

John Wright III (aka John Wright Jr.)

Summary by Michelle Fansler written 2 June 2019 using source:

Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine Vol. 4 No. 8 January, 1923
"The Washington-Wright Connection and Some Descendants of Major Francis and Anne (Washington) Wright" by Charles Arthur Hoppin
https://books.google.com/books?id=BbNYAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=thumbnail&q=&f=false

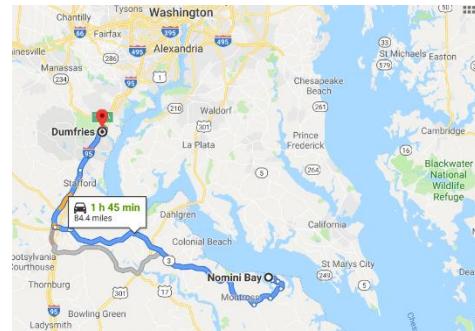
John Wright III (1728-1789, 61 years)

Childhood:

According to the article written in the link above John Wright III, "gentleman, surveyor and captain, doubtless was born upon his grandfather's thousand-acre estate of Leesylvania between Powell's run and Neapsco creek, near the Potomac river in Prince William county, about the time (1731) that county was formed from Stafford County. This was while his grandfather, who had come to Leesylvania about eight or nine years before from the "great house" in Westmoreland county, was living thereon with all his family. As this grandfather and his wife, Dorothy, died but a few years after the birth of this grandson, it may be true that the latter did not well remember either of these grandparents. That he was educated to follow the practice of law and to maintain the ascendancy of the family in public office is likely; but neither he nor his brothers William and James became the administrators of law from the bench, however often they figured in the functions of the courts in other capacities" (Hoppin 244).

Property:

After his Uncle Francis Wright sold his grandparents property known as Leesylvania, "he must have lived upon his father's new estate called "Pine View" near Liberty, from 1741, when the boy was aged about nine years, until after he married in 1753" at about age twenty-five (Hoppin 244). It appears that he married a neighbor girl named Ann Williams and they lived on her mother's estate, "which adjoined the Wright estate" (Hoppin 240) where John Wright III managed his mother-in-law's estate.



Character:

The "records of his life as remain in Fauquier county is that John Wright III, Gentl, was a man of independent spirit, not inclined to follow the conservative path of his judicially-minded and self-restrained fore-bears. He was adventurous; he was bold; he was outspoken – disinclined mentally at that period to judicial functions. That he was strong-headed, bent upon having his own way, and quite fearless of others and of consequences is apparent. So high-spirited a man could not be expected long to remain about where he was born, or to do as others had done before him, albeit noble, indeed was their example" He chose to go back to the "conditions in which his first American direct ancestor began, the wilderness" (Hoppin 245). "He created in a few years a new estate" and had 18 adult children! (Hoppin 245).

What the Records Show:

On 27 Nov 1752 while John Wright III's father was serving as sheriff the first of three official records show John Wright III, Gent. (~ age 24) serving as a grand juror with 20 other jurors in Prince William county, Virginia (Hoppin 246).

On 26 Feb 1753 he is listed as being ordered by the court "to view the most convenient way for a road from Beverleys Ford into the Rolling Road that leads from Hedgmans Quarter to the Marsh Bridge and report to the Court" (Hoppin 246). The third official record shows him giving the report to the court to establish a public road.

On 14 April 1755 John Wright III petitioned the court "for a servantman named Samuel Gray who was sent to the Expedition on the Ohio" but his petition was not granted by the Virginia legislature (Hoppin 248). This was during the French and Indian War (1754-1763) when Governor Dinwiddie sent Virginia troops, one of them commanded by George Washington, to secure territory between the Mississippi and Alleghanies.

Starting 30 Oct 1762 – July 1766 in Warrenton, Fauquier county, Virginia under King George III - Captain John Wright III, vs. Honour Williams and Thomas Withers. John Wright III requested the court investigate the possible embezzlement and waste of Honour Williams estate left to her and her two single daughters, Anne and Sarah after her husband's death in 1749. John Wright III contends that Honour Williams had promised a negro woman named Phillis and her offspring to her daughter, Ann Williams as a dowry to John Wright III. However, Phillis was given to Honour's daughter, Sarah and her husband George Wheatley instead. So, John Wright III requested that half the value of Phillis and the estate be given to him and Ann. John Wright III ended up becoming a witness on behalf of his mother-in-law against Thomas Withers. The case was settled without being formally tried and John Wright III resumed caring for his mother-in-law's estate.

On 29 July 1763 Fauquier County court Captain John Wright "took the usual oaths to his Majesties Person & Government and subscribed the Teste" (Hoppin 248).

On 25 April 1764 he received from his father 116 acres of land. But, John Wright III asked for the money instead. He did not reinvest the money into his own estate until eight years later. "He seems to have continued his residence, after the settlement of a lawsuit with his mother-in-law, upon the estate to which his wife was an heir" (Hoppin 245).

On 23 April 1771 at about 43 years old John Wright III was commissioned as an official surveyor for Warrenton, Fauquier county, Virginia under the authority of King George III and the President and Masters of the College of William and Mary. "His age suggests that he did not attend William and Mary College as a student of civil engineering, but gained the experience, which enabled him to qualify for the position at an examination held for or before the faculty of the college, through a practical association with surveyors in the field" (Hoppin 258). Interestingly, "[A young George Washington](#) (1732–1799) also received his surveyor's license through the college" (Wikipedia).



**WILLIAM
& MARY**
CHARTERED 1693



King George III
reigned 1760-1820

On 27 April 1772 Captain John Wright III, surveyor, purchased 292 acres in the northern (upper) half of Fauquier county from Minor Winn and wife Margaret. (Hoppin 259).

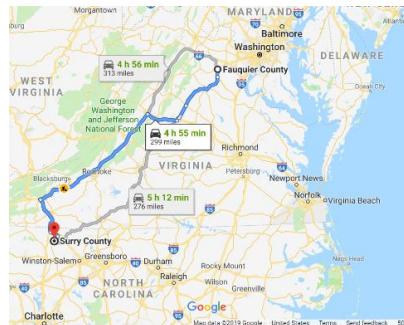
On 28 March 1774 Thomas Marshall, Gentl. (future colonel in War of the Revolution) won a suit against John Wright III for a debt and John Wright III was ordered to pay 50 pounds.

On 21 September 1774, Captain John Wright III, surveyor, sold the 292 acres in northern Fauquier county at over 100% profit! (Hoppin 260). The sale was completed on 24 Oct 1774 and it appears John Wright III paid off Thomas Marshall out of the proceeds.

Sometime in 1774 John Wright III left the Episcopal Church membership and joined the Anabaptists. His granddaughter, Nancy (Riley) Clark said, "both himself and wife were Baptists at heart" (Hoppin 260).

After finalizing the sale of land in Virginia John Wright III moved his family through "the gap in the Blue Ridge, for the long Indian trail between the ridge and the Cumberland mountains, which, by the treaty of Lancaster, had become the best and chief highway overland to the south from northern Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania" (Hoppin 261).

In February 1775 John Wright III shows up as a defendant in "A Civil Docket for the County of Surry," North Carolina but the case was dropped.



In June 1776 John Wright III's son, Thomas Wright (age 18) enlisted in Surry County, North Carolina for the North Carolina Troops for the War of the Revolution according to his pension papers (Hoppin 264). John Wright III was 48 years old in 1776.

In 1777 John Wright III enlisted as a "soldier in Smith's Co. 4th N.C. Regiment in service in that War" (Hoppin 271). Multiple descendants have registered as members of the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution:

William Richard Wright of Jackson, Mississippi member #23227

James Long Wright of New Orleans, Louisiana member #26283

Thomas Leslie Riley of Ghent, Kentucky member #561225

Miss Vessie Riley of Greensburg, Indiana member #63470, copy of the 1849 diary of John Wright's granddaughter, Nancy (Riley) Clark

Mrs. Margaret Riley Martin member #158199

An entry in Nancy Riley Clark's journal reads, "While serving in the war he took a violent cold that settled on his lungs and eventually caused his death" (Hoppin 272).

Tax records show John Wright III had "five separate tracts of land by 1779" for a total of 1,980 acres at a value of 600 pounds plus four horses and two slaves under forty (Hoppin 266).

On 3 April 1780 the state of North Carolina issued John Wright III a grant for "a tract of land containing 640 acres lying and being in our County of Surry on a branch of Hunting Creek" (Hoppin 267).

After the War of the Revolution it appears John Wright III resumed his duties as a surveyor as on 11 August 1785 he was ordered by the Court to "mark out a Road the nearest and best Way from James Sanders's on Hunting Creek to the yellow Bank ford on the Yadkin River near Richmond" (Hoppin 272)

John Wright III's will shows all 18 of his adult children: Lezebeth Arnold, Nancy Elliott, Agatha Elsbury, Amelia Martain, Lucrecia Petty, Frances Reiley, Thomas Wright, Daniel Wright, John Wright, Sally Wright, William Wright, James Wright, Williams Wright, Rosey Wright, Patsy Wright, Sukky Wright, Peggy Wright, Polley Wright (Hoppin 273).

On 30 October 1789 at about age 60-61 John Wright III died according to the family Bible, which is in his son, Thomas Wright's Pension records. His wife, Ann Williams Wright lived 36 more years and passed away at age 90 in 1825.



President George Washington served as
President 1789-1797
(John Wright III's 2nd cousin 1x removed)