

Nicholas Gentry and his Descendants

Part II (The Gentry Family in America 1676 to 1909 by Richard Gentry)

Nicholas Gentry, The Immigrant, of Hanover Co., VA

The first record of Nicholas Gentry that has been found, is in the old Land Books of the Colony of Virginia in the record of a patent to land in favor of Samuel Gentry, dated Oct. 21, 1684, and described as being situated in New Kent County, adjacent to the lands of Nichols Gentry and others. The second mention of his name is found in St. Peter's Parish Register of New Kent County, VA., in the record of the baptism of his daughter Elizabeth, dated August 29, 1687.

The St. Peter's Parish Vestry Book also has a record dated May 4, 1689, of the appointment of Nicholas Gentry and others as processioners of land in said parish. On October 22, 1701, Nicholas Gentry was allowed by the Vestry of St. Peter's Parish for clothes and funeral charges for Mabel Wood, 971 lbs. Of tobacco; and in 1703, he is mentioned among the tithables on the north side of Totopotomoy's creek.

In St. Paul's Parish Vestry Book is recorded the appointment of Nicholas Gentry as road overseer, January 8, 1709, and on March 14 of the same year mention is made that the lands of Nicholas Gentry, Joseph Gentry and others are adjacent to each other. He is mentioned again in 1711, 1723, 1734, 1735 and in 1739. This last mention may possibly be that of his son Nicholas.

Hanover County was cut off of the western part of New Kent County in 1720, and St. Paul's Parish was in that part of New Kent which was afterwards made Hanover County. It is a tradition in the family that Nicholas Gentry and his brother Samuel Gentry were British soldiers, who came to America at the time of the Bacon Rebellion. British soldiers landed in Jamestown, VA, in January 1677 and were paid off and discharged in the fall of 1683; and the further fact that Nicholas Gentry and Samuel Gentry were land-owners of record in 1684, tends to corroborate the family tradition.

Nicholas Gentry may have had other children besides the three mentioned. Joseph Gentry, mentioned in 1709 as having adjoining land to Nicholas Gentry, may have been one of his sons. Below is the form of the record in St. Peter's Parish Register.

Children:

Eliz., daught. To Nich's Gentry, bapt. 29 day of Aug., 1687
Nicholas (2), sone of Nicholas Gentry, baptiz the 30 May, 1697
Mabel, daut'r of Nich's Gentry, baptiz the 13 Dec'r, 1702

Second Generation

The Gentry Family in America 1676 to 1909 by Richard Gentry

Nicholas Gentry (1) Nicholas I, of Albemarle Co., VA

Born in New Kent Co., VA, May 30, 1697. His will was probated in Albemarle Co., in April, 1779, and was dated February 20, 1777. Bezaleel Brown and Benajah Brown were witnesses to the will. These Browns were probably related to the Gentry's in some way. One of Nicholas Gentry's sons was named for Benajah Brown. From his will it appears that he had two wives, and two sets of children, and that his last wife was named Jane. He owned land in Louisa Co., which was a part of Hanover before Louisa was organized in 1742.

He probably had sold most all of his lands, and made distribution to his children before his death. He was the owner of a number of slaves at the time of his death. He married Jane Benajah & Mary Books.

Children by first wife:

Moses (3), born about 1722: died 1808

David (4), born about 1724; died 1812

Nicholas (5), born about 1726; died 1812

Mary, married a Mr. Hinson.

Children by second wife:

Robert (6)

Elizabeth, born (Oct. 14, 1831); married Nathaniel Haggard in 1747. See page 238.

Benajah (7) born 1733; died 1831

Nathan (8)

Martin (9), born September 11, 1747; died April 22, 1827.

His will also mentions two granddaughters, Jane Timberlake and Ann Jenkins

Third Generation

The Gentry Family in America 1676 to 1909 by Richard Gentry

Robert Gentry (2) – (Nicholas II, Nicholas I) of Jefferson Co., Tennessee

Born in Hanover Co., VA about 1730; married Judith Joyner, daughter of Philip Joyner of Albemarle Co., VA. In 1776 he conveys 234 acres of land on which he lived in Albemarle, to John Woodson, in which his wife Judith joined. He is described as a planter of the parish. The will of Philip Joyner dated February 19, 1761, names, among other legatees, his grandsons Charles and Jesse Gentry, giving each of them 200 acres of land, and names his granddaughters, Elizabeth, Sarah and Mary. The land on which the Virginia University stands is a part of this legacy. He moved to Tennessee and settled on the north side of the French Broad River, 4 miles east of Dandridge, Jefferson Co., Tennessee, in 1783. He married second wife Rachel West, in Tennessee, November 13, 1804. She had no children. "Ramsey's History of Tennessee," page 277, mentions Robert Gentry among the first settlers in Jefferson Co., Tennessee in 1783.

Children, by first wife:

Charles (23)
Jesse (24)
Bartlett (25)
Martin (26)
Elizabeth, married Mr. Murror
Sarah, married Mr. McGork
Mary, married Mr. Drake

Fourth Generation

The Gentry Family in America 1676 to 1909 by Richard Gentry

Bartlett Gentry (6) – (Robert III, Nicholas II, Nicholas I) of Belfant, Alabama

Born in Albemarle Co., VA, about 1761. He emigrated to Tennessee with his father, who was one of the first settlers of Jefferson Co., Tennessee in 1783. He raised his family in White Co., Tennessee about 18 miles from Sparta, and in his old age he moved to Alabama with some of his children, and died near Belfant in the state.

Children:

Robert (86)

Joyner (87)

John (88), died in 1854

Barlett (89), born in 1803; died in 1894, in Seymour, MO

Jesse, born in White Co., Tennessee, about 1805; married and settled in Jackson Co., Tennessee and raised a family.

Jennie

Betsie

Polly

Sallie

Katie; married Wesley Green and had: Mrs. Sallie Thorn of Confederate, KY; Mrs. Rosa Gist of Calera, Alabama, W. J. Green of Alabama, and Henderson P. Green of Prairie Grove, ark., Mrs. Thorn's daughter, Mrs. Rosa Lawrence, lives at Old Hickory, Conway Co., Ark.

Fifth Generation

The Gentry Family in America 1676 to 1909 by Richard Gentry

Robert Gentry (25) – (Barlett IV, Robert III, Nicholas II, Nicholas I) of Jackson Co., Tennessee

Born in White Co., Tennessee; married and reared his family in Jackson Co., Tennessee

Children:

Silas
William

Meredith

GENTRY SOLDIERS OF THE PRINCIPAL WARS

A partial list of the Gentry's who took part in the various wars of our country, and reference to the service each performed:

Richard Gentry

s/o Mary (Estes) & David Gentry – David is the s/o Nicholas Gentry II

md – Jane Harris, 5 April 1821 – d/o Christopher Harris

md – Nancy Guthrie, 12 October 1821 – d/o Nathaniel Guthrie

Born in Louisa Co., VA, 26 September 1763, died on his estate in Madison Co., KY, February 12, 1843. He was a Revolutionary soldier, and enlisted from Albemarle Co., VA. he served first for two months as a private under Captain William Dalton, in the fall of 1780, at the age of 17. He probably served as a substitute for Bezaleel Brown. In May, 1781, he enlisted and served under Captains John Miller, Benjamin Harris and Woodford, under Colonels Richardson and Boyer, until after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, when he was discharged at Fredericksburg after serving six months. He made application for a pension August 13, 1832, which was granted.

After returning from the war, he spent a year on his father's farm and married Jane Harris. He rented some land from Bezaleel Brown, and put in a crop of tobacco. He raised a fine crop of tobacco with the help of his friends and farmhands. He made enough money to outfit and join a party of emigrants for Kentucky, the next spring. They made the journey to Kentucky by the way of Cumberland Gap and the Wilderness Road; his young wife Jane rode on horseback and carried her baby, Reuben, in her lap; he walked and led or drove another horse, packed with all their worldly effects except his faithful hound and his rifle, which he carried on his shoulder. On reaching Kentucky, they stopped for about a year at Boone's Fort in Clark Co., KY. In 1787 he secured 300 acres of land in Madison C., Kentucky, in the midst of a rich canebrake and built his cabin. His second son, David, was born in Clark Co., at Boone" Fort, and his third son, Richard, who afterwards became Major General Richard Gentry of Missouri, was the first child born in the new cabin home in the canebrake.

He got his start making salt and trading with the emigrants. There was no money in the country, and salt was scarce and in great demand, and took the place of a circulating medium; it became a measure of value as tobacco did in Virginia.

Realizing the value of salt, he provided himself with two brass kettles, and with his two horses and his rifle he traveled west to Logans Fort and Harrods, Station, and thence via Bullitts trace in Bullitts Salt Lick, a total distance through an Indian country of 75 miles. He made salt by evaporation the salt water, and when he had made about six bushels of salt, a load for his two horses, he would return to his home and trade with the emigrants. A peck of salt was the price of a yearling calf, and it was in such demand that he soon had fifteen to twenty head of cattle, and he repeated his trips to the Salt Lick.

In a few years he had acquired a large number of cattle. His mark was a crop and underbit in each ear, and was known in Kentucky and Missouri for many

years as the old Gentry mark. A government fort was established in a few years near where Cincinnati now is, and a government agent bought of him a large number of his cattle for beef for the soldiers, paying him the first money he had found since he came to Kentucky. He left his wife and babies at the settlement at Boone's Fort, and went back to Virginia and brought out to Kentucky his father's family, consisting of his father David, his brother David, and sisters Winnie and Onie, and three negroes, Isaac, Pompey and Patsie. He continued to prosper, bought more land and more negroes, and in 1804 he built a large two-story brick residence. It was the third brick house built in Madison Co., KY. In the early days in Kentucky he made portholes in his cabin to shoot through, in case of an Indian attack, and his wife was taught to use the rifle. There were no mills in those days, hand mills were used to grind the corn for bread, and hominy was made in a mortar. The baby's cradle was made by cutting down a buckeye tree and cutting it out like a sugar trough. General Richard Gentry, his third son, loved to boast in his political campaigns in Missouri, "that he was born in a canebrake, rocked in a sugar trough, and raised in good democratic style."

Richard Gentry often spoke of his early American ancestor and his brother as the two old "British Red Coats." Nicholas I Gentry, - 1677 - sent from England with brother Samuel as Redcoats to Quell Bacon's Rebellion. Richard celebrated the Fourth of July as a great holiday. The drum and fife were played by his negroes, while he waved the flag as a formal part of the ceremony. He loved to relate that he was one of the guards that marched off the British prisoners after the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, and to tell how his heart swelled with pride while the ragged, barefooted Colonial troops marched off, as their prisoners, the splendidly uniformed British Regulars.

He was for many years a member of the Baptist Church, but left it with most of his family in 1833, to join the new church of Alexander Campbell. He continued to prosper until he owned over 1000 acres of fine blue grass land and a great many slaves. He traded largely in mules, cattle and hogs, which he collected and sent to market on foot, driven by some of his sons, either to Cincinnati, Louisville, Richmond, Virginia or Charleston South Carolina.

He was the father of 19 children, 16 sons and 3 daughters, and all but one lived to be grown and married. Twelve by his first wife, Jane Harris, and seven by his second wife, Nancy Guthrie.

Richard Gentry had light hair and blue eyes, he was over six feet in height, and weighed about 220 pounds. He was a great hunter, and most all of his sons loved the hounds and the chase. Eight of his sons settled in Missouri before it was a state. He was buried on his estate, in what was known as the old Gentry graveyard.

David Gentry

s/o Nicolas Gentry III - Nicholas is the s/o Nicholas Gentry II
md Sarah Johnson – 12 May 1807

Born in Louisa Co., VA in 1754; he was raised in Bedford Co., VA and died in Overton Co., Tennessee 16 July 1847. He was a Revolutionary soldier, enlisted from Bedford Co., Virginia in 1780; served under Captain Lewis, and Colonel Benjamin Cleveland, and was at the battle of "Kings Mountain," and the "Cowpens." His widow drew a pension from date of his death.

Nicholas Gentry

s/o Nicolas Gentry III - Nicholas is the s/o Nicholas Gentry II

Born in Louisa Co., VA about 1756. There is a record at Richmond, VA of payments made to Virginia State troops in the Revolutionary War in which a Nicholas Gentry's name appears as a private artilleryman. Payment was made for his services to William Biggers, June 8, 1787.

The following also appears in Henning's Virginia Statutes, Vol. 12, page 598, Chapter LVIII: "An act concerning the personal estate of Nicholas Gentry, deceased," passed December 13, 1787.

John Gentry

s/o Nicolas Gentry III - Nicholas is the s/o Nicholas Gentry II

Born in Louisa Co., VA, about 1758. He settled in Bullitt Co., KY, and raised a family. Many of his and his brother Blackstone's descendants are still in Bullitt and adjoining countries. He was a Revolutionary soldier; was paid for his services by the State of Virginia, August 9, 1786, as shown by the Virginia State records. Children: John, Wyatt, Martin & Elizabeth Gentry.

Martin Gentry

s/o Nicolas III - Nicholas is the s/o Nicholas Gentry II

Born in Virginia, married Miss Loree in 1785, in Oglethorpe Co., GA. He was born in 1760 and died in 1863, one hundred and three years old. He was a Revolutionary soldier. Children: William, Richard, Seaborn, Alfred, Perry, John D., David, James, Ransom, Nancy, & Jane Gentry.

James Gentry

s/o George Gentry III – George is the s/o James II

Born in Hanover, Co., VA in 1757 and died June 22, 1851 in Albemarle Co., at the age of 94 years. His wife, Mary Hicks, died in 1835. He enlisted in the Continental Army from Hanover Co., VA for three years on January 11, 1777, and was discharged January 10, 1780, near Morristown, NJ. He served as private and Corporal in Captain Eddin's Company , in Colonel Charles Harrison's 1st Continental Artillery and was in the battle of Monmouth. In 1787 he removed to Albemarle Co. and became a prosperous farmer, owning considerable land and negroes. He drew a pension as a Revolutionary soldier until his death. He was a great worker in the Methodist Church and was a prominent class leader for years. He built a church on his land and deeded it to the M.E. Church. His will was probated July 7, 1851, in which he named as legatees his son George, Nancy Simmons, Elizabeth Harvey, James and Polly Harvey. It appears that his son John was not mentioned in his will but the court reported to the U.S. Pension Office that his surviving children October 6, 1851, were John, James, Polly and Betsie Harvey. His will provided that Austin Gentry and Peter Gibson be his executors, if John Gentry would go security for his son Austin.

George Gentry

s/o George Gentry III – George is the s/o James II

Born in Hanover Co., VA in 1765 died 28 October 1855, at 90 years of age. He made a deed of gift to lands situated on the water of Henson Creek, in Louisa Co., VA in 1811, to his four children naming them as John, Nancy, Jemima and Frankie. In 1824 John Gentry and the husbands of his sisters petitioned the court for a division of said lands, which was granted. He made his home for many years before he died with his son-in-law, James Johnson. He was a Revolutionary soldier. He stated in his application for a pension to the War Department, made October 2, 1832, that he was a resident of Albemarle Co., that he was born in Hanover Co., near Ground Squirrel Bridge, in 1765; that in January, 1781, he substituted for his father and served as a private in Captain John Thompson's Company of Militia for eight months and was wounded in the leg by a sword cut.

Meshack Gentry

s/o Allen A. Gentry III

Born in Louisa Co., VA, in 1761 died in Monroe Co., TN in 1833. He bought land in Surry Co., NC, but soon after moved to TN. He made application for a pension August 29, 1836, in which he stated that he lived in Monroe Co., TN; that he was born in Louisa Co., VA; that he was appointed Captain of a company of mounted riflemen at Caswell Court House, in NC, November, 1779, under Colonel Fifer; that he was in the battles of 'Rugley's Mill,' 'Hanging Rock,' and 'Eutaw Springs,' and that he served two years. His application was rejected for want of sufficient proof. His children were: Allen D., Jourdan, Pleasant F., Francis, Susan, & Nancy Gentry.

Richard Gentry

Born in Lunenburg Co., VA, December 27, 1755; died February 13, 1836; married Gestin, daughter of Ayers Hedgepeth, October 27, 1793. The following data is from the Pension files at Washington City; Widow's file No. 8844:
"Richard Gentry was allowed pension on application executed September 12, 1832, at which time he was a resident of Rock Castle Co., KY. He stated that he was born in Lunenburg Co., VA, December 27, 1755 and resided in Union District, near Tiger River, South Carolina when he enlisted in 1780 as a private in Captain Vardery Magby's Company, under Colonels James Cotton and Sevier, served six months and was discharged after the battle of King's Mountain; enlisted three months later, under same Captain and Col. Cotton, was in the siege of '96, after which he was discharged; also served the same Captain in pursuit of Tories at different times, amounting to seven months." It is further alleged that Richard Gentry married in Surry Co., North Carolina, October 27, 1793, Gestin, Daughter of Ayers Hedgepeth. Soldier died in Rock Castle Co., KY, February 13, 1836, and his widow was allowed pension on an application executed November 25, 1839, at which time she was 70 years of age and a resident of Rock Castle Co., KY." Children: David, John H., Betsey, Richard, & Othaniel Gentry.

Gaddis Gentry

Born in Hanover Co., VA about 1762; died July 29, 1827. In an application for a pension on file in Washington, D.C., marked Widow's file No. 7512 it is alleged that Gaddis Gentry was a resident of Hanover Co., when he enlisted and that he served three terms as a private shortly before the siege of Yorktown, as follows; under Major McGill, two months; under Deklatown, two months; and under Col. John Taylor, three months. He married March 29, 1786, Martha or Patsey Thatcher. His widow was allowed pension on an application executed May 7, 1843, at which time she was about 77 years of age and a resident of Hanover Co., VA. Children: Robert, William, Hobson, Turner, Temple, Maria & Lucy Gentry.

Joseph Gentry

He was probably the Joseph Gentry who bought land in Lunenburg Co., VA in 1752, 1760, and 1761. All we know of him is from his will, which is on record in Surry Co., NC and bears date November 11, 1804. His services as a Revolutionary soldier can be found in records of the Auditor's Office of the State of North Carolina. His legatees were named as his wife and the following sons and daughters: Shelton, Lemuel, Anne, Judith, Sarah and Lausana Gentry.

William Gentry

He lived and reared his family in Gloucester Co., NJ. He is said to have been a Revolutionary soldier. There was a William Gentry, private in 3d Battalion, Gloucester Co., who served also in Colonel Somer's Battalion State troops (New Jersey) in Revolutionary War. Children: Thomas, Joseph, & John Gentry.

William Gentry

He enlisted as a private for three years in the Revolutionary War and served in Captain William T. Gaines Company, under Colonel Charles Harrison in the First Continental Artillery. He was discharged after Gates' defeat at Hillsborough, NC. At the date of his application for a pension, May 9, 1819, his residence was Hanover Co., VA and his age was 64 years. He was therefore born in 1754. To the pension office he mentioned in 1820 his family as follows: Spencer, Thomas, Howard, Theodrick, Andrew, & Mary Gentry

William Spisa

His daughter Jemima Spisa married Jonathan H. Gentry in 1831. William Spisa was a Revolutionary War soldier.

Major Benjamin Sharp

s/o Thomas Sharp

Benjamin Sharp was born in Lancaster Co., PA, January 22, 1762 and came Washington Co., VA while a mere lad. He had the most tragic experience as a young man from 1774 until 1790, as a pioneer on the Indian frontier; encountered numerous Indian raids, took part in several Indian campaigns, and gained his chief honor by being a soldier of the Revolution at the battle of "Kings Mountain." He married Hannah Fulkerson, a daughter of James Fulkerson of Washington Co., Vain 1787, and removed in the fall of 1793 to "Powell Valley," into what was afterwards made Lee Co., VA where most of his children were born. He later moved to Warren Co., MO. He is the great grandfather of Richard Gentry.

Frank Wyatt

s/o John Wyatt of North Carolina

f/o Captain John Wyatt who married Attossa Pinckney Sharp

Frank Wyatt of Montgomery Co., KY, father of Captain John Wyatt, was born in North Carolina about 1757. He was a Revolutionary soldier, and served seven years and eight months; yet there is no record at Washington of his services. After the war he settled on a farm in Montgomery Co., KY and reared a family of 12 children, most of whom settled in Warren and Montgomery Counties, MO.

John Wyatt

s/o Frank Wyatt, a brother of John Wyatt, both of North Carolina

John Wyatt who settled in Warren Co., MO at an early date. He was a Revolutionary soldier and drew a pension. He was a first cousin of Frank Wyatt of Montgomery Co., KY, father of Captain John Wyatt of MO. This Frank Wyatt of NO, born about 1738, had the following children: John (the Revolutionary soldier), William, Frank, Jr., Ricks, Polly Elizabeth and Sally. His son Frank was a soldier in War of 1812 and died in KY.

Nicholas Hawkins

s/o Nathan Hawkins

Nicholas Hawkins of Madison Co., KY, was born in Virginia about 1760. He married Ann Robinson in Virginia and moved from Spotsylvania Co., VA, to Madison Co., KY with his wife's father and family about 1785. Nicholas was a soldier in the Revolution and was present at Yorktown at the surrender of Lord Cornwallis. There is no record of his military service in the War Department at Washington, but the family tradition is very clear and positive. It is generally believed, and is almost certain, that this branch of the Hawkins family is descended from William Hawkins of England, the famous sea captain, who died in 1554, and who was the father of Sir John Hawkins, the Admiral, and William Hawkins, his brother. Nicholas was a man of prominence and wealth.

*The War Department collection of the Revolutionary War records is far from complete. There are still some records of services of Revolutionary soldiers among the various State records, which may be found by the aid of the Adjutant General of the State where the soldier lived and enlisted, and which are not in the War Department collection. The pension laws were not passed for forty to fifty years after the close of the Revolution, and many soldiers died without making application for pension; afterwards proof could not be made of the soldiers' services, in many cases.

WAR OF 1812**David Martin**

s/o David & Onie (Gentry) Martin

David was born in 1789 and was a Kentucky volunteer in the War of 1812.

James Gentry

s/o Benajah III – who is the s/o Nicholas II – who is the s/o Nicholas Gentry I
Born in Albemarle Co., VA, October 15, 1786; married Elizabeth Tooley in Virginia, August 4, 1808. He served as a soldier in the War of 1812, before leaving Virginia. After the war he settled in Monroe Co., KY on Meshach Creek, and became a wealthy land and slave owner. He died January 15, 1861.

John Gentry

s/o Benajah III – who is the s/o Nicholas II – who is the s/o Nicholas Gentry I
Born in Albemarle Co., VA about 1790; married a Miss Thurman and settled on a farm near Crozet in the western part of the county, where he lived until he died in 1845. His descendants still own and live on this farm. He was a soldier in the War of 1812.