

# The Birth Date of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman (1729/1730 – 1834/1835)

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by

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A specific, documented birth date for **John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman** (wife: **Elizabeth Morgan**) has never been discovered; however, several documented events enable us to approximate a reasonably accurate, calculated date for this event.

Note: No credibility whatsoever should be given to the erroneous and discredited birth date of 1718 which appears for him in many family trees and other documents. This date has been proven by documented records to have no basis in fact and to be contradictory to many confirmed records..

While the stated purpose of this current document is to establish a credible date of birth for John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman which will be in agreement with all other confirmed documented records, it also includes several additional items of significant importance concerning the early history of the Vardaman/Vardeman/Vardiman family, as follows:

- (1) On page 2 it provides a confirmed ultimate time of death for William<sup>1</sup> Vardaman in Newberry County, South Carolina.
- (2) On pages 5 thru 8 it establishes the probable historical circumstance, time and route of the Vardaman family's journey from New Castle "on the Delaware" to the Blue Ridge Mountain area of then western Virginia.
- (3) On pages 8 and 9, by extension, it also establishes an approximate, credible birth date for John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman's younger brother, William, Jr.
- (4) On pages 9 thru 12 it identifies and corrects several of the shortcomings — errors, misconceptions, contradictory and misleading information — relative to early Vardaman/Vardeman/Vardiman family history contained in the two *Draper MSS* interviews with Morgan Vardeman and Rev. William H. Vardeman.

(5) On page 13 it establishes the approximate time and place of the marriage of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman to Elizabeth Morgan. Aside from the establishment of an approximate birth date for John<sup>2</sup>, this is probably the second most important item provided in this document.

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## To Begin

### Will of William<sup>1</sup> Vardaman

1. The will of **William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman** (ca 1697 - ca 1789), father of **John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman**, specifically names his four sons in the order of their birth: **John**, first; **William**, second; **Peter**, third; and **James**, the youngest, last.

It is important to note that this will includes the names of only the four sons with whom we are familiar and which appear in various documented records. This confirms that there were no additional sons in this family unless they died as children before reaching adulthood and we have no record whatsoever of any such occurrence.

**Source:** (1) I have a photocopy of the original, handwritten will of William Vardeman, dated 24 February 1783. My copy of this will was received personally, August 18, 2006, from researcher Mike Barr of Augusta, Georgia. Mike had obtained his copy of the will during a personal visit to the probate files of the Newberry County, South Carolina, Probate Court Office (date of his visit unknown).

**Source:** (2) Photocopy of an official abstract of the above original will received from the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, August 8, 1987. The contents of the will as set forth in the abstract are exactly as written in the actual copy of the original will. As provided on this official abstract of the will, it is recorded in Newberry County, SC, Will Book B. Page 382.

Note: The above will abstract also contains the information that the will was probated **March 3, 1789**, thus proving that William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman had died prior to that date – sometime between February 24, 1783 and March 3, 1789 but undoubtedly much closer to the 1789 date and possibly in 1788 or very early 1789.

**Source:** Above cited official abstract of the will of William Vardeman, Newberry County, SC, Will Book B. Page 382, which contains the probate date.

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## Records of Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church

2. The records of Holy Trinity (*Old Swede's*) Church, located in then Fort Christina, New Castle County "On the Delaware", PA, (later the city of Wilmington, DL) contains the following records:

(a) Marriage of **William Ver de Man** (*William<sup>1</sup> or "Old William" Vardeman*) and **Magdalena Petersson**, April 21st, 1720.

**Source:** (1) *Christina Congregation's Church Book from the year after Christ's Birth, 1713 for the following time till 1756*, Page 106, Record of Persons Wed in Christina Parish in the year 1720, Old Swedes Church, Wilmington, Delaware, May 1720 Church Records.

**Source:** (2) *The Records of Holy Trinity (Old Swedes') Church, Wilmington Delaware, 1713-1799*, Page 21, Willow Bend Books, Westminster, MD, 2000

Note: The erroneous and discredited date of 1718 for their son John's birth is two years prior to the above confirmed date of his parent's marriage.

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(b) **William and Magdalena Ver de Man** (*Vardeman*), Church communicants in May 1720.

**Source:** *Christina Congregation's Church Book from the year after Christ's Birth, 1713 for the following time till 1756*, Page ??, Records of Communicants by Rev. Andrew Hesselius, 1720, Old Swedes Church, Wilmington, Delaware.

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(c) **William Verdeman** (*Vardeman*) & wife **Magdalena**, child Maria, born April 1, baptized April 5, 1724. Sponsors: The pastor, Herr Magister Samuel Hesselius, Jacob Van De Wer, Maria Smith, Erasmus Stedham's Wife, Helena.

**Source:** (1) *Christina Congregation's Church Book from the year after Christ's Birth, 1713 for the following time till 1756*, Page 149, Records of Births & Baptisms by Herr Magister Samuel Hesselius, 1724, Old Swedes Church, Wilmington, Delaware.

**Source:** (2) *The Records of Holy Trinity (Old Swedes') Church, Wilmington Delaware, 1713-1799*, Page 33, Willow Bend Books, Westminster, MD, 2000.

Note: Although this latter record cites the birth date of the child Maria as April 1 (no year specified), the same as the first source above, it cites the baptismal date as March 5, which appears to be an obvious "typo" type error as the baptismal date could not precede the birth date unless the birth date is for a preceding year..

Since this baptism is listed as number 12 in the list of baptisms for the year 1724, which are listed in chronological order in the above cited book, its position between the date of the number 11 baptismal record (*March 29*) and the date of the number 13 baptismal record (*April 5*), tends to confirm the April 5 baptismal date cited in the first source above.

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(d) **William and Magdalena Ver de Man** (*Vardeman*) communicants in May 1724.

**Source:** *Christina Congregation's Church Book from the year after Christ's Birth, 1713 for the following time till 1756*, Page ??, Records of Communicants by Herr Magister Samuel Hesselius, 1724, Old Swedes Church, Wilmington, Delaware.

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(e) **William and Magdalena Werdeman** (*Vardeman*) communicants in Oct. 1724.

**Source:** *Christina Congregation's Church Book from the year after Christ's Birth, 1713 for the following time till 1756*, Page ??, Records of Communicants by Herr Magister Samuel Hesselius, 1724, Old Swedes Church, Wilmington, Delaware.

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Note: Since William and Magdalena had observed the Church baptism of the early birth of a daughter (possibly quite some time after her birth) it is not unreasonable to assume that they would have done so for any other children, especially sons, born prior to the time of their last Church visit recorded in October of 1724 and no such records are found. As a result we can logically assume that none of their sons were born until after 1724.

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The above October 1724 record is the last record of the William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman family in New Castle County, at that time part of Pennsylvania, but later, during the Revolutionary

War period, included in the area of the new state of Delaware. New Castle County was bordered on the north by Chester County, PA.

The next record that we have for William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman is in Goochland County, VA, in September 1734 on the, then, far western Virginia frontier where he purchased property on the Rivanna River on the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains. This area would later become part of Albemarle County when that county was created in 1744 from the western half of Goochland County.

**Source:** Land Records, **William Vardeman** (*William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman*) granted 200 acres adjacent to the south side of the Rivanna (*sic*) River, Goochland County, VA Virginia State Library, Land Office Patents and Grants, Patents No. 15 1732 - 1735, Vol. 1 & 2, page 296, New Land Form, p. 3

Note: The Vardaman /Vardeman/Vardiman family is believed to have made this journey from their Atlantic coast home in New Castle County "On the Delaware" (then part of Pennsylvania but later the northernmost of the three counties of the state of Delaware), to the Blue Ridge Mountain area of what was then the western frontier of Virginia, ca 1733-34. The area west of the Blue Ridge was totally unsettled until shortly before 1730 when people began crossing the shallow Potomac River from Maryland. Eager to attract settlers into this area, the Virginia government ca 1729 - 1730 instituted a program (see below) to encourage settlement in these western lands.

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## A Little History and Geography

To expedite settlement in the Blue Ridge Mountain area and the "Great Valley of Virginia" which lay beyond, the Colonial government of Virginia, in the late 1720s and early 1730s, gave large grants of land in then "western" Virginia to various individuals to be sold to and settled by families recruited from nearby Pennsylvania, Maryland and the Atlantic coastal counties which would later evolve into the state of Delaware.

Jost Hite, John Van Meter and others were among these individuals who recruited groups of settlers to migrate into the area. Historical figure, Jost Hite, recruited a band of Quakers from Chester County, PA, which he led into the Shenandoah Valley ca 1733-34. It is very probable that the Vardeman family traveled across the northern border of New Castle County into adjoining Chester County, PA, where they joined one of these parties of settlers heading to Virginia's "western" lands.

Note: It has been suggested in certain family lore that the Vardeman family from New Castle County first migrated into Chester County, Pa, where they joined a group of intrepid settlers recruited by "**Old**" **Michael Woods**, a Scotsman with a

very large extended family of his own. Woods led his group westward across southern Pennsylvania subsequently turning southward down the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Arriving at a point where several mountain passes, including today's well known **Rockfish Gap**, as well as other lesser known, then unnamed, gaps, could be accessed, the party crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains from west to east.

Note: **Rockfish Gap** is the southern terminus of the **Skyline Drive** and the **Shenandoah National Park** and the beginning of the **Blue Ridge Parkway** in Virginia. Current day Interstate Highway 64 crosses the Blue Ridge Mountains between the Virginia cities of Charlottesville (to the east) and Staunton (to the west) at **Rockfish Gap**.

The mountain pass used by the Woods party was the next navigable pass north of Rockfish Gap, and was first named for **Woods** who, legend says, was the first white man to lead a party through this pass in the mountains. Although it came to be known at that time as "**Woods Gap**", the name would later be changed to "**Jarman's Gap**" by which it is known today.

The area on the east side of the Blue Ridge Mountains at this point, then part of the western extreme of Goochland County, encompassed the site of the future city of Charlottesville and would include the home (Monticello) of Thomas Jefferson (1743 - 1826), the 3rd President of the United States,

The first part of the route traveled by the settlers would have been westward thru Pennsylvania's Chester and Lancaster Counties as they existed at that time, along existing Indian trails which would later, ca 1744, become part of the historically famed and storied "Great Philadelphia Wagon Road".

Note: Chester County was one of the three original counties, together with Philadelphia County and Bucks County, of William Penn's "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania". These three counties were created August 24, 1682. At that time Chester County included most of the very large southern half of Penn's Pennsylvania land grant of 1681 and stretched from Pennsylvania's southeastern border on the Delaware River to its western border in the Allegheny Mountains.

It remained thus until the establishment of Lancaster County, May 10, 1729. At that time Chester County was reduced in size to a much smaller eastern county with newly created Lancaster County now including the huge western area that had previously been included in Chester County and it was through then Lancaster County, as it existed at that time, that the settlers would travel as they headed westward during the 1730s and 1740s. No further change to this county situation would occur until the creation of York County on August 19, 1749, and Cumberland County, 27 January, 1750, both from the western lands of Lancaster County. There would be further changes to these counties as time passed.

This route would lead the settlers westward into the Cumberland Valley of Pennsylvania and the site of current day Chambersburg, PA, which did not exist at that time. At this point in the Cumberland Valley the travelers' route would turn south crossing into Maryland, and reaching the Potomac River at a site that would first become known as "**Watkins Ferry**" and would much later become the town of **Williamsport, MD**, founded ca 1787.

Note: Although not incorporated until 1803, settlement of the site destined to become the city of Chambersburg, PA, began ca 1734. Its growth was greatly enhanced by its location on the route of what would become known as the "Great Philadelphia Wagon Road" (ca 1744). This was the major route of that era connecting the Philadelphia area with the Shenandoah Valley area of Virginia and many other more distant inland southern locations..

**Conococheague Creek** (pronounced "Conny-co-jig" by local settlers), an important northern tributary of the Potomac River, rises in current day Adams County, PA, (originally part of Chester County and later Lancaster County) and, at first, flows westward from its source thru present day Franklin County, PA. (also then part of Chester and Lancaster County) to where it is enlarged by its juncture with Falling Spring Creek . This juncture of the two waterways is now located in the heart of the city of Chambersburg. After arriving at this site where the city of Chambersburg, PA, would later be established, the waterway turns southward and after crossing the border into Maryland, about 15 miles to the south, passes a little to the west of the current day city of Hagerstown in western Maryland, ultimately reaching the Potomac River at the site of current day Williamsport, MD. The traveler's route southward thru this area, back then, would roughly parallel the route of this stream as well as current day U.S. Route 11 and Interstate Highway 81.

Note: Settlement of the site that would later become the city of Hagerstown, MD, began ca 1739 and would be established as the city of Elizabethtown in 1762. The name would later be changed to Hagerstown in 1813.

Once across the Potomac the route would continue southward through the "**Great Valley of Virginia**" (the area between the Blue Ridge Mountain chain to the east and the Allegheny Mountains to the west). This valley, which contains the entire 156 mile course of both the North and South Forks of the Shenandoah River, is known to us today as the **Shenandoah Valley**. The Shenandoah River is a southern tributary of the Potomac River joining the Potomac at the National Historical Site of Harper's Ferry. The northernmost 16 mile portion of the River would, during the Civil War, become part of the extreme easternmost arm of the state of West Virginia. The route through the Valley would soon (ca 1744) be included as a major portion of the "Great Philadelphia Wagon Road" and would roughly parallel the route of current day Interstate 81 throughout this part of Virginia.

Documented facts include the first record that we have for our Vardeman family's arrival in Virginia at the same time, 1734, and in the exact same area, as the **Michael Woods** family. Since both the time and the place of the Vardeman family's first record in this

location coincide with the arrival of the Michael Woods party, it is not unreasonable to assume a connection of these events and to speculate that the Vardeman family was, indeed, a part of the Michael Woods group. In any event, whether with the Woods party or some other group, the circumstance of their migration to this area and the route they would have traveled would remain the same.

The Vardeman family would later reside in the nearby Rockfish Valley area which was part of Goochland County at the time of the Vardaman family's arrival in 1734. Later, in 1744, this area became part of newly created Albemarle County. It would subsequently be included in Amherst County when that county was created in 1761 from the southwestern portion of Albemarle County and is today located in Nelson County which was created in 1808 from the northeast half of Amherst County. However, the Vardeman family had departed this area ca 1744 to move further south in Virginia, long before these latter two counties were established.

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### **Calculated Date of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman's Birth (Lunenburg County, VA, Tithe Records)**

**3. William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman** paid three tithe records for himself and sons **John** and **William, Jr.** in Lunenburg County, VA. in each of the three years 1748, 1749, and 1750. Tithes were required to be paid by (or for) all males who had reached the age of 16.

**Source:** *Sunlight on the Southside, Lists of Tithes Lunenburg County, Virginia, 1748-1783, Compiled by Landon C. Bell*, originally published by the Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974.

1748 - page 83, (*Vardeman*. sic)  
1749 - page 100, (*Verdeman*, sic)  
1750 - page 151, (*Verdsman*, sic)  
1751 - no records available  
1752 - page 203, (*Verdeman*, sic)  
1753 - no records available

Note: Lunenburg County had just been created from the northwestern portion of Brunswick County May 1, 1746.

In 1752 the tithe list, as it appears in the above cited book, contains only the names of *Wm.*, *Robt.* and *Wm, Jr.*, *Verdeman*. John is not present. The name "Robt." is an abstracting error. A review of a copy of the actual tithe page (which I have a copy of) clearly shows the name as "Peter", whom we know to be William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman's third son. In addition, *Wm., Jr.* is not included in his father's household, as in previous years, but is listed separately indicating that he has established his own household and has presumably married.

Also note that the northwestern area of then Lunenburg County – all of the territory of Lunenburg north of the Staunton (Roanoke) River where the Vardeman family's homesteads were located – was established as Bedford County, December 13, 1753 (Source: *Wikipedia* on the Internet). Presumably, due to the close proximity of the above date to the beginning of the upcoming year, some records just reporting the year, cite 1754 as the year of Bedford County's establishment..

From the above records we can determine that William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman's two oldest sons, John<sup>2</sup> and William, Jr., had both reached the age of 16 prior to 1748 (not later than sometime in 1747). This would indicate that both were born prior to 1732. Since John is confirmed as older than his brother William, Jr., and both were born prior to 1732, it is reasonable to assume a probable gap of at least one year (and possibly more) between their births. This would result in John's birth as occurring, at the latest, before 1731 and his brother William's birth before 1732. **The net result of these determinations at this point is to place their birth dates after 1724 and by 1730 for John and after 1725 and by 1731 for William, Jr.**

These same records determine that neither John<sup>2</sup> nor William, Jr., had left their father's household to establish their own households prior to 1750. This can also be construed to indicate that neither had married by this date. Documented records for the Thomas Morgan family confirm that this conclusion is, in fact, absolutely correct for the marriage of his daughter, Elizabeth, to John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman (see the **Thomas Morgan** record later in this document on page 13).

Unfortunately, these records do not help us to determine for certain where John<sup>2</sup> and his brother William, Jr. were born. The possibility exists that their place of birth may well have been in New Castle County prior to the time of the family's departure, for which we do not have a specific date. However, the family could have departed at any time after the last documented record that we have for them in New Castle County (October 1724). A move from New Castle County to neighboring Chester County, PA, could have occurred any time between 1724 and ca 1732, with the family temporarily settling for a time in Chester or Lancaster County before joining with a group of settlers to travel to western Virginia. In this case the birth of both John<sup>2</sup> and William, Jr., may have been in either Chester or Lancaster County.

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### **Draper MSS Interview with Rev. William H. Vardeman**

4. Included in *Vol. 23S (pages 143 - 160)* of the *Draper MSS* is the content of an interview by Lyman C. Draper on **May 25 - 26, 1868**, with **Rev. William H. Vardeman** (1816 - 1891), son of Rev. Jeremiah Vardeman and grandson of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman, in which Rev. Vardeman furnishes valuable information related to his grandfather's death.

The pertinent passage from this interview contained on pages 144 and 145 is as follows:

*"The original Vardeman came from Sweden to America 260 years ago & married a Welch lady — one of their sons settled in Virginia & he had a large family, one of whom was John, the father of Rev. Jeremiah Vardeman. This John Vardeman died on Gravois Creek, St. Louis County, Mo, perhaps about 1835, aged 104. He was buried at Captain John Sappington's about 15 miles west of St. Louis."*

Note: Be aware that there are certain factual errors in the above statement.

First: The statement that the family came to America 260 years ago cannot be true and is, in fact, impossible. This figure would place the family's arrival in America ca 1608 when, in fact, available records place the calculated time of their arrival as ca 1705.

In addition, the first European settlement in South Carolina did not occur until 1670 at Albemarle Point on the west bank of the Ashley River. In 1680 this settlement was moved a short distance to the present site of the city of Charleston, South Carolina. Prior to the establishment of this settlement in 1670, there would have been no place in South Carolina for any European emigrants to have landed and settled.

Since the calculated time of arrival was about 160 years prior to the time of the Draper interview, this may be an error on Mr. Draper's part in recording what he was being told to him by Rev. Vardeman.

Second: The original emigrant, John<sup>1</sup> Vardeman did not marry a Welch lady either here in America or very, very unlikely before the family immigrated from Sweden. The original John arrived in America with his family consisting of his wife Margaret and three sons already born, presumably, in Sweden. We do not have any hint as to Margaret's origin, although the name "Margaret" has been reported to me to be a quite common Swedish name. She could have been of either Germanic or Swedish descent or possibly even of some other linguistic stock although Welsh would be one of the least likely.

Note that Elizabeth Morgan's mother, the first wife of Thomas Morgan, is reported to have been **Lettice (or Letticia) Evans** (another, very definite, Welsh surname), the daughter of **Rodger** and **Mary Evans**. This Evans family is reported to have arrived in Philadelphia, PA, ca 1695 and, as a result, their daughter Lettice would have been born in Pennsylvania and, although of Welsh descent, would not have been considered a native of Wales.

Apparently this reference to a marriage with a "Welch" lady should have been written to apply to Rev. Vardeman's grandfather, John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman, who married Elizabeth Morgan (and Morgan is certainly a Welsh name), not to his great-great-grandfather, the original emigrant, John<sup>1</sup> Vardeman. But, even in this case, while Elizabeth Morgan was most assuredly of Welsh descent, she would not have been a native of Wales having been born in America, reportedly ca 1732, most certainly in Chester County, PA, where the Thomas Morgan family is confirmed to have been living at that time.

A few Vardaman family trees include the name "Evans" as the surname of Margaret, wife of John<sup>1</sup> Vardeman, the original emigrant. This is another obvious error resulting from the confusing of information pertaining to John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman with that of his grandfather, John<sup>1</sup> Vardaman.

Also, note the statement "*...one of their sons settled in Virginia & he had a large family, one of whom was John, the father of Rev. Jeremiah Vardeman.*" Not only does this statement provide for the missing generation of William<sup>1</sup> Vardaman, father of John<sup>2</sup>, that is omitted in an earlier interview with Morgan Vardeman (see item 5 below) but also provides the information that William<sup>1</sup> had a *large* family. Since we know that there were only four sons, which would not constitute a large family in that era, this confirms that there had to be not just one or two but several daughters. This is solid support for our identification of several Vardeman women reported on family trees as wives of local men of that era and area as daughters of William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman

A very important part of the information from the Rev. W. H. Vardeman interview is the date and age of his grandfather, John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman, at the time of his death. **If John<sup>2</sup> was 104 years old at the time of his death ca 1835, his extrapolated birth date would be ca 1730.**

**Note how closely this agrees with the birth date (1725 - 1730).previously calculated for him based on the Lunenburg County, VA, tithe records.**

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### **Draper MSS Interview with Morgan Vardeman**

5. A much earlier interview by Lyman C. Draper, dated **October 17th, 1844**, with **Morgan Vardeman**, son of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman and brother of Rev. Jeremiah Vardeman, regarding early Vardeman family history contains certain contradictory and incorrect information regarding early Vardeman family history and the death of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman. The pertinent passage from this interview, which is included in Vol. 12C (pages 62 - 66) of the *Draper MSS*, is as follows:

*"Jeremiah Vardeman was born in what is now Wythe County, then old Fincastle County on New River — about 12 miles above Ft. Chiswell in the (illegible) year '75. His father was John Vardeman (John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman) who came to Ky to mark the road in company with Boone & others in the spring of '75. He died at his son's in Mo abt the year 1827, aged about one hundred and nine years old — a native of Sweden & at seven years old his father and family emigrated to America & settled in South Carolina & there the old man (John V., Sr.) died at the age of 125 years...."*

It should be noted that Morgan Vardeman, born 12 December 1766, was approaching an elderly 77 years of age at the time of this interview with Lyman Draper and neither his memory nor his communicating ability may have been as sharp and clear as one would have hoped they might be.

To the best of our knowledge, the first part of the above information concerning Jeremiah, and including his father coming to Kentucky as a member of the trailblazing party of Daniel Boone, is confirmed and correct; however, much of the rest of the passage is incorrect and should not be cited as confirmation for any purpose. The information in this interview about the death of John<sup>2</sup> is not credible and deviates substantially from that furnished in the Rev. William H. Vardeman interview (above). It also lacks some of the details included in the Rev. Vardeman interview which is much more reasonable and acceptable. This death information for John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman (died in 1827 at the age of 109) appears to be the source of the discredited birth year of 1718 for John<sup>2</sup> which erroneously appears in so many family trees. This incorrect information in the above cited interview should not be used to calculate a birth year for John<sup>2</sup> or for any other purpose.

In addition, the above account totally omits the intervening generation between John<sup>1</sup>, the original emigrant, and John<sup>2</sup> who was his grandson, the son of William<sup>1</sup> (son of John<sup>1</sup> and grandfather of Rev. Jeremiah) and whose presence is provided in the Rev. William H. Vardeman interview (above). John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman was, of course, not born in Sweden although his father, William<sup>1</sup>, was born there. Events ascribed to John<sup>2</sup> in the above record (such as being born in Sweden and being brought to America when he was 7 years old) should be recognized as applying to William<sup>1</sup>, the father of John<sup>2</sup>, whose generation has been omitted in the above recounting of the family's early history but who readily fits the events being described. .

And I hope that I need not even mention the fact that the family did not originally land in South Carolina but, instead, in what is now Delaware, as confirmed by numerous existing records. And, of course, citing John<sup>1</sup> as having died in South Carolina at the age of 125 is utter nonsense. He is confirmed as having died in New Castle County, then a part of Pennsylvania, in 1714, only about 10 years after his arrival in America. While we do not have a confirmed age for him at the time of his death, he was young enough at the time of his death to be the father of three minor children the youngest of whom (daughter Jane Margaret) was born ca 1708, after the family's arrival in America and only six years prior

to his death. However, his son, William<sup>1</sup>, did, indeed, die in Newberry County, SC, not later than March 3, 1789, at the age of about 90.

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**Thomas Morgan**  
**(father of Elizabeth Morgan, wife of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman)**

**6. Thomas Morgan**, father of Elizabeth Morgan and father-in-law of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman, was born ca 1702, probably in Philadelphia or Chester County, PA; died 23 May 1774, in Bedford County, VA; married first to **Lettice** (or **Letticia**) **Evans** ca 1723 - 1725 in Chester County, PA. Lettice is reported to have died ca 1749 in then Frederick County, VA, and Thomas married, second, to **Hester** (or **Esther**) **Taylor**, ca 1750 in either Frederick or Lunenburg County, VA.

Existing records provide the information that Elizabeth Morgan's father, **Thomas Morgan**, first appears on the tax rolls of Chester County, PA, in 1725 and continues on the Chester County tax rolls thru 1734 after which time he is no longer found there. Additional family records (unconfirmed) provide that he and his family may have been members of the historical Jost Hite party of Quakers from Chester County, Pa, who emigrated into the Shenandoah Valley area of northwestern Virginia ca 1734.

Thomas Morgan obtained land in 1735 on *Arnold Branch*, a small western tributary of the Shenandoah River in what was then Frederick County, VA, which had just been created in 1734 from the northwestern portion of then Orange County. The name of this stream was later changed to "*Wheat Spring Branch*", the name it is known by today. The specific site of Thomas Morgan's property would have been included in what is now Clarke County, VA, when that county was established in 1836 from the eastern half of what remained of the original Frederick County at that time. Clarke County is currently located on Virginia's northern border with the extreme northeast arm of West Virginia.

However, Thomas Morgan would again move his family, ca 1750, much further to the south and across to the eastern side of the Blue Ridge Mountains, settling in the northern area of then Lunenburg County which would become Bedford County in late 1753. This move placed him in the same area with the Vardaman family who had settled there about six years earlier.

Note: The above date of the arrival of Thomas Morgan in Lunenburg County, VA, is confirmed by his presence on the 1750 Lunenburg County tithe list but not on the earlier 1748 and 1749 tithe lists. It is also supported by the record of the sale of his land in Frederick County, VA, on November 2, 1749, after which there are no further records of him in Frederick County.

**Beyond any doubt, this is when (ca 1750) and where (Lunenburg County, VA) John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman would have become acquainted with and married Thomas Morgan's daughter Elizabeth. This determination as to the probable date and circumstance of John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman's marriage to Elizabeth Morgan also clearly supports the fact that none of their children would have been born prior to 1750.**

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## **Early Kentucky Land Records**

7. An additional set of records, entitled *Early Kentucky Landholders, 1787 - 1811* includes the names of both John Vardiman, Sr. and John Vardiman, Jr. each year from 1787 thru 1795 in Lincoln County, first located in western Virginia but later in 1792 included in the new state of Kentucky. Beginning in 1796, the name John Vardiman continues to appear at least once each year from 1796 thru 1811, except for 1810 when it does not appear at all. However, the suffix of Sr. or Jr. no longer appears on any of the 1796 thru 1811 entries.

The John Vardiman, Sr. of the earlier years is John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman (wife Elizabeth Morgan) while John Vardiman, Jr. is his son, John (wife Mary Spaulding).

Although existing records confirm that both John, Sr. and John, Jr. continue to reside in Lincoln County through 1811, it is believed that the reason there is only one John listed on these later tax lists and we no longer see the name extensions "Sr." and "Jr." after 1795, is because John, Sr., has reached the age of 65 and will no longer be required to pay county taxes. This supposition, although unconfirmed, is based on an earlier August 25, 1762, Bedford County court record in which John<sup>2</sup>'s father, William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman, is declared to be "*exempt from paying county and parrish taxes in the future*". Based on the previously calculated birth date of 1697 for William<sup>1</sup> Vardeman, he would have reached the age of 65 in 1762 and it is assumed that this is the most probable reason that he has become exempt from paying these taxes in the future.

Although John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman is now, in 1795, living in Lincoln County, in the new state of Kentucky (recently admitted to the Union in 1792) in a new nation, the United States, rather than in the British Colony of Virginia where Lincoln County had been earlier established in 1780, it is assumed that most, if not all, of the earlier local governmental provisions would have continued in effect thru the period 1796 thru 1811. In this case the omission of the Sr. and Jr. suffixes after 1795 would be attributable to the fact that John, Sr., having reached the age of 65 in 1795, would no longer be required to pay them and only the previous John, Jr. would now remain on the tax list. This, again, would agree with a birth date of 1729 or 1730 for John<sup>2</sup>.

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## Conclusion

The foregoing analysis of available records allows us to determine that **John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman** was most likely born ca 1729 - 1730 either (1) in New Castle County, PA (now part of Delaware), before the family had departed for the Virginia frontier; (2) during a period in which the family may have temporarily lived in Chester or Lancaster County, PA; or, much less likely, (3) during a lengthy journey through southern Pennsylvania and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia via the "Great Wagon Road" to the Blue Ridge Mountain area of Virginia, especially if they were wont to tarry for a while at various stops along the way.

These same records provide that his younger brother, William, Jr., was most likely born ca 1731 - 1732

Based on the available records, both of their births would have definitely occurred prior to the family's arrival in the then westernmost, settler inhabited area of colonial Virginia. I suspect that they very likely could have been born during the family's speculated stay in Chester or Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, if such should have actually occurred.

In addition, these records confirm, beyond any possibility of doubt, both the earliest date, **ca 1750**, and place, **Lunenburg County, VA**, of the marriage of **John<sup>2</sup> Vardeman** to **Elizabeth Morgan**. This, in turn, establishes that none of their children would have been born prior to 1750.

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## The End