 and made the assumption that this was the father. I have examined this census record as well, and I must admit that I do not know who this “Phill Perry” is, but I do not believe that he is the father of the 7. I have been unable to find any written record of a Phill or Phillip Perry in Franklin Co., NC except for this census entry.

To summarize this chapter of my report, I state simply that I do not agree with C.W. Perry that Phillip Perry (son of Phillip who died in 1751) was the father of the 7 brothers for several reasons, the most important of which is that I don’t believe that it is even a possibility because this Phillip Perry would have been born of the same generation as the 7 brothers and most likely to have been born after them, and I have found no evidence to date that any of the 7 brothers left written records or had roots in Perquimans Co., NC.