

Chapter 5 Drusilla Ann Humphrey

Helen Price Humphrey has in her possession (8/2001), a white leather bible, and published in 1944 with a family history page she stated was completed by Jay Lee Humphrey (1881-1964) sometime before his death. This page records the parents of John Humphrey as John Humphrey and Drusilla Ann Gardner. This page also records the grandparents of John Humphrey as John Hill Humphrey and Drusilla Gardner, probable entry duplication.

Martha Simpson Humphrey also recalls a baby book for her son, Hal Humphrey, Jr., about 1950, with similar entries by Jay Lee Humphrey, Sr.

After their family research in the 1980s, Martha Simpson Humphrey and Virginia Hamilton Humphrey agreed on the likelihood of John Humphrey being of illegitimate birth.

Nannie Wetherington Humphrey recalls her mother, Letha Moore Wetherington (1890-1958), stating John Humphrey was illegitimate and the mother lived on a farm near Cove City as a young girl next door to the father of her child.

The NC Archives microfilm record, Craven County Bastardy Bonds 1820 - 1878, has a folder dated 1848 - 1849, with several documents naming Drusilla Ann Humphrey. An examination document dated November 20, 1848 states that Drusilla had a male child born April 1, 1847. This date is the accepted, recorded date of birth for John Humphrey. Drusilla signed the document with her mark, as she could not write her name. Hiram Humphrey (father) was also subpoenaed. Samuel Biddle and William Wadsworth, both Justices of the Peace, signed the document. They both appear in the 1860 census as wealthy Craven County landowners in or around the Cove City - Ft. Barnwell area.¹

Drusilla is referenced in several of the documents as Drusilla, Drusilla Ann, Ann and Priscilla. There is also a second bond referring to Drusilla Ann Humphrey and David Jackson with a female child born September 28, 1848.² This bond is also listed in an index of North Carolina Bastardy Bonds, however Drusilla's first child was omitted from that index, probably due to the jumbled nature of the original microfilm record.³

The actual bond for the male child of Drusilla Ann Humphrey born on April 1, 1847 is charged against Johnson H. Bryan of Craven County.⁴ His bondsmen, Abner N. Arman and Graves Fonville also signed the document on March 14th, 1848.

There is a second bond charged to David Jackson for a female child born to Drusilla Humphrey on September 28, 1848 and was litigated in April-June 1849.⁵ This child may possibly be Dinah, age 2, listed with Brazella Murphrey and a John, age 3, in the 1850 census.

There is a third bond charged to Johnson H. Bryan for a female child born to Emeline 'Emma' Williams in September 1849.⁶ Emma attended county school with Bryan Johnson in 1841 along with Jesse and William Humphrey.⁷

This record reveals John Humphrey was likely the son of Drusilla Ann Humphrey and Johnson H. Bryan. The family bible entries by Jay Lee Humphrey may be a 'sanitized' version of the original facts. The elusive Drusilla may be the Brazella Murphrey in the 1850 census. In 1860, John Humphrey appears to be an orphan in the home of Matilda Morris, and no records on Drusilla after 1849 have been found to date.

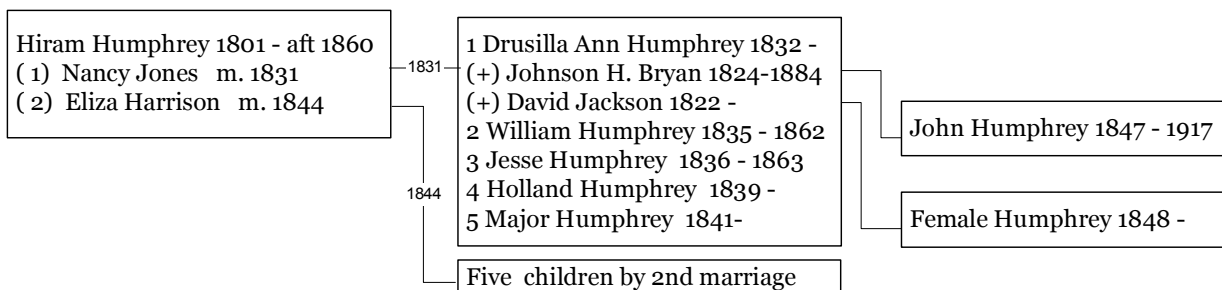


Figure 5 *Drusilla Humphrey Family Tree*

Abner Armanic A bondsman signing the 1848 bond on behalf of Johnson Bryan. In the 1850 census, Abner was a merchant in New Bern, born in the West Indies.⁸

Samuel S. Biddle (1811-1872) Justice of the Peace signed the 1848 court examination of Drusilla Ann Humphrey. He is buried in the Biddle Cemetery near Ft. Barnwell, NC.⁹ He married Mary Bryan (1819 – 1843), daughter of General J.O.K. Williams. Mary is buried in the Biddle Cemetery near Ft. Barnwell.¹⁰

Elizabeth J. Rhem (1839 – 1900). Second wife of Johnson H. Bryan. Buried in the Russell Cemetery on Core Creek Landing Road near Ft. Barnwell, NC. Also buried with Elizabeth are son George H. Bryan, and daughter, Susan Bryan Hartley.

Jane B. Lane Bryan (1823–1867) Jane married Johnson Bryan in 1849. She died in 1867 and is buried in the Lane Family Cemetery near Fort Barnwell, NC.¹¹ She was the daughter of Capt. John T. Lane.

Johnson H. Bryan (Jr.) (1824-1884) lived near Cove City. Johnson H. Bryan was the son of Johnson Bryan, Sr. (1788-1856) and executor of his father's sizeable estate.¹² His mother, Elizabeth Bryan (1789-1831), maiden name also Bryan, married Johnson Bryan, Sr. in 1817.¹³ Johnson H. Bryan died intestate in 1884¹⁴ and was buried in the Quinn Cemetery on SR 1253 near Cove City, NC. ¹⁵ Johnson should not to be confused with John H. Bryan, a prominent New Bern lawyer.

Johnson H. Bryan, Sr. (1788 – 1856) lived near Cove City, NC. He is buried in the Quinn Cemetery on SR1253 near Cove City along with his wife Elizabeth Bryan (maiden name Bryan) and son, Johnson H. Bryan. Several other family members are also buried at this location. In 1850, Johnson Bryan lived with his son Richard.¹⁶ The Bryan family was prominent in the Wintergreen area. Johnson Bryan's estate was sizeable and considerable detail can be found in the estate record.

Graves Fonville A bondsman signing the 1848 bond on behalf of Johnson Bryan. He appears in the 1840 Craven census, age 30-40, living on the south side of the Neuse River, a slave owner holding 19 slaves.¹⁷

Drusilla Ann Humphrey The Drusilla Ann Gardner Humphrey named in the bible entry by Jay L. Humphrey could not be located in Craven County records. There are no marriage records in Craven County naming a Gardner – Humphrey marriage. There are no census records revealing a Gardner–Humphrey family unit in Craven County or surrounding counties. No cemetery records have been found relating to this relationship. Drusilla Ann Humphrey has been found in only county court records, and these records reveal her maiden name as Humphrey not Gardner.¹⁸ The record also indicates she was illiterate.

Hiram Humphrey (1801, died after 1860) Hiram Humphrey appears in the court record as being summoned for testimony in the Drusilla Humphrey - Johnson Bryan case. Hiram is not listed in the 1830 census. Hiram is listed in the 1840 census living on the south side of the Neuse River, in the Core Creek area.¹⁹ His neighbor in 1840 is Johnson Bryan, Sr. In 1840, Hiram was 30-40 years old with a household consisting of 1 female 30-40, 1 female under 5, 2 males, ages 10-20 and 5 slaves. In 1831, Hiram married Nancy Jones in Craven County. In 1844, Hiram married (2nd) Eliza Harrison.²⁰ In the 1850 census, Hiram Humphrey was a farmer, age 49. Two of his sons, Jesse and William Humphrey are also listed in the 1850 census.²¹ He is listed also in the 1860 census living in the 9th Township.²² The two sons, Jesse and William, attended school in 1841 in the same school district with Johnson H. Bryan and Emeline Williams.²³ There is not a record of a female Humphrey attending school with this group. There are no estate records, cemetery records, or land transactions for Hiram Humphrey in Craven County. In 1850, there was a Holland Humphrey, age 11, residing in the household of Hiram Humphrey. Therefore Holland Humphrey was probably the 1840 Craven census listing and Drusilla Humphrey was not listed in the 1840 census. Hiram and Nancy's marriage date of 1831 is consistent with the possibility of a daughter, Drusilla, being of childbearing age by 1847.

Lewis Humphrey (1775? – 183?) Lewis enters the Craven County records in 1817 with his marriage to Nancy Burke. Lewis Humphrey is listed in the 1820 Craven census, and 1830 Craven census records reveal 6 others in the household.

Nancy Humphrey (1780 – after 1850) Nancy, widow of Lewis Humphrey, was listed in the 1850 census as a solitary head of household.²⁴ The order of census

enumeration places her home between Brazella Murphrey and Elisha Arnold (grandfather to Julia Arnold Humphrey, wife of John Humphrey).

Matilda Morris (1801- after 1860) Matilda is listed as female head of household in the 1860 census. She owned \$1,000 in real estate and had personal property valued at \$11,200.²⁵ John Humphrey is listed in the household as age 13. Matilda was the widow of Thomas Morris, d. 1843. Thomas Morris is listed in the 1840 Craven census and was listed with a female in the household of age 40-50 but no children.²⁶ The 1843 will of Thomas Morris left his estate to Matilda for the remainder of her life, to be sold after her death and dispersed among heirs: his nephew, Lewis M. Loftin, his sister Sally Morris Heath, wife of Edward Heath, and his niece Mary Hill, wife of Simon Hill, and friends Jeremiah Fonville, John T. Lane, and John Harris.²⁷

Brazella Murphrey (1821-) - The 1850 Craven County census lists a Brazella Murphrey, illiterate, a possible name permutation of Drusilla²⁸ or may be a correct listing as there is a old testament biblical name, Barzillai. Brazella is listed as age 29, illiterate, a child, John, age 3, child, Dinah, age 2, in the household of Joseph Murphrey, age 34. The children's ages are consistent with the dates on the court bonds for Drusilla Humphrey. Furthermore, Brazella and the family lived in the neighborhood with Nancy Humphrey, Elisha Arnold, Johnson H. Bryan, and the Lane family.²⁹ Later county census and cemetery records do not place Drusilla or Brazella.

William B. Wadsworth (1809 -) Justice of the Peace, signed the 1848 court examination of Drusilla Ann Humphrey. He is listed in the 1850 census living in the Ft. Barnwell area.³⁰ He was married to Mary G. Harris, daughter of Enoch Harris, and Mary is buried in the Lane Cemetery near Ft. Barnwell, NC.³¹

Leonard White In 1860, Leonard is listed as a farmer, age 45, in the household of Matilda Morris.³² Winifred was his wife, and children were Frederick, Benajah, Reuben, and Nancy. In 1850, this White family is listed in the Lenoir county census.³³ They appear to have moved into Craven County before 1860. It is not known if John Humphrey was a dependent of Leonard White or Matilda Morris. Reuben and Frank White were long time residents of Cove City and are buried in the area.³⁴

State of North Carolina }
 Craven County }

To Any lawful officer

Whereas, upon the examination of Drusilla Ann Humphrey, this day taken on oath before us, it appears that she has been delivered of a child, which child is a bastard and was born on the first day of April 1847. And may be come chargeable to the said County: And the said Drusilla Ann Humphrey hath confessed that Johnson & Bryan, of the said County, did begot the said child, and hath charged him with the same: These are therefore to command you to apprehend the said Johnson & Bryan and bring him before us, or any two Justices of the Peace, for said County, to answer the said charge. Given under our hands and seals, this 30th day of January A.D. 1848

W. W. Adams J.P.

Santhia Ann Biddle J.P.

Figure 6 Court Examination of Drusilla Humphrey

Photocopy of Craven County Record for the examination by the Court of Drusilla Ann Humphrey, 1848, identifying a male child born in 1847. Transcription of text follows.

Microfilm G.028.2031213 Frame 1224.

*Transcriptions of the Court Bonds***STATE of NORTH CAROLINA
CRAVEN COUNTY**

Whereas upon the examination of **Drusilla Humphrey**, this day taken an oath before us, it appears that she has been delivered of a child, which child is a bastard, and may become chargeable to the Said County; And the Said Drusilla Humphrey hath confessed that **David Jackson**, of the County aforesaid, did beget the Said child, and hath charged him with the Same. These are therefore to command you to apprehend the Said **David Jackson** and bring him before us, or any two Justices of the Peace, for Said County, to answer the Said charge. Give under our hands and Seals, this 16th day of April AD 1849.

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| William B. Wadsworth | J P |
| Samuel S. Biddle | J P |

Microfilm G.028.2031213 Frame 1217

CRAVEN COUNTY

Know all men by these presents that We **David Jackson, Jesse McCoy** are held and firmly bound unto the State of North Carolina in the just and full sum of One hundred pounds, to payment whereof well and truly to be made, to the said State, we bind ourselves and respective heirs, executors and administrators, jointly and severally, firmly by these presents.

Sealed with our Seals, and dated this 12th day of June. 1849

The conditions of the above obligation is such, that whereas the above bounden **David Jackson** is charged with begotten a bastard female child upon the body of **Ann Humphrey** a single woman, now if the said **David Jackson** his executors or administrators shall well and truly perform such order as the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions of Craven County, shall make respecting the maintenance of such child and indemnify the parish of said County, from all charges for the maintenance of said child, then the above obligation of said child, then the above obligation to be null and void.

Signed, sealed and delivered
In presence of
Signatures of Court Officers

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|---------------|------|
| David Jackson | SEAL |
| Jesse McCoy | SEAL |

Microfilm G.028.2031213 Frame 1221

Endnotes Chapter 5 Drusilla Humphrey

- ¹ Craven County Bastardy Bonds 1820-1878. NC Archives Microfilm G.028.2031213 Frame 1224.
 - ² Craven County Bastardy Bonds 1820-1878. Microfilm frame 1213. Craven County Library.
 - ³ North Carolina Bastardy Bonds. Camin. 1990. RNC 929.3 C. Craven County Library.
 - ⁴ Craven County Bastardy Bonds 1820-1878. Microfilm frame 1228. Craven County Library.
 - ⁵ Craven County Bastardy Bonds 1820-1878. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁶ Craven County Bastardy Bonds 1820-1878. Microfilm. . Craven County Library.
 - ⁷ 1841 Craven County School List. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁸ 1850 Craven County Census. Page 300A. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁹ Craven County, North Carolina Cemeteries, Volume 2, p. 221. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁰ Craven County, North Carolina Cemeteries, Volume 2 , p. 221. Craven County Library.
 - ¹¹ Craven County, North Carolina Cemeteries, Volume 2, p. 361. Craven County Library.
 - ¹² Craven County Estate Records. Johnson Bryan, d. 1856. Microfilm, Craven Co. Library.
 - ¹³ Craven County Marriage Bonds 1780 – 1867. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁴ Craven County Estate Records. Johnson H. Bryan d. 1884. Microfilm.
 - ¹⁵ Craven County, North Carolina Cemeteries, Volume 2. P. 286. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁶ 1850 Federal Census Craven County, NC. Page 327A. EN 973. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁷ 1840 Craven County Census, Page 77. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁸ Craven County Bastardy Bonds 1820-1878. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁹ 1840 Federal Census Craven County, NC. Page 082. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁰ Craven County Marriage Bonds 1780-1857. Craven County Library.
 - ²¹ 1850 Federal Census Craven County, NC. EN 1723. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²² 1860 Federal Census Craven County, NC. EN477. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²³ 1841 School Records, Craven County, NC. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁴ 1850 Federal Census Craven County, NC. Page 327B. EN 982. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁵ 1860 Federal Census Craven County, NC. EN 404. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁶ 1840 Federal Census Craven County, NC. Page 82. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁷ Craven County Wills, Book D, p. 73. Microfilm Roll 248. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁸ 1850 Federal Census Craven County, NC. Page 327B. EN 981. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁹ 1850 Federal Census Craven County, NC. Pages 327A – 329A. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁰ 1850 Federal Census Craven County, NC. Page 327B. EN 977. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ³¹ Craven County, North Carolina Cemeteries, Volume 2, p. 362. Craven County Library.
 - ³² 1860 Craven County Census. EN 404. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ³³ 1850 Lenoir County Census. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁴ Craven County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 2. Craven County Library.
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