

Taylor & Epps



Ancestors of



Lineages

Professional Genealogy Services



INTRODUCTION

The goal of this research was to extend the family lines of the Taylor and Epp families and to continue the search for records that would indicate where the families lived and where they came from. A few more documents were found in the time allotted that took the families back to the era of slavery, where, unfortunately the trail often ends. In the case of your family there are clues as to who their owners were; but we will never know for sure from the records because the slaves on the plantations were rarely named. The records utilized were lists created in 1850 and 1860 called Slave Censuses, on which an owner's slaves were listed by age and gender. We can estimate the age your ancestor may have been at that time, and then search for a corresponding age in the Slave Censuses. Sometimes, the owner would die before the time of emancipation in 1863, and all his or her property would be listed in a will or probate record. In this case there is a chance of a person who was enslaved to be named; but even if that is the case, we cannot guarantee a relationship to your family.

The following report explains the process and what was found. Most of your family, in fact, the two lines we were pursuing, came from the areas in Greensville and Brunswick Counties, Virginia, which is located on the south edge of the state, bordering North Carolina. Here is an 1870¹ map of that area:



¹ <https://mapgeeks.org/wp-content/uploads/1870-Map-of-Virginia-Delaware-Maryland-and-West-Virginia.jpg>

ANTHONY TAYLOR JANE (TAYLOR)

FAMILY GROUP

Anthony Taylor was born in May 1820 in Brunswick, Virginia, United States.

Anthony Taylor and Jane were married about 1850. **Jane** was born about 1822 in Virginia.

Anthony Taylor and Jane had the following children:

- i. **Federick Taylor** was born in 1851 in Virginia.
- ii. **Hannah Taylor**, born May 1852, Virginia; married Richard Fed Epps, 17 Dec 1868, Greensville, Virginia, United States.
- iii. **John Taylor** was born in 1853 in Virginia; married Tempy Easter, 25 Jan 1877,² Brunswick, Virginia. He died 16 Dec 1919.³
- iv. **Richard Taylor** was born in 1858 in Virginia; married Charlotte Taylor 25 Feb 1880,⁴ Brunswick, Virginia.
- v. **Charles Taylor** was born in 1860 in Virginia; married Sallie A. Merritt, 13 Dec 1888, Brunswick, Virginia
- vi. **Angelina Taylor** was born 1862, Virginia; married Benjamin Powell, 22 Mar 1882,⁵ Brunswick, Virginia.

In 1870⁶ Anthony Taylor and his wife Jane lived in Meherrin, Virginia. Anthony was employed as a laborer. He was 50 years old according to the census, and his wife Jane was 45. Their five children were as follows: Fed, age 18, John 15, Richard 14, Charles, 12 and Angie, 10. None of them could read or write. A very interesting phenomenon occurred with this family—the census taker enumerated them twice. Image 72⁷ in the same record lists the family once again, both parents and the five children.

Ten years later, Anthony and his wife Jane lived in Powellton, Virginia, the same county as Meherrin but about 20 miles east. Anthony, age 57, was a farmer, and his three children worked on the farm. According to this record Jane was mulatto, and age 58. It is not uncommon for the census records to contain many discrepancies year to year, so the fact that Anthony only aged seven years from the previous census in 1870 and Jane aged 13 is noted, but is not a cause for

² Taylor, John & Tempy Easter, 1877 Marriage, Brunswick, Virginia #30660 image 266, *familysearch.org*. Document 15.

³ Taylor, John, 1919 Death record #28869, Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia, *ancestry.com*. Document 12.

⁴ Taylor, Richard & Charlotte Taylor, 1880 Marriage, Brunswick, Virginia, #30660 image 459, *familysearch.org*. Document 13.

⁵ Taylor, Angie & Benjamin Powell, 1882 Marriage, Brunswick, Virginia, #30660 image 553, *familysearch.org*. Document 14.

⁶ Taylor, Anthony, 1870 U.S. Census, Meherrin, Brunswick, Virginia, Lines 1-7 image 65, *ancestry.com*. Document 1.

⁷ Taylor, Anthony, 1870 (2) U.S. Census, Meherrin, Brunswick, Virginia, Lines 29-35, Image 72, *ancestry.com*. Document 8.

concern, just an error either in that census or the 1880⁸ census. The children in the home were Richard, age 22, Charles, 20 and Angie, 18. Also in the household was Charlotte, age 19 and a daughter-in-law to Anthony, and Georgie, his eight-month-old granddaughter. Charlotte was Richard's wife, and Georgie was likely their daughter. Federick Taylor, age 28, and his wife Betty lived a few dwellings away from Anthony and Jane. This son was married in 1876⁹ in Greenville County, Virginia.

Unfortunately, the 1890 U.S. Census was burned; it may have cleared up many questions about your family. The next available census record was taken in 1900,¹⁰ where Hannah Epps, the daughter of Anthony and Jane, was widowed and living in Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia. She was the head of the household, and a member of that house was Antony Taylor, her father. He was 80 years old, born in May 1820, and also widowed. We can conclude from this information that Jane died before 1900. Richard Taylor lived next door to Hannah Epps, and Charles Taylor lived next to Richard, two of the sons of Anthony and Jane. This was also the last record found for Anthony Taylor, so we can assume he died sometime after 1900.

In our continued attempt to discover Jane's maiden name, we searched the marriage and death records for all of the children and each record we found named their father as Anthony Taylor and their mother as Jane. Their son John Taylor's 1919¹¹ death record has his mother mistakenly listed as Tempy Ester, who was really John's wife, not his mother. It is possible that Jane's maiden name was Taylor.

⁸ Taylor, Anthony, 1880 U.S. Census, Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia, ED 31 Lines 38-44, *ancestry.com*. Document 2.

⁹ Federick Taylor, Federick & Bettie Taylor, 1876 Marriage, Greenville, Virginia, FHL #7578981, image 29, *familysearch.org*. Document 9.

¹⁰ Epps, Hannah, 1900 U.S. Census Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia ED 11 Sheet 4 Lines 70-79, *ancestry.com*. Document 10.

¹¹ Taylor, John, 1919 Death record #28869, Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia, *ancestry.com*. Document 12.

Census

Anthony & Jane Taylor

1870 U.S. Census, Meherrin, Brunswick, Virginia

Taylor Anthony	27	20	16	Saloon			Virginia
" Susan	25	22	16	Housekeeper			"
" Ned	18	16	16	"			"
" John	15	20	10	"			"
" Richard	11	16	16	"			"
" Charles	12	16	16	"			"
" Angie	11	7	16	"			"

Anthony & Jane Taylor

1880 U.S. Census, Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia

Taylor Anthony	B	No 57		1	Farmer
Jane	W	F 58	Wife	1	Keeps House
Richard	B	No 22	Son	1	Works on Farm
Charles	B	No 20	Son	1	Works on Farm
Angie	B	F 18	Daughter	1	Works on Farm
Charlotte	B	F 19	Daughter	1	At Home
Gennie	B	F 12	Gr Daughter	1	At Home

Hannah Epps household, Anthony Taylor, father
 1900 U.S. Census, Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia

George	10-1	Daughter	3	24	Sept	1893	6	8			Virginia	10
Epps Hannah	10-1	Head	18	21	July	1822	26	Wid	11	7	Virginia	10
Ellen		Daughter	3	71	Mar	1828	22	8	1	1	Virginia	10
Mattie		Daughter	3	71	Sept	1879	20	8			Virginia	10
Lucie		Daughter	3	71	July	1883	12	8			Virginia	10
Richard		son	3	71	May	1884	16	8			Virginia	10
Cora		Daughter	3	71	Dec	1884	13	8			Virginia	10
Henry		son	3	71	Oct	1888	11	8			Virginia	10
Isaac		son	3	71	Nov	1888	9	8			Virginia	10
Erie		Daughter	3	71	Apr	1894	6	8			Virginia	10
Taylor Anthony		father	3	71	May	1820	80	Wid	7		Virginia	10
Taylor Richard		Head	3	71	Feb	1860	40	Wid	7		Virginia	10
Lena		Wife	3	71	Dec	1864	35	Wid	7	7	Virginia	10
Mary		Daughter	3	71	Nov	1880	19	8			Virginia	10
Willet		son	3	71	Sept	1884	15	8			Virginia	10
Taylor Frank	8-1	Head	3	71	Sept	1861	38	M	11		Virginia	10
Lally		Wife	3	71	Mar	1865	35	Wid	11	7	Virginia	10
Conce		Daughter	3	71	June	1889	10	8			Virginia	10
Lucie C		Daughter	3	71	Jan	1892	8	8			Virginia	10
Fred		son	3	71	Apr	1893	7	8			Virginia	10
Lillie		Daughter	3	71	Oct	1894	5	8			Virginia	10
Charlie		son	3	71	June	1896	3	8			Virginia	10
Emma	10-1	Daughter	3	71	May	1899	1	8			Virginia	10

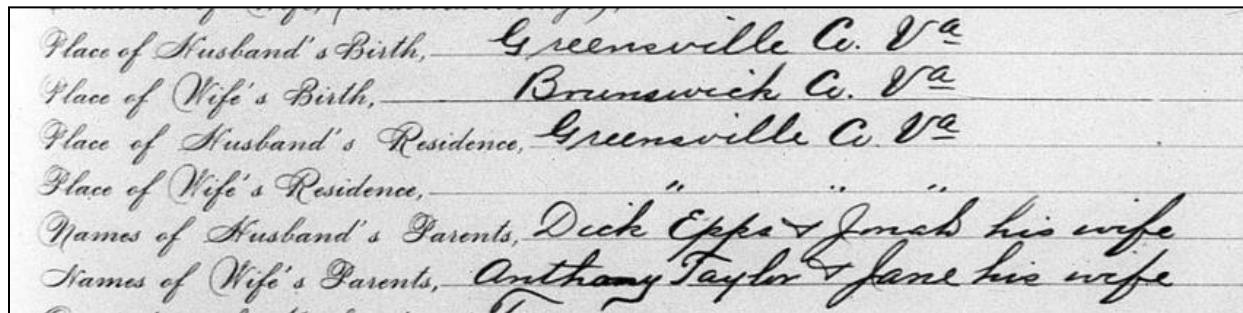
DICK EPPS
JONAH

FAMILY GROUP

Dick Epps and Jonah had the following child:

- i. **Richard "Fed" Epps** was born about 1840 in Virginia, United States. He died before 1900 around the age of 60.

When Richard Epps married Hannah Taylor in 1868,¹² both sets of parents were listed on the marriage record:



The name Jonah is unusual for a woman, and it is possible it was recorded incorrectly. It may have been any variation of Jane, Janet or Joanna. The challenge faced here is we know of no other siblings for Richard, or we could trace them and examine marriage or death records in hopes the parents may be listed. What we do know is Richard's parents lived in Greenville County, Virginia during the time of his birth which was about 1840.

Something that gave us cause to believe Richard's mother may have had the last name Wyche was the 1870¹³ U.S. Census for Hicksford, Greenville, Virginia. In the household of Richard and Hannah Epps lived a woman by the name of Jane Wyche, a 45-year-old female mulatto. The 1870 census records did not indicate the relationships of the individuals listed, but she was the right age to be the mother of Richard, and there were others listed with the last name of Wyche:

¹² Epps, Richard & Hannah Taylor, 1868 (17 Dec) Marriage, Greenville, Virginia, Film 7578980, Book 1 page 351, image 638 [Familysearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org). Document 10.

¹³ Epps, Richard, 1870 U.S. Census, Hicksford, Greenville, Virginia, Page 24 image 23 Lines 16-22, Jane Wyche [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com). Document 3.

Richard Epps	26	M	26	Farm Laborer			Va
Hannah	22	F	26	Farm Laborer			Va
Wm Jane	40	F	26	Farm Laborer			Va
Kizzy	3	F	13				Va
Threat	23	M	13	Farm Laborer			Va
Jocaster	18	F	13	Keeping House			Va
Ulysses G	1/2	M	13				Va

Wright male age 23
 Jocaster female age 18
 Kizzy female age 3
 Ulysses G male ?/12 (less than a year)

After researching these individuals, we discovered that Wright Wyche married Jocaster Threat in 1868 at the Shiloh Baptist Church in Greenville, and the two young children, Kizzy and Ulysses, were theirs. This was determined by looking at marriage and other records. We hoped to discover the names of Wright's parents on his marriage certificate, but unfortunately that portion on the record form was left blank. Richard was 26 and Wright was 23, the right ages to be brothers, even though Richard's last name is Epps, and Wright's surname was Wyche. There are no records available to link these two individuals except this census record, and we cannot determine their relationship to each other or to Jane Wyche.

Searches were made for Dick/Richard Epps and Jonah/Jane/Janet throughout the census records of that Greenville area, knowing their son Richard was born there about 1840. We estimated the parents' births to be about 1810-20, but still nothing was found.

There was a Richard Epps age 51, and his wife Jane age 49, who were living in Norfolk, Virginia in 1870 and 1880, but this was not geographically close to their son Richard. Norfolk is about 90 miles away from Greenville County. We could not associate them in any way with your family, so we had no way, by paper documentation, to tell if they are related.

Slave Owners

A way to possibly identify slaves is by the records of the former owners. We determine who their owners may have been by drawing upon a tradition that the slaves generally had no last name, and upon emancipation they could have taken the surname of their former owners. Something we must consider is only 15 percent of freed slaves used the family name of a former owner, and from 1865 to 1875 many African Americans changed their family name.¹⁴

Another dilemma faced in African American research is there is no ready evidence available to determine any connection between these families and your own. It is a well-established fact that rarely is a person of color recorded by name in any record prior to 1870 in the United States. Those exceptions are found randomly in wills left by slave owners who may have described their property to those who benefited from the will. (The wording is harsh, but slaves were considered by their owners as property.) If a slave owner failed to make a will, the probate record could serve the same purpose when the property was divided up for distribution.

With this in mind, we researched the slave owners who had the same surnames as those in your ancestral lines, Epps and Taylor. It is also important to remember the individuals who took these names may not have been related to each other but assumed the same name because they were grouped together in one household.

We began by using a method of comparison to narrow down the extensive list of people with the common surname. We compiled the list of Taylor slave owners in Virginia in 1850 with 22-year-old females, then compared Taylor slave owners of 1860 with 32-year-old females (assuming she was not sold to someone in a different place during that ten-year period), hoping for some overlapping names and counties. We did the same for Anthony, only used the age difference of 30 and 40.

There was a slave owner by the name of Francis R. Taylor who had slaves in 1850¹⁵ and 1860,¹⁶ the right age for both of your ancestors, living in Greensville County, Virginia. Tracking her using the records, we discovered she was still living in 1880, which means if and when she made a will, it would not mention any slaves, because it was after the time of emancipation.

¹⁴ *FamilySearch* Wiki, African American Research

¹⁵ Taylor, Frances R., 1850 Slave Schedule, Brunswick, Virginia, *ancestry.com*. Document 5.

¹⁶ Taylor, Frances R., 1860 Slave Schedule, Meherrin, Virginia, *ancestry.com*. Document 7.

We used the same process, comparing 1850 and 1860 slave census records to search for Dick and Jonah Epps and found a slave owner named Martha B. Epps.^{17 18} She did not live in Greenville County but just across the border in Halifax, North Carolina. We also discovered she had holdings in Buckingham, Virginia. We determined she died in 1861, so searched for a will or probate record. One was found dated February 1864. She mentioned some of her slaves by name, willing them to her family members, but there was no Jonah or Dick (or variations of those names) specifically mentioned. She had so many slaves she acknowledged she was not aware of how many she had when she wrote her will.

There was one more place to look, a digitized register titled “Free Persons of Colour” from 1803-1832,¹⁹ naming individuals who were living in Greenville County during that time. A page-by-page search uncovered some men with the name of Dick, and also a woman named Jinney, both freed in 1814-1816, by their former owner Nathaniel Mabry. Again, there was no way to determine whether or not these individuals were your ancestors, thus coming to a disappointing end to an intense and thorough search.

¹⁷ Epps, Martha B, 1860 Slave Schedule, Halifax, North Carolina, *ancestry.com*. Document 11.

¹⁸ Epps, Martha B, 1850 Slave Schedule, Halifax, North Carolina, *ancestry.com*. Document 4.

¹⁹ Processioners' returns, 1796-1832, 1848-1857; register of free persons of "colour", 1803-1832, #31712 *familysearch.org*

CONCLUSION

We followed every lead available after finishing our last report composed earlier this year and found a few more documents for Anthony Taylor and his wife Jane and their children. We knew it would be difficult, heading into the time period of the early 1800's but hoped for more.

In the case of the Epps family and the 1870 census record that mentioned a Jane Wyche in their household, we still could not definitively connect Jane Wyche with the Epps or Taylor families after an exhaustive and diligent research.

The evaluation of the Slave Censuses failed to turn up a will which recorded your ancestors' names.

Perhaps taking an Ancestry DNA test could provide new leads on your paternal grandmother's ancestry in ways existing paper records cannot do by themselves.



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Document Calendar

Subject:	Researcher: Staff Genealogists	
Source	Comments	Document #
Taylor, Anthony 1870 US Census, Meherrin, Brunswick, Virginia Lines 1-7 image 65, <i>ancestry.com</i>		1
Taylor, Anthony 1880 US Census, Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia ED31 Lines 38-44, <i>ancestry.com</i>		2
Epps, Richard 1870 US Census, Hicksford, Greensville, Virginia Page 24 image 23 Lines 16-22, Jane Wyche <i>ancestry.com</i>		3
Epps, Martha B 1850 Slave Schedule, Halifax, North Carolina, <i>ancestry.com</i>		4
Taylor, Frances R. 1850 Slave Schedule, Brunswick, Virginia, <i>ancestry.com</i>		5
Epps, Hannah 1900 US Census Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia ED 11 Sheet4 Lines 70-79, <i>ancestry.com</i>		6
Taylor, Frances R. 1860 Slave Schedule, Meherrin, Virginia, <i>ancestry.com</i>		7
Taylor, Anthony 1870 (2) US Census, Meherrin, Brunswick, Virginia, Lines 29-35, Image 72, <i>ancestry.com</i>		8
Taylor, Federick & Bettie Taylor 1876 Marriage, Greensville, Virginia, FHL #7578981 image 29, <i>familysearch.org</i>		9
Epps, Richard & Hannah Taylor 1868 (17 Dec) Marriage, Greensville, Virginia, Film 7578980 Book 1 page 351, image 638 <i>familysearch.org</i>		10
Epps, Martha B 1860 Slave Schedule, Halifax, North Carolina, <i>ancestry.com</i>		11
Taylor, John 1919 Death record #28869, Powellton, Brunswick, Virginia, <i>ancestry.com</i>		12
Taylor, Richard & Charlotte Taylor 1880 Marriage, Brunswick, Virginia, #30660 image459 <i>familysearch.org</i>		13
Taylor, Angie & Benjamin Powell 1882 Marriage. Brunswick, Virginia #30660 image553, <i>familysearch.org</i>		14
Taylor, John & Tempy Easter 1877 Marriage, Brunswick, Virginia #30660 image266, <i>familysearch.org</i>		15