

Chapter 16 The Johnson Bryan Family

Johnson H. Bryan was the son of Johnson H. Bryan, Sr and Elizabeth Bryan. The Bryan family lived in the Core Creek area of Craven County. The Bryan family cemetery is in the Wintergreen area near Cove City and in later years Johnson Bryan owned property in the lower Core Creek area near Hickory Grove.

George Bryan, in his will of 1815, leaves property to his four sons, Frederick, George, John, and Johnson Bryan, Sr. A daughter, Mosely is also named. Part of the George Bryan estate was land received after the death of his brother, Joseph Bryan.¹

George Bryan also appears in the 1790 Craven census, listed with 4 males under 16, and 4 females in the household.²

Figure 78
George Bryan House

The George Bryan house circa 1810-1820 in the Third Township. Several turpentine kiln beds or 'tarkle beds' on the Bryan farm are evidence of turpentine production.



Johnson H. Bryan, Sr. was born on February 14, 1788 and died on July 12, 1856 in Craven County.³ Johnson married Elizabeth Bryan (maiden name Bryan) on October 14, 1817 in Craven County.⁴ Elizabeth was born on April 10, 1789 and died on April 6, 1831 in Craven County.⁵ Johnson and Elizabeth Bryan are buried in the Quinn Cemetery on Quinn Road near Wintergreen.

Johnson Bryan, Sr. appears in the 1820 Craven census listed with a male and 2 females in the household.⁶ In the 1830 Craven census, Johnson is listed with 3 dependent males, 2 females and 26 slaves.⁷ In 1840, Johnson is listed in the Craven census with two dependent males, and 1 female.⁸ In the 1850 Craven Census, Johnson is listed as a farmer, his son Richard lives in the household, and Johnson was also the owner of 27 slaves.⁹

Overview of Johnson H. Bryan Family

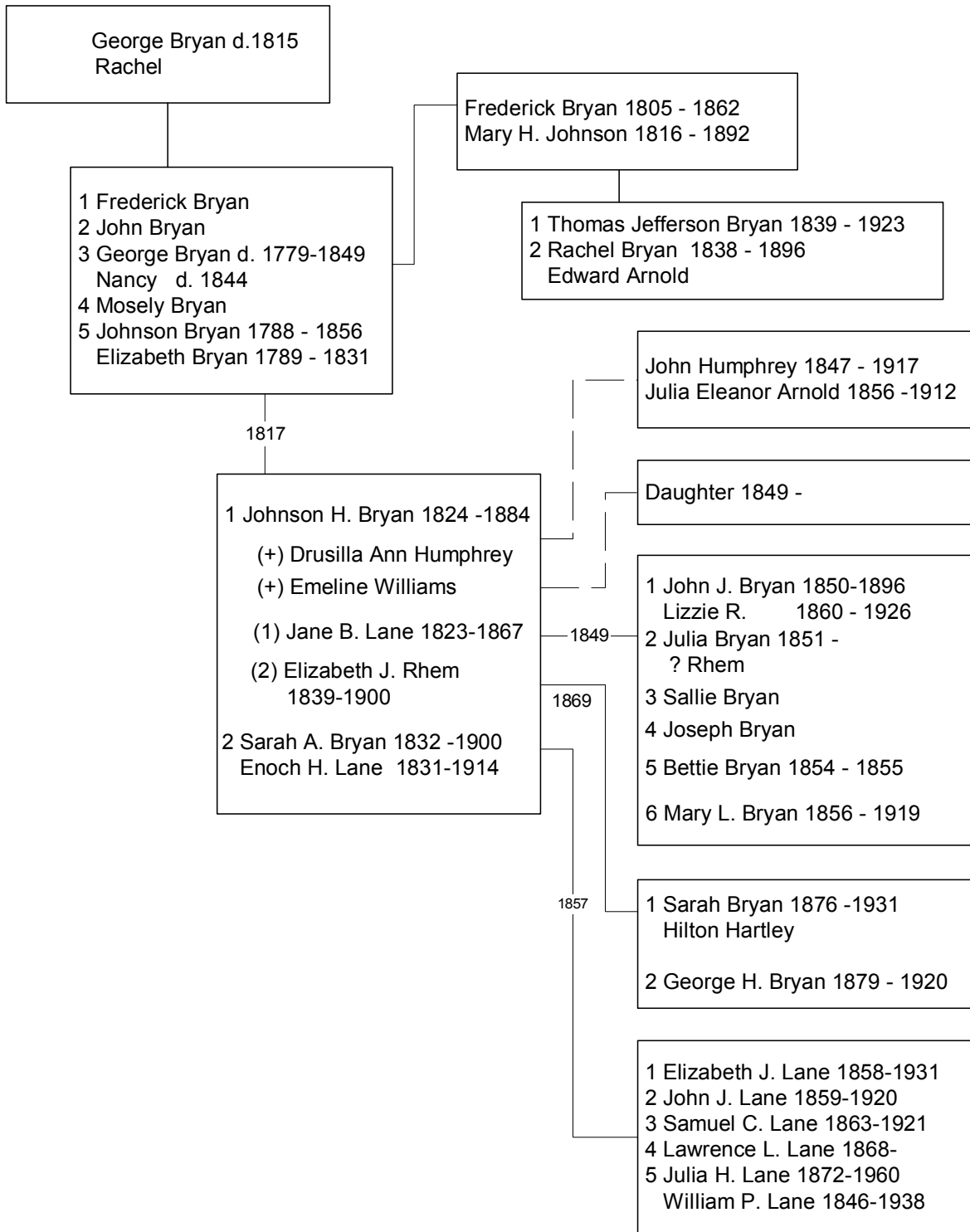


Figure 79 Overview of Johnson H. Bryan Family

Johnson Bryan, Sr died intestate in 1856 and his son, Johnson H. Bryan, was the executor of the estate. One inventory in the estate papers lists the following property¹⁰:

34 negroes	1 yoke of oxen	lot of sweet potatoes
21 head of cattle	set of blacksmith tools	bee hives
17 stacks of fodder	1 wagon	1 hand mill
8 geese	1 buggy and harness	farming utensils
6 horses	2 carts	40 shoats
1 mule	1 saddle	1 corn sheller
2 banks of slips	30 bushels of peas	43 fat hogs
125 barrels of corn	1 grind stone	4 sows and pigs
household furniture	kitchen furniture	

In the probate papers, the estate was valued at \$30,000. Receiving funds from the estate were: Sally Bryan Lane, wife of Enoch Lane, Elizabeth J. Pearce, Richard J. Bryan, and Johnson H. Bryan.

The children of Johnson H. Bryan, Sr. and Elizabeth Bryan were: ¹¹

A. Richard J. Bryan

B. Sarah A. Bryan Lane

C. Elizabeth J. Pearce

D. Johnson H. Bryan

A. **Richard J. Bryan** (1828-) appears in the 1850 Craven census in the household of his father, a widower.¹²

B. **Sarah A. Bryan** (1832- 1900) appears in the 1850 Craven census in the household of Elizabeth Pearce in New Bern.¹³ Sarah A. Bryan was born on August 21, 1832 and died on July 4, 1900 in Craven County.¹⁴ Sarah married Enoch H. Lane on January 9, 1857 in Craven County.¹⁵ The children of Sarah and Enoch Lane were Elizabeth J., John J., Samuel C., Lawrence L., and Julia H. Lane.¹⁶ Sarah and Enoch Lane are buried in the Harris-Lane cemetery near Fort Barnwell, NC.¹⁷

C. **Elizabeth J. Pearce** – no information.

D. **Johnson H. Bryan** (1824-1884) was born on May 27, 1824 and died on September 8, 1884 in Craven County.¹⁸ He is listed in the 1840 Craven census in the headcount of the household of his father Johnson Bryan.¹⁹ He appears by name, in an 1841 Craven County list of school children for District No. 3. John

Harris submitted this list to the school board. John Harris was a relative of John T. Lane by marriage and is also buried in the Lane-Harris Cemetery. In 1842, John T. Lane was superintendent of the school board, which maintained over 50 school districts in the county. Among the 52 children on the school list were: Johnson Bryan, Richard Bryan, George Bryan, William Humphrey, Jesse Humphrey, and Emma Williams.²⁰

Johnson H. Bryan appears in Craven County court records in 1848, in the examination of an unwed mother, Drusilla Ann Humphrey. Johnson Bryan executed a bastardy bond with two bondsmen and an initial support payment of \$200 was paid. The unnamed male child was born on April 1, 1847 the case was litigated in 1848. The sex, birth date, and mother's maiden name correspond to a match for John Humphrey.²¹

Johnson H. Bryan appears again in Craven County court records in 1849 in a bastardy case for a female child born in 1848 involving Emeline Williams, a former schoolmate in 1841.²²

Johnson Bryan married Jane B. Lane on January 23, 1849 in Craven County.²³ Jane B. Lane, the daughter of John T. Lane, was born on September 26, 1823 and died on June 5, 1867 in Craven County.²⁴

See Chapter 5, Drusilla Ann Humphrey.


The children of Johnson H. Bryan and Jane B. Lane were^{25, 26} :

1. John J. Bryan 1850-1896
2. Julia Bryan Rhem 1851-
3. Sallie Bryan (died in infancy)
4. Joseph Bryan (died in infancy)
5. Bettie Bryan 1854 -1855
6. Mary L. Bryan 1856 – 1919

Johnson Bryan, Jr purchased the Washington Hotel in New Bern in 1856.²⁷ An advertisement informing the public in the change of ownership appeared in the New Bern paper, *The Union* in July 1856.²⁸ The wealthy farmer turned politician and was elected as representative to the NC State Legislature in 1858.²⁹ A junior politician, he successfully obtained a charter for a bank in New Bern during his tenure in office.³⁰

Figure 80 Washington Hotel Advertisement, 1856

Washington Hotel.

 THE subscriber respectfully informs the numerous patrons of the above Hotel, that he has purchased the same and that he hopes a generous public will continue the support hitherto extended to the former Proprietor, Gen. Cutler. He hopes that a careful attention to the comfort of his

GUESTS.

will give ample satisfaction to the most fastidious.

HIS TABLE

Is now, and will be supplied with the choicest luxuries the market affords.

HIS STABLES

are under the management of a careful Hostler, and he feels safe in saying, that they are inferior to none in the State.

The whole Establishment is under his personal supervision. Travellers are requested to give him a call and see for themselves.

JOHNSON H. BRYAN,
Newbern, June 11th, 1856. 29 1y.

In the 1860 Craven County census, Johnson Bryan and family are listed living in New Bern (at the Washington Hotel). Listed also were wife Jane, son John, and daughters Julia and Mary. Johnson's real estate is listed as \$7,000 and along with a personal estate of \$25,000.³¹

Sadly, there are no known photographs surviving of the Washington Hotel. One of the oldest known New Bern photographs, is an c. 1861 photo of the ruins of the Craven County court house which burned in 1861.³² The courthouse was located in the middle of Broad Street at the intersection of Middle Street in the vicinity of the Washington Hotel. The photo of the ruins also shows the town market, located behind the courthouse. The hotel was to the right of the town market. Fortunately, the fire was contained and the Washington Hotel was undamaged.



Figure 81 Ruins of the Craven County Courthouse, c. 1861

In March 1862, invading Union forces from the east over the Trent River captured the town of New Bern. The town was largely undamaged, and many residents fled the advancing Union troops. In the retreat the Washington Hotel was burned.³³

Johnson H. Bryan does not appear to have served in the Civil War. A John H. Bryan appears in the Craven County Roll of Honor, but this Bryan died in the war.³⁴ The Civil War seems to have ended his political career, as after the war Johnson's occupation is listed as farmer, living in the 9th township in 1870 and 1880.³⁵

Like many of the residents of Craven County, Johnson Bryan and family likely became refugees elsewhere during the war. After the war, the family returned to the area and in 1867, Johnson's wife Jane Lane Bryan died and was buried in the Harris-Lane cemetery near Fort Barnwell.³⁶

On May 6, 1868 Johnson Bryan was declared bankrupt by the Federal District Court.³⁷

After the death of Jane, Johnson Bryan married Elizabeth J. Rhem on September 8, 1869 in Craven County.³⁸ Elizabeth J. Rhem, the daughter of Edward H. Rhem

and Mary Rhem, was born on January 21, 1839 and died on April 24, 1900 and is buried in the Russell cemetery near Core Creek Landing and Fort Barnwell.³⁹

The children of Johnson H. Bryan and Elizabeth J. Rhem were:

1. **Sarah Bryan** was born on March 11, 1876 and died on December 13, 1931. Sarah Bryan married Hilton Hartley and is buried in the Russell Cemetery.⁴⁰
2. **George H. Bryan** was born on June 12, 1879 and died on June 12, 1920. George Bryan is buried in the Russell Cemetery.⁴¹

Johnson Bryan and wife Elizabeth are listed in the 1870 Craven census in the 9th Township. In the 1880 Craven census, Johnson and Elizabeth are listed along with daughters, Mary and Sarah and sons, John and George. In the household were John Bryan, a brother, and Bettie Bryan, the wife of son John J. Bryan.⁴²

Johnson H. Bryan died intestate in 1881 and the estate was not settled until 1891. His daughter, Mary L. Bryan was the executor of the estate, and there was an apparent disagreement over the property. Johnson's second wife, Elizabeth, was granted some property in the settlement, but her minor children, Sarah and George, were made guardians of R. A. Russell. The estate papers also locate some of the property as being adjacent to Deep Bottom Branch and adjoining the property of Enoch H. Lane, Johnson's brother-in-law.⁴³

Many of Johnson H. Bryan papers from (dated 1848-1882) are included in the collection of Charles Laban Abernethy in the Joyner Library at East Carolina University.⁴⁴

Johnson H. Bryan is buried in the Quinn Cemetery near Wintergreen along with members of the Bryan family.⁴⁵ Johnson's 1st wife (Jane Lane) and family are buried in the Harris-Lane cemetery and Johnson's 2nd wife (Elizabeth) and family are buried in the Russell Cemetery.⁴⁶

John J. Bryan, son by Jane B. Lane, married Lizzie Russell. John died about 1897 and left one child, Jane L. Bryan, with M. D. Lane as guardian. Mary L. Bryan, daughter by Jane B. Lane, never married. George H. Bryan, son by Elizabeth J. Rhem, married Sarah Rowe.⁴⁷

Endnotes Chapter 16 The Johnson Bryan Family

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- ¹ Craven County Wills. George Bryan 1815. Book C Page 109. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ² 1790 Craven County Census. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ³ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ⁴ Craven County Marriage Index 1780-1867. Craven County Library.
 - ⁵ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ⁶ 1820 Craven County Census. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁷ 1830 Craven County Census. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁸ 1840 Craven County Census. Page 82. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁹ 1850 Craven County Census. Schedule 1 Page 327A. Schedule 2. Page 37. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁰ Craven County Estate Records. Johnson Bryan 1856. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹¹ Ibid.
 - ¹² 1850 Craven County Census. Page 327A. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹³ 1850 Craven County Census. Page 302A. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁴ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁵ Craven County Marriage Index 1780-1867. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁶ 1870 Craven County Census. 9th Township. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁷ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁸ Ibid.
 - ¹⁹ 1840 Craven County Census. Page 82. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁰ Craven County 1841 School List. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²¹ Craven County Bastardy Bonds. 1820 –1878. Folder 1858 – 1860. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²² Ibid.
 - ²³ Craven County Marriage Index 1780-1867. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁴ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁵ Ibid.
 - ²⁶ 1870 Craven County Census. 9th Township. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁷ Craven County Deeds. 1858. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁸ The Union. New Bern, NC. July 16, 1856. Page 3. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁹ A History of New Bern and Craven County. Watson. 1987. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁰ Ibid.
 - ³¹ 1860 Craven County Census. City of New Bern. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ³² A New Bern Album. John Green III. 1985. Craven County Library.
 - ³³ Ibid.
 - ³⁴ The Heritage of Craven County. Volume I. 1984. Article L43. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁵ Craven County Census 1870 and 1880. 9th Township. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁶ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁷ C. L. Abernethy Collection. No. 98-2. Original Papers. 4th Floor Joyner Library. ECU. Greenville, NC.
 - ³⁸ Craven County Census 1870. 9th Township. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁹ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ⁴⁰ Ibid.
 - ⁴¹ Ibid.
 - ⁴² Craven County Census 1880. 9th Township. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁴³ Craven County Estate Records. Johnson Bryan. 1891. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁴⁴ C. L. Abernethy Collection. No. 98-2. Original Papers. 4th Floor Joyner Library. ECU. Greenville, NC.
 - ⁴⁵ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ⁴⁶ Ibid.
 - ⁴⁷ C. L. Abernethy Collection. No. 98-2. Original Papers. 4th Floor Joyner Library. ECU. Greenville, NC.
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