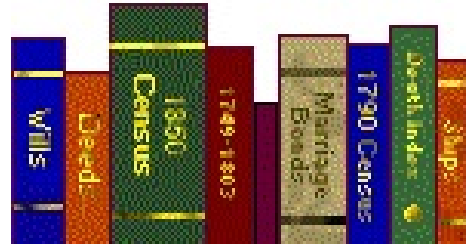


James Gunn, Sr.

son of Thomas and Sarah Boatwright Gunn
born 1731 Amelia County, Virginia
died May 1807 Nottoway County, Virginia



The story of James Gunn, Sr., begins with his father's will of 1777. He was the sixth child of eleven, having three older sisters, two older brothers, and five younger siblings, all mentioned in the will of Thomas Gunn.

From census records, Personal Property Taxes we learn his likely birth year was between 1725 and 1731, with the more likely date being 1731. James Gunn was raised in Amelia County, Virginia, though he may have been born in either Hanover or New Kent. By 1744, his father Thomas had purchased 198 acres from Edward and Katy Thweat and moved the family to Amelia County.

We know James Gunn and his siblings were educated, able to read and write reasonably well. He was able to witness deeds, and conduct county business. He and his siblings were likely tutored first in the home by their mother or another tutor. Because education was expensive, usually only male children, primarily in the wealthier families, received advanced education in the homes of privately hired professors or private boarding school. There were no public schools available to children in Virginia during James Gunn's lifetime.

James Gunn was appointed guardian to children of his family members, was asked to witness numerous deeds and documents for neighbors and family, and signed bonds for the same. We know he was a man of means, and was held in respect. He was the holder of a great deal of property, in several counties some I mention are New Kent, Amelia, Lunenburg, and Nottoway counties, and he was the owner of a number of slaves during his lifetime. He was the father of 13 children who survived infancy and lived to adulthood. This was a remarkable thing for the times.

It isn't known for certain if he was a patriot or was loyal to the English crown during the Revolutionary War. It can be assumed he was the former rather than the latter, since his own brothers, grandchildren, and others close to him were patriots. His children and their families were his greatest legacy. His life is documented in deeds and documents as follows:

May 16, 1759 in Amelia County, Va., James Gunn purchased property from the estate of John Ornsby. He was about 28 years old.

April 13, 1761 in Amelia County, the estate of Samuel Jordan mentioned Thomas Gunn, Sr., James Gunn.

September 26, 1765 - James Gunn, Thomas Gunn, and Thomas Jeffress purchased property of the estate of Samuel Jordan.

April 28, 1768 - James Gunn sold 89 acres of land in Lunenburg County to William Landrum. This is part of a tract of land 323 acres that was granted to Trace Brown by patent dated 1748. This deed did not show a wife relinquishing her dower, but it does state that it was clear of all right of Dower or any other encumbrance whatsoever. This indicates that in 1768, James' wife was likely deceased.

1769 - List of tithables taken by Charles Hamlin, gentleman, shows James Gunn with 350 acres.

August 29, 1770 - John Cocke of Amelia County sells to James Gunn of the same county, 200 acres on the Nottoway River, opposite fork of said river, adjacent to the lines of Alex. Bolling and the little Nottoway River.

May 29, 1771 - William May, Jr., of Amelia County, sells to James Gunn, 241 acres in two tracts on the North Side of the Great Nottoway River, adjacent to John Cocke, James Gunn, Arthur May, and John May. This property abuts the 200 acre parcel purchased in August 1770.

October 1, 1772 - William May sells to John May, 50 acres on the North Side of James Gunn's spring branch.

April 27, 1773 - James Gunn bought property from Stith Bolling of Prince George County. Published in Unrecorded Deeds and other Documents of Amelia County, Virginia 1750-1902 by Gibson Jefferson McConaughy. Page 1

December 27, 1773 - James Gunn is witness to a deed from Samuel Morgan to William Fitzgerald.

December 31, 1774 - James Gunn bought 146 acres in Amelia County, adjacent to Cokes Corner on the little Nottoway River, below the stone house and lines of James Gunn, William Muse and the River.

.September 22, 1779 - John May purchased land in Amelia County adjacent to James Gunn, Repps John (sic), and John Leith.

1780 Continental Census of Virginia shows James Gunn claimed 13 white souls, 1 dwelling, and 12 other buildings. James Gunn is living next to Elisha Gunn

February 20, 1782 - William Muse sells to Thomas Cocke, both of Amelia County, 130 acres of land in the fork of the Nottoway River, adjacent to the line of James Gunn as it meanders the river

March 22, 1786 - John Leith of Amelia to John Mills of the same, 250 acres adjacent to the lines of James Gunn, Repps Jones, and others. Also on this date in the Virginia Gazette - James Gunn advertizes a cow and calf taken in Amelia County, at the Fork of the Nottoway River.

October 12, 1786 - Frances Landrum sells 108 acres of land in Lunenburg County, to James

Gunn along the line of James Gunn.

1787 Personal Property Tax of Amelia County - James Gunn shows 11 Whites; 27 Blacks.

1791 Personal Property Tax of Nottoway County - James Gunn shows 11 Whites; 27 Blacks
2 white males over 16; 12 Black Males of over 16; 1 Black Male under 16 but over 9;
December 15, 1791 - James Gunn purchased from his son, Elisha Gunn, 41 ½ acres which Elisha
had both from Matthew May, located in Nottoway County. The land adjoins that of the said
James Gunn, John Mills, and Freeman Jordan.

December 6, 1792 - James Gunn is a witness to the sale of land from William Hood to Elisha
Gunn.

April 7, 1792 - James Gunn of Nottoway County, Sells to Copeland Davis 298 acres as it
meanders from a branch of Flatrock Creek and the Landrum line in Lunenburg County. The
court mentioned that Joice, the wife of James Gunn, was not able to come to the Lunenburg
Court to sign her Dower rights and a commission was sent to obtain her signature at her
residence. It is assumed Joice died shortly after this 1792 sale.

July 4, 1793 - On the petition of James Gunn, setting forth that he is seized of land on the south
side of the Little Nottoway River in this county, opposite to the land of John Cocke, where he
wishes to erect a water grist mill, and praying that a writ be issued to ascertain the value of one
acre of ground the property of the said John Cocke, where he wishes to erect the said mill for the
purpose of abutting his dam.

July 4, 1793 - On the petition of John Cocke (same as above) petition. The two men, John Cocke
and James Gunn both wanted to do the same thing - Build a Grist Mill.

July 31, 1793 - James Gunn purchases from his son in law, James Williams, four slaves, plus
other items including house, cattle bed, etc.

December 12, 1794 - James Gunn purchases 92 ½ acres from Thomas Cocke. Land is situated in
Nottoway County on the Great Nottoway River bounded by Cockes Mill Road, a branch in the
river as it meanders to Gulleys Branch just below Thomas Cocke's barn, up to the point of the
beginning. Spencer Gunn, Crawford Zachary are two of the several witnesses. Spencer is the
son of James Gunn, and Crawford Zachary is his son in law.

October 1, 1795 - James Gunn sells to son Elisha Gunn 41 ½ acres in Nottoway County bounded
by the lands of James Gunn, John Mills, and Freeman Jordan. Witnessed by Crawford Zachary,
Spencer Gunn, Sally Gunn. Freeman Jordan is the father of two daughters who married the sons
of James Gunn. Sally Gunn, mentioned is the daughter and Spencer, mentioned is the son of
James Gunn, and Crawford Zachary is the son-in-law of James Gunn.

November 13, 1800 - James Gunn guardian of Nancy Gunn settled the accounts. James Gunn
was the uncle of Nancy. Her father was Daniel Gunn a brother of James Gunn. Daniel Gunn

died in 1798. Nancy Gunn married Macon S. Hurt on June 14, 1800.

September 13, 1804 - Macon Hurt gives receipt to James Gunn, gdn of Nancy Gunn for her legacy in full.

April 3, 1807 - James Gunn of Nottoway County, Virginia signs his Will. As in the 1797 deed, James Gunn, did not mention a wife in his last Will and Testament.

May 7, 1807 - James Gunn in a deed of trust makes a gift of a slave to his son, James Gunn, Jr. Witnessed by Freeman Jordan, Griffin Gunn (his son) Ephriam Thweatt (his son in law)

James Gunn's sons, Griffin and James Gunn, Jr., married daughters of Freeman Jordan. They were Jane Jordan who married Griffin Gunn, and Elizabeth Irby Jordan who married James Gunn, Jr.

May 28, 1807 The Account and Inventory of the estate of James Gunn was entered into the September 1808 Court. The Inventory was conducted by Griffin Gunn, Ephriam Thweatt and Gabriel Gunn. James Gunn died between May 7, and May 28 1807.

May 31, 1808 Petersburg Intelligence published - Claims against the estate of James Gunn, Sr., are desired by bring them forward. Ephriam Thweatt, executor.

In his will, James Gunn gave his son Spencer Gunn, 500 acres of land lying on Whiteoak Creek in the County of Dinwiddie Virginia. Because Dinwiddie records were destroyed by fire, it was not learned when and from whom the property was purchased. James Gunn, Sr., was a large property owner with lands in Amelia, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and possibly Brunswick Counties in Virginia.

His first wife was Elizabeth, her surname is undocumented, but it is possibly Garner. Some researchers have indicated she was the daughter of James Garner and Elizabeth Freeman of Orange County, Virginia who were married in 1748. James Gunn, Sr and Elizabeth had five children as follows:

1. Elisha Gunn 1757 - 1838 who married Henrietta Wilkes in 1784
2. Edith Gunn 1762 - died prior to 1796 who married Willis Vaughan in 1778
3. Jemima Jane Gunn 1764 - 1841 who married James Williams in 1785
4. James Gunn, Jr. 1765 -1828 who married Elizabeth Irby Jordan about 1794
5. William Gunn 1768 - 1795 who married Sally Clack Cross in 1788

Elizabeth gave birth to her last child, William on March 15, 1768 and was deceased when James Gunn sold property in April 1768. She likely died as so many women did, from complications due to childbirth.

Exactly when James Gunn married his second wife Joice isn't known. Her surname is unknown. Based on known and estimated births of her children, it is likely she and James married in 1769. James and Joice had eight children as follows:

1. Spencer Gunn born 1770 - 1824/30 married Susannah G. Pritchett in 1798
2. Catherine (Caty) Gunn 1771-1810 married Davis Crawford Zachary in 1787
3. Sarah (Sally) Gunn 1773 - 1825 married Thomas Burwell Wilkes in 1794
4. Elizabeth (Betsy) Gunn 1776 - 1844 married Burwell Bassett Wilkes in 1787 and Phillip Claiborne in 1817
5. Griffin Gunn 1778-1823 married Jane Jordan abt 1801
6. Mary (Polly) Gunn 1783 - 1849 married John C. Bradshaw in 1801
7. Henrietta Gunn 1784 married Ephriam Thweatt in 1802.
8. Gabriel Gunn 1783 - 1811/14 married Martha Lambert in 1803

My line continues through James Gunn, Jr., who married Elizabeth Irby Jordan