This guide will be an evolving, living document and is by no means complete. We hope that by sharing this information in an organized and succinct way that we can better assist you with your family history research.

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Section 4 - The History of the African and African Americans of Bacon’s Castle, c. 1640-1972
By Peighton Young, September 2019
Section 1:
Links to Helpful Historic Resources

- Faulcon & Co Account Books from 1770
  - [https://sites.rootsweb.com/~vaschsm/MtAiry1.html](https://sites.rootsweb.com/~vaschsm/MtAiry1.html)
  - Contains accounts of Cocke Family and other Surry county individuals from Faulcon & Co, a merchant company
- Virginia Memory, including Virginia Untold:
  - [https://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/](https://www.virginiamemory.com/collections/)
  - This is a repository for digitized collections from LVA. Virginia Untold focuses on documents related to African American history in the Commonwealth.
- USGS historic topographical maps:
  - Tip: If you click on "View maps" you can enter an address, and a list of all of the old topos will be on the right. You can then show or hide the ones you want to view.
- Frick digital archive:
  - [https://digitalcollections.frick.org/digico/#/](https://digitalcollections.frick.org/digico/#/)
  - This is a database of thousands of paintings, especially portraits. Tip: there are images of many, many, Virginia sitters in this database. Search a name like “Ambler,” “Marshall,” or “Cocke” and you might just find a face to go with a person you are discussing in a program!
- Ancestry.com
  - [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)
  - Great source for genealogy
- Newspapers.com
  - [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com)
  - Newspapers from 18th century on, good primary sources
- 1619: Virginia’s First Africans
  - Article on the first Africans in Tidewater VA, published by Hampton History Museum
- Surry County Index of Homicides, 1662-1900
  - Index compiled by OSU from Surry court records
  - [https://cjrc.osu.edu/sites/cjrc.osu.edu/files/surry%20county%20homicides.doc](https://cjrc.osu.edu/sites/cjrc.osu.edu/files/surry%20county%20homicides.doc)
- Frances Benjamin Johnston’s 1930s HABS photos of Bacon’s Castle and other Surry buildings
  - Images taken in the 1930s during the Historic American Building Survey
  - [https://www.loc.gov/pictures/search/?q=bacon&co=csas&st=gallery](https://www.loc.gov/pictures/search/?q=bacon&co=csas&st=gallery)

Enslaved People of Bacon’s Castle, 1673-1865

Dataset Article

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Description
Bacon's Castle is the oldest surviving brick house in North America. It was constructed around 1665 for wealthy merchant-planter Arthur Allen I. Allen's plantation seat was 2,450 acres located two miles from the James River, bounded on one side by Lower Chippokes Creek. He commissioned a 5,000 square-foot Jacobean manor home which would have been a visual
representation of the Allens' prosperity. Arthur Allen I died in 1669 and the property passed to his son Arthur Allen II, also known as Major Allen.

In 1673, Major Allen purchased seven enslaved men: Simon, Mingo, Comsee, Tony, Steven, Matthew, and Emmanuell. Allen's agricultural operations encompassed tobacco, grain, and fruit production. He utilized a mixed labor force of these enslaved men and indentured English servants to tend his crops and serve his family. Three years after coming to live at Allen's plantation, these first enslaved individuals experienced Bacon's Rebellion firsthand when 70 of Bacon's rebels commandeered and ransacked the Allen house. After the rebellion, the enslaved experienced the tightening of legal restrictions on their rights as the House of Burgesses passed law after law designed to inhibit the ability of Africans and their descendants to participate in colonial government (or rebellions against it). These laws, now known as the Black Codes, stripped them of, among other things, their ability to own property and legally marry, thus solidifying their position as human chattels. Simon and Emmanuell continued to be enslaved by the Allens at Bacon's Castle until their deaths around the turn of the 18th century; their lifetimes' encompassed landmark changes with regards to their status as African or African-descended men.

The 18th century at Bacon's Castle saw tensions building between England and its colonies in America. The Allens maintained their merchant business, in addition to operating the plantation. This meant enslaved house servants like Hannah and Jeaney had a front row seat to the effects of British taxation on colonial trade. As slave-owning merchants, it is not surprising that the Allen's perceived those they enslaved as little more than trade goods. Elizabeth Bray Allen, who lived at Bacon's Castle from 1711 until 1774, gifted her great grandson, James Allen Bradby, with an enslaved boy named Mercury, "as a token of... Love, good will, and affection..." Nothing more is recorded of Mercury's humanity; his age, parentage, and place of birth are all currently unknown.

Elizabeth Bray Allen's death on the eve of the American Revolution threw Bacon's Castle and those enslaved there into a series of changes. Everyone who had been enslaved by Elizabeth,

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1 Bryan Clark Green, *Historic Structures Report for Bacon's Castle, Surry, Virginia* (Richmond, VA, June 2016), 2.3.
5 Peighton Young, *Africans and African-Americans of Bacon's Castle, Surry County, Virginia* (Richmond: Preservation Virginia, 2019), 5.
7 Young, *Africans and African-Americans of Bacon's Castle*, 5.
8 Will of Elizabeth Stith, recorded November 3, 1774. Surry County Clerk's Office, Surry County, VA.
9 Elizabeth Bray Stith, Deed of Gift to James Allen Bradby, April 25, 1769, Surry County Deed Book for 1769, SurryCounty Clerk's Office.
except for Jenney, Phillis, and Dick, were sold according to her will. This included at least Hannibal, Grace, Jemmey, Isham, Isaac, Joe, and Lucy. There may have been others who were left unnamed. The plantation then passed into the hands of Allan Cocke, Elizabeth's grandson. Like many other Virginians of his time, Cocke apparently saw no contradiction between his “pro-liberty” politics and holding other humans in bondage. Cocke raised race horses at Bacon's Castle, and experimented with producing wine and silk as a partner in Philip Mazzei's scheme to promote American self-sufficiency. Men like Heziah, Ben, Booker, and Sam may have raised the stallions that made Cocke both famous and successful, while women like Kit, Tabb, Sier, and Lucy may have been put to the laborious task of trying to process a meager silk worm harvest into valuable textiles. Allan Cocke died before the end of the Revolutionary War.

After passing through a laundry list of short-lived owners, Bacon's Castle and its enslaved population landed in the hands of Allan Cocke's granddaughter, Ann Hunt Cocke, in 1802. She had inherited most of her father's enslaved workforce, including a skilled sawyer named Squire, valued cook Patty, house maid Mary, foreman David, and 39 others. The one surviving slave quarter on the Bacon's Castle property was constructed during her ownership, about 1830. At this time, enslavers were coming under increasing pressure from the growing abolitionist movement, and many responded by trying to craft a façade of “decent treatment,” often by constructing slave quarters of higher quality for domestic servants. Some of its first inhabitants may have been Beck and her son, Madison, who likely lived alongside three other enslaved families in the tiny quarter.

In 1831, Nat Turner's Rebellion rocked nearby Southampton county when enslaved people rallied around preacher Nat Turner to attack those who held them in bondage. John Claiborne, a man enslaved by Ann Cocke and her husband, Richard, was convicted of participating in the rebellion. Claiborne was pardoned, escaping execution, but was ultimately sold south. This brush with rebellion may have influenced the Cockes to part with more of their enslaved servants. Toward the end of their lives, Ann and Richard Cocke chose to sell several enslaved individuals to neighbors or family members who wanted to manumit them. Charlotte, who had at least three children at Bacon's Castle, was sold to the Cockes' son-in-law, Benjamin Dandridge Henley, who freed her. Her son Leander was sold to Henley's brother, Robert, and her daughter Minerva was sold to neighbor John Crump. Both children were required to be freed as part of the sale. One unnamed girl, whose mother, Polina, had died while enslaved at Bacon's Castle, was sold to

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10 Will of Elizabeth Stith, 1774.
12 Will of Allen Cocke I, Surry County Court, 1780, Surry County Clerk’s Office.
13 Estate Inventory of Allen Cocke II, Surry County Court, 1803. Surry County Clerk’s Office.
16 Public Claim of John alias John Claiborne filed by Richard H. Cocke, 5 October 1831, African American Narrative Digital Collection, Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA.
William Allen, with the understanding she was to be given to her father, a free Black man named Walker.\textsuperscript{17}

By 1838, both Ann and Richard Cocke had died, willing Bacon's Castle to their 20-year-old granddaughter, Indiana Henley Robinson, whom they had largely raised. By 1843, however, Indiana was dead, her enslaved servants sold, and Bacon's Castle was put on the market for the very first time. It was purchased by Thomas O'Sullivan. The next year he sold it to John Henry Hankins, a young man from a prominent, slaveholding York County family.\textsuperscript{18}

Although Bacon's Castle was already a sizable plantation, Hankins expanded agricultural production, which resulted in the expansion of his enslaved labor force. By 1860, Hankins enslaved over 80 people at Bacon's Castle.\textsuperscript{19} These men, women, and children labored to produce wheat, corn, vegetables, cotton, livestock, and cordwood. They applied marl to improve the sandy soil, grew fruit and produced brandy, and constructed a massive 2,500-square-foot addition onto the 1665 Allen House.\textsuperscript{20} Within the manor house, Paulina Boone cared for the Hankins' children, keeping in touch with them into the 20th century.\textsuperscript{21} Walter was a domestic servant, possibly serving as a butler or footman. Martha Jones worked as both a housemaid and a laundress, raising her daughter, Cordelia, in the attic of the manor house.\textsuperscript{22} Fanny and Nancy were skilled lady's maids who laboriously maintained the appearance and wardrobe of Louisiana Hankins and her daughter Virginia, respectively. Camilla Kelly Pierce was a busy mother of six who worked as a house servant, alongside Julia Hill, Adeline, Henrietta, Gilly, and Susan.\textsuperscript{23} Outside the home, an army of enslaved field hands worked from sunup to sundown, often at Bacon's Castle but sometimes on other plantations, if they were hired out.

In 1861 when the Civil War began, life became full of uncertainty for the enslaved community of Bacon's Castle. Desperate to maintain their wealth, much of which was held in human chattel, the Hankinses strategically moved enslaved people around the state of Virginia like chess pieces. Nancy traveled alongside Virginia Hankins to Richmond, Mecklenburg, Henrico, and Petersburg, all the while receiving detailed instructions from her enslavers about how she was expected to dress, style her hair, and behave.\textsuperscript{24} Isaac spent a great deal of time in Confederate military encampments serving the Hankins' oldest son, Captain James Dewitt Hankins. Isaac worked as both a field aide and body servant, carrying letters, handling tedious day-to-day tasks, and running errands.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{17} Will of Richard Herbert Cocke. Surry County Court, May 1, 1833. Surry County Clerk's Office.
\textsuperscript{18} Andrews, ed., \textit{Bacon's Castle}.
\textsuperscript{19} U.S. Census Bureau. Slave Inhabitants of the County of Surry in the State of Virginia, 1860. 11-12.
\textsuperscript{20} Green, \textit{Historic Structures Report for Bacon's Castle}, 2.28.
\textsuperscript{21} Paulina Boone to Mary D. Hankins, January 29, 1900, Hankins Collection, Virginia Museum of History and Culture (VMHC), Richmond, VA.
\textsuperscript{22} Young, \textit{Africans and African-Americans of Bacon's Castle}, 17.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 30-32.
\textsuperscript{24} Louisiana Hankins to Virginia Hankins, September 8, 1862, Hankins Collection, VMHC.
\textsuperscript{25} Young, \textit{Africans and African-Americans of Bacon's Castle}, 25.
Back at home, tensions rapidly escalated between Surry's Black community and white plantation owners. The first enslaved woman to flee Bacon's Castle during the Civil War was Adeline, whose labor had kept the Hankins family comfortable and whose loss was duly noted. Many others soon joined her, and in November 1864, a group of 14 men (some of whom had been enslaved at Bacon's Castle) kidnapped John Henry Hankins at gunpoint and took him to the James River. They demanded to know where Hankins had hidden gold, but when he denied hiding any, the men threatened to kill him. According to Hankins, he appealed to Collier, whom he had enslaved, but Collier said Hankins had been a "bad master" and agreed Hankins should be shot. John Henry Hankins claimed his life was saved due to the intervention of a man who had been enslaved by a family friend. He was later escorted home to Bacon's Castle.

After the kidnapping, the Hankins’ dealings with their enslaved servants took on a frenzied quality. Louisiana Hankins advised her son James to re-hire out as many of the servants they had in Richmond and Petersburg as possible in order to capitalize on their labor before they inevitably became free. By December 21, 1864, only three “very old and infirm” men remained enslaved at Bacon's Castle. The Hankinses themselves fled the plantation as well, going to Strawberry Plains. Paulina, still the primary caregiver to the Hankins’ baby daughter, Mary, was sent along with her young charge to stay with Martha Wilson, Louisiana's sister-in-law. The Wilsons, too, had fled their home in response to the armed uprisings in the area.

While records become spotty toward the end of the Civil War, we do know that by May 1865, Louisiana Hankins was dead, her family had returned to Bacon's Castle, and few of those they had enslaved were willing to remain on the plantation. Slave quarters were converted to housing for tenant farmers and sharecroppers in the years following the Civil War. Agricultural production slowed. Eventually, the Hankinses became bankrupt and moved away. Slowly, the community reknit itself around Bacon's Castle. People who had been enslaved there found work in the area or started businesses of their own, and life carried on. Today, many people who live in the area surrounding Bacon's Castle can trace their heritage to formerly enslaved individuals.

### Dates of Data Collection
2022-2023

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26 Louisiana Hankins to Virginia Hankins, September 8, 1862, Hankins Collection, VMHC.
27 James D. Hankins to Virginia Hankins, December 21, 1864, Hankins Collection, VMHC.
28 Louisiana Hankins to James D. Hankins, December 12, 1864, Hankins Collection, VMHC.
29 James D. Hankins to Virginia Hankins, December 21, 1864, Hankins Collection, VMHC.
30 Joan E. Douglas to Virginia Hankins, January 15, 1865. Hankins Collection, VMHC.
31 Louisiana Hankins to James D. Hankins, December 11, 1864, Hankins Collection, VMHC.
32 Green, Historic Structures Report for Bacon's Castle, 2.51.
33 Andrews, ed., Bacon's Castle.
34 Young, Africans and African-Americans of Bacon's Castle.
Dataset Languages

English

Geographic Coverage

Surry County, Virginia
Isle of Wight County, Virginia
Richmond, Virginia
Henrico County, Virginia
Mecklenburg County, Virginia
Petersburg, Virginia
Clifton Forge, Virginia
Southampton County, Virginia

Temporal Coverage

1673-1900

Document Types

Letters
Life History or Narrative
Inventory or Probate Record
Runaway Advertisement
Will and Testament
Appraisal or Assessment
Census or Register
Digital Data Repository

Sources

- Hankins Collection, Virginia Museum of History and Culture, Richmond, VA.
- Surry County Clerk's Office. Surry County, VA.
- Surry County Tithables Lists for 1673-1701. Surry County Records, Microfilm. John D. Rockerfeller, Jr. Library, Williamsburg, VA.
- Surry County Runaway Slaves Records, 1794, 1806-1863. Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA.
- U.S. Census Bureau. Slave Inhabitants of the County of Surry in the State of Virginia, 1860.

**Methodology**

When Preservation Virginia (formerly the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities) began to operate Bacon’s Castle as a public site in 1973, they interpreted it with the understanding that enslaved people had labored there for generations. However, it was not until 2004 that Preservation Virginia staff began actively researching the enslaved community and their individual stories via a National Endowment for the Humanities grant. In 2007, Dr. Ywone Edwards-Ingram produced the first major research project into the names and histories of the enslaved of Bacon’s Castle, *Africans and African-Americans at Bacon’s Castle, Surry County, Virginia*. In 2019, Peighton Young, a researcher and PhD candidate at William & Mary, was hired to expand this research into the legacy of slavery within the community around Bacon’s Castle. This research resulted in an forty-three-page research paper entitled *Africans and African-Americans of Bacon’s Castle*, cited frequently in this document.

In July 2022, Preservation Virginia staff began compiling documents pertaining to enslavement at Bacon’s Castle. From September 2022 to February 2023, staff identified named enslaved individuals from existing source material for purposes of submitting a dataset for Enslaved.org. Compiling this data prompted additional research into specific individuals as well as acquiring additional source material.

Staff analyzed this collection of primary and scholarly sources and extracted names by hand into a spreadsheet. They then cross-referenced names that appeared multiple times to determine single or multiple identities. Primary source material has informed our decisions for first name and surname and the spelling of each. It is important to note that most of the material we use to inform names of the enslaved people has been authored by free white individuals, in most cases by their enslavers. We do not know how these individuals would have referred to themselves. For example, “black Betty” may not have considered her first name to include the descriptor “black,” however without having her own words on the subject we are relegated to using the writings of others that describe her.

The dataset presented contains the principal information about each individual and the source in which they are referenced. Data points include a unique identifier (which we have assigned), name, surname, alias, age, gender, full source citation, and names of parents. When we could determine if more than one name across various sources was in fact referring to the same enslaved individual, we chose a primary name based on frequency of occurrence (if possible) and included any name variations under the “alias” heading. Names of individuals in the dataset are provided in chronological order.

**Date of Publication**

July 2023
**Data Links**

Dataset Repository: Harvard Dataverse, [https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/NVY7PA](https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/NVY7PA)
Linked Data Representation: [Enslaved.org](https://www.enslaved.org)

**Acknowledgments**

National Endowment for the Humanities American Rescue Plan
Library of Virginia

**Cite this Article**


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Section 3:

Data on Known Individuals Enslaved at Bacon’s Castle, 1673 - 1864

To access this data, please click on the link below.

Spreadsheet Link
The History of the African and African Americans of Bacon’s Castle, c. 1640-1972

Final Report for Preservation Virginia

Peighton L. Young
Preservation Virginia
September 1, 2019
Arthur Allen I

Arthur Allen I settled in the Virginia Colony by the 1640s. The earliest known documentation of his residence in Virginia was recorded in c. 1649, when Allen received a land grant in what would become Surry County. He settled between the Lawnes Creek and Chippokes Creek areas of what was formerly the southern section of James City County. In 1663, Allen commissioned the construction of his brick house, which was completed in 1665. Allen’s Brick House, as Bacon’s Castle was known at the time, functioned as a tobacco plantation. In conjunction with his agricultural pursuits, scholars such as Daphne Gentry, suggest that Allen had some involvement in commercial trade as well. It is through his agricultural and commercial activities that Arthur Allen may have had a curious relationship to indentured servitude and early colonial slavery.¹

While record of the white indentured laborers who worked on Allen’s property still survive, the Surry County property tax records recorded during his lifetime do not specify whether any enslaved people, free black workers, or black indentured servants lived or worked at Allen’s Brick House between 1665 and 1669, the year of his death. The Surry County tithables list from 1669, recorded soon after Allen’s death, listed that Allen’s estate had eleven tithables, or taxable persons, resident on the property - the most listed as having been paid by a single

person in Surry County for that year.\textsuperscript{2} While the number of tithables shows that Allen was wealthy when compared to the rest of Surry County’s landowning residents, the tithables do not distinguish whether the people listed were enslaved, free, African, white, or Native American.

Although the 1669 tithables list does not specify whether persons of African descent of any condition of bondage were present on the property, it is indeed possible that Allen had some contact with both the indenture trade and slave trade, putting him in close proximity with laborers of African descent. Arthur Allen I’s entry in the \textit{Dictionary of Virginia Biography} written by Daphne Gentry, asserts that sometime prior to 1649, Allen acted as an agent in the international trade and sale of tobacco between the Virginia Colony and merchants in Bristol, England. Regarding these commercial ventures, Gentry posited that Arthur Allen I had worked with three specific individuals: Micajah Perry, Phillip Perry, and Thomas Lane. While shipping and sale records show that the Perry men and Lane participated in the trade and sale of indentured servants and enslaved Africans in late-seventeenth century Virginia, Gentry could not provide any records that definitively connected them to Arthur Allen I.\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{2} Daphne Gentry, "Arthur Allen (1608–1669)".
\item \textsuperscript{3} By 1673, Micajah Perry and Thomas Lane formed the Perry & Lane Company, a commercial trade company that operated out of London. This company was heavily involved in the trade of tobacco, indentured servants, and the transportation and sale of enslaved people from Africa to the British American colonies. More specifically, the company was recorded as having traded in both indentured servants and enslaved Africans directly to merchants and planters in Virginia by the late seventeenth century. The Perry & Lane Company had ties with the Royal African Company, which had obtained its own charter to trade in enslaved Africans in 1663. The problem with Gentry’s supposed theory is that she does not provide any citations from documents that directly tie the Perry Family and Thomas Lane to Arthur Allen I in Virginia. Although it is possible that Micajah Perry and Thomas Lane had worked together prior to the 1670s, the Perry and Lane Company was not formally established until 1673, four years after Allen’s death. More research on this lead would be required to prove the connection. Gentry’s biographical entry is assumptive. Possible evidence to substantiate some of the claims posed by Gentry regarding the potential trade
\end{itemize}
According to Jacob Price, author of *Perry of London: A Family and a Firm on the Seaborne Frontier*, Micajah Perry had established himself as an independent shipper and trader in England and Virginia by 1665 or 1666. Micajah Perry’s grandfather had established himself as a trader in the Virginia Colony during the 1620s and 1630s, cementing the Perry family’s connection to trade in Virginia during its early history. It is unclear what types of commodities, aside from tobacco, the Perry family shipped to Virginia prior to the 1670s. It is also unclear how early the Perry family began financing the slave ships that transported Africans to be sold in Virginia. Neither Gentry nor Price provided documentation that recorded members of the Perry family or Thomas Lane transporting enslaved Africans or indentured servants to Virginia before 1670.

Considering these circumstances coupled with affluent position he held within Surry County society, it is possible that Arthur Allen I, who was described as a planter and merchant in the *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* and *Encyclopedia Virginia* entries written by Gentry, may have participated in the domestic trade of indentured servants and enslaved people through the Perry family and Thomas Lane before the Perry & Lane Company was formed in 1673. Due to the fact that Gentry could not provide specific records such as bills of sale or shipping manifests that could definitively tie Arthur Allen to any specific trade participation or trader, locating that documentation would be necessary in order to substantiate this claim.

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Slavery in Surry County, Virginia in the 1650s and 1660s

Although slavery was legalized by the Surry County legislature c.1652 when the county was founded, the number of Africans and people of African descent in Virginia was very small for several decades. Thereby making slave ownership uncommon. Between 1648, around the time Allen settled in what would become Surry County, and 1671, the number of Africans in Virginia was low, compared to the total estimated number of people inhabiting Virginia. For example, population records show that there were roughly 300 Africans living in Virginia in 1648. Africans would have made up about 1.6% of Virginia’s population during that year. A similar occurrence can be seen just two years after Allen’s death in 1669. There were about 2,000 Africans recorded as living in Virginia in 1671. The number of Africans in Virginia rose up to 5.7% of the total population soon after Allen’s death.

Throughout the time Arthur Allen lived in Surry County, Africans and persons of African descent would have likely been very few in numbers, although they did indeed exist. A handful of Africans were in Surry County between 1652 and 1669. In one instance, Allen, a vestryman, was recorded as having witnessed the sale of a fourteen year old described as a “Negro boy” called Peter. The said Peter was sold by John Holmwood on 13 March 1654, to a Surry County man named Frances Slaughter. Peter was sold under the pretense that he would serve

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Slaughter for the rest of his life.\textsuperscript{7} The fact that this court record distinguished Peter’s lifetime servitude term from a temporary indenture contract shows two things. Firstly, it suggests that the concept of enslavement or permanent servitude in Surry County may not have been common in the 1650s. Secondly, it could also suggest that black indentured servants may have been present in the county and therefore the court had need to specify the permanent nature of Peter’s term of service. The institution of slavery was in its infancy during Allen’s lifetime. The rapid growth of the black presence at Allen’s Brick House, as well as, throughout Surry County became much more evident after Allen’s death in 1669.

\textbf{Arthur Allen II: Transition from Indentured Servants to Enslaved Labor}

Slave ownership was an integral part of life at Allen’s Brick House by the 1670s. Arthur Allen II was the first owner of the manor home to be recorded as having owned enslaved people on the property. He inherited the Brick House from his father in c. 1670. His slave ownership took place during Virginia’s transition period from white indentured labor to enslaved African labor. This happened fairly quickly. Between 1650 and 1715, the Virginia General Assembly began establishing Virginia’s “Black Codes,” a set of laws that cemented the slavery status of Africans and people of African descent.\textsuperscript{8} Characteristic of this period in

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{7} The sale of Peter, which took place in 1654, was recognized by the Surry County Court in 1656. Original court record taken from the Surry County, Virginia Court Records, 1652-1663 Book 1, pages 80-82 as referenced by Ywone Edwards-Ingram, PhD, \textit{Africans and African Americans at Bacon's Castle, Surry County, Virginia}, report, Preservation Virginia (Richmond, VA: A.P.V.A., 2007), 8.

Virginia’s early history, Allen II had a mixture of both white indentured servants and black enslaved people working on the property from c. 1673 to 1710.

The earliest account of Allen II’s slave ownership is recorded on 3 March 1673, when he was granted 2,000 acres of land by the Surry County Court through the headright system; a compensation program established in 1618 that encouraged planters to bring labor to the colony in exchange for land. He brought several white indentured servants to Allen’s Brick House in 1673, along with seven enslaved men: Simon, Emmanuell, Tony, Stephen, Comsee, Mingo, and Mathew. These men may be the first Africans or persons of African descent enslaved on the property. Simon and Emmanuell were amongst Allen II’s longest serving enslaved people; persons who were enslaved by him and his family for more than twenty years. Comsee, Mingo, and Mathew disappeared from Allen II’s tax records after 1673. While the fates of Comsee and Mathew have yet to be unveiled, Mingo might have gained his freedom sometime after 1673. He might be the Mingo recorded as having married a Surry County woman named Charity and fathered a daughter named Jane Mingo, who is listed in Surry County Court case records along with Charity in 1702 and 1712. The Mingo family line continued in Norfolk and Southampton County, Virginia well into the nineteenth century.

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10 Tony Elliott, a descendent of Martha and Cordelia Jones, as well as the Charity family line, believes that he may be related to Jane Mingo (and by proxy Mingo) through the Charity line. The Charity and Mingo families of Surry County, Virginia: Paul Heinegg, "Campbell-Charity," *Free African Americans of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, and Delaware, 2001*, http://www.freeafricanamericans.com/Campbell_Charity.htm.
By the time Arthur Allen II died in 1710, he had owned at least 44 enslaved people during his lifetime:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mingo (1673)</th>
<th>Ivy #1 (1688-1690)</th>
<th>Joyce (c. 1704-1710)</th>
<th>Ned (c. 1704-1710)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comsee (1673)</td>
<td>Frank (1689-1710)</td>
<td>Bess (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>George (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathow (1673)</td>
<td>Abraham (1690)</td>
<td>Roso (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Peter #2 (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen (1673-1678)</td>
<td>Sam #1 (1691-1701)</td>
<td>Peg (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Billy (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony (1673-1695)</td>
<td>Jack (1691-1710)</td>
<td>Savory (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Doll (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon (1673-1701)</td>
<td>Robin (1692-1710)</td>
<td>Dick #2 (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Peter #3 (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emanuell (1673-1702)</td>
<td>Moll (1694-1710)</td>
<td>Jean (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Marea (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary (1677-1701)</td>
<td>Ivy #2 (1696-1703)</td>
<td>Sam #2 (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Harry Lucas (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffery (1677-1702)</td>
<td>Peter #1 (1699-1700)</td>
<td>Sue #1 (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Little Dick (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick #1 (1686-1710)</td>
<td>Joy (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Sue #2 (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Great Dick (c. 1704-1710)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom (1687-1689)</td>
<td>Hannah (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td>Abigail (c. 1704-1710)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Allen II died, he had around 29 enslaved people who still lived at the Brick House. His last will and testament, proved in 1709, shows that six family units, made up of married couples and couples with children, were resident on the property. Five out of those six families were separated when Allen II mandated that all of his slaveholdings be divided amongst eleven of his family members – a mixture of his children, grandchildren, and siblings. This dispersal resulted in substantial family separation amongst the enslaved community at Allen’s Brick House. Some stayed on the property and went on to have other children or grandchildren, while several of these enslaved people ended up in Isle of Wight County, other parts of Surry County, or elsewhere. A handful of these people show up in both Arthur Allen III and his wife, Elizabeth Bray Allen’s property and estate records decades later. While it appears to have been common for enslaved spouses to remain together, often times the children were separated
from their families – with parents remaining at the Brick House, for example, while their children were enslaved by an Allen family member in another part of Surry or farther away in Isle of Wight County.

When Allen died in 1710, his last will and testament outlined how the 29 enslaved individuals still living on the property would be distributed amongst eleven of his family members:

1. Katherine Baker Allen (his wife) received Jack, his wife Joy, Frank and his daughter Hannah.
2. John Allen (his son) received Robin, his wife Jean, and Billy.
3. Katherine (his daughter) received Sam, Abigail, and Moll.
4. James Allen (his son) received Joyce, her husband Harry Lucas, and Tom.
5. Arthur Allen (his son) received Peter, his wife Bess, and their daughter Rose.
6. Ann (his daughter) received Peg, Savory, and Moll’s young son Dick.
7. Mary (his daughter) received Jean’s son Sam and Frank’s children Ned and Sue.
8. Joseph Allen (his son) received George and Bess’s children Sue and Peter.
9. Joan Procter (his sister) received Doll.
10. Joseph and Martha Bridger (his grandchildren) received Little Dick and Marea, respectively, Doll’s children – to be given to them in the event of their mother, Elizabeth Bridger’s, death. Until that time, they were to be retained by Elizabeth Bridger.

Arthur Allen II also specified a potential sale in his will. In the event of Moll’s death (who he described as “weak and ill”); if it occurred within 12 months of Allen II’s death, Katherine (his daughter) would be given an enslaved man called Great Dick. If Moll survived beyond that time frame, Allen II directed that Great Dick be sold, and the resulting funds added to his estate.  

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1710 marks the first recorded case of a major separation of enslaved families in the history of Bacon’s Castle.

Arthur Allen III: The First Large-Scale Separation of Enslaved Family Groups at Bacon’s Castle

The Allen family’s complex history with slave ownership continued during the life of Arthur Allen III, perhaps the most obscure out of the three generations of Allen men. Concerning slave ownership, he started out very small. He first received three enslaved people, Peter, Bess, and their daughter Rose, who were given to him through his father’s will in 1710. By the time Allen III died in 1727, his slaveholdings had increased to 25 people. During his lifetime, he owned two sizeable properties, Allen’s Brick House and Coppohonk Plantation in Isle of Wight County. The 25 enslaved people he owned were divided amongst both properties. According to his estate inventory, compiled after his death in 1727, Allen III had twelve enslaved people living on the property of the Brick House at the time of his death: Harry, Adam, Cato, Hannah, Fanny (Hannah’s daughter), Jeaney, Cyrus (Jeaney’s son), Rose, Abigail (Rose’s daughter), Phillis, Beck, and Vickin.12 The remaining thirteen were enslaved at

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Coppohonk: Oliver, Quashey, Peter #1, Caesar, Robin, Bess, Mireah, Betty, Sarah, Peter #2 (Sarah’s son), Daniel, Boatswain, and Salisbury.\(^{13}\)

The issue of family separation within the institution of slavery is central to understanding how the Allen family approached enslavement, particularly in the cases of Arthur Allen II and Arthur Allen III. Through examining their history of slave ownership, events did occur which illustrated how complicated family separation could be for the enslaved following the death of an Allen patriarch. For example:

Peter and Bess (whom I mentioned earlier) were a married couple originally enslaved at Bacon’s Castle by Arthur Allen II. They had three children. Two of whom, Peter and Sue, were sent to live in Isle of Wight County with Arthur Allen II’s son Joseph, while their third child, Rose, remained property of Arthur Allen III. Peter and Bess were enslaved by Allen III at Coppohonk Plantation, while Rose was enslaved at Bacon’s Castle, where she went on to have a daughter called Abigail.

This kind of scenario was very common in terms of slaveholding families who owned more than one plantation. Oftentimes, enslaved families would be broken up and divided amongst a slaveholder’s landholdings. While it is possible that the enslaved people of the Allen’s Brick House and Coppohonk Plantation could have had contact with each other and maintained some familial bonds, those family units would have been inevitably damaged due to that forced separation caused by the institution of slavery.

\(^{13}\) Also included in the estate count for Arthur Allen II which included Boatswain and Salisbury at Bacon’s Castle “Two Negro Men viz - Over the Chamber” who were originally owned by his father, Arthur Allen II: Virginia Barrett Price, "Keeping Up Appearances: Elizabeth Allen At Bacon's Castle, 1711-1774," *W&M Scholar Works* (1998): 151.
Elizabeth Allen Smith Stith: Property Ownership and Slave Sales

When Arthur Allen III died intestate in 1727, his wife, Elizabeth (Bray) Allen, took control of all his property, including the Brick House and all of the enslaved people resident. Beginning with the deaths of her husband, as well as her father, James Bray in 1725, accounting for the black presence at Bacon’s Castle becomes more complicated due in large part to the fact that she inherited a considerable amount of land wealth throughout her adult life. Her landholdings included Allen’s Brick House in Surry, as well as, property in James City County, Isle of Wight County, and Williamsburg. Concerning slave ownership, she retained the twenty-five people enslaved by Arthur Allen III. She also had additional opportunities to increase both her wealth in landholdings and in enslaved people, as she was married two other times: to Arthur Smith IV in 1729 and William Stith in 1761.

One of the most poignant cases of community separation occurred in 1774, when Elizabeth Allen died. According to her last will and testament, at the time of her death, she owned twelve enslaved people – three of whom, Jenny, Dick, and Phillis, were accounted for as persons originally enslaved by Arthur Allen II and Arthur Allen III. She mandated that all of her existing slaveholdings, save for James, Phillis and Dick, were to be sold away. The fates of James, Phillis, and Dick are currently unknown. Phillis and Dick would have been elderly by 1774. They may have remained at the Brick House to live out the rest of their lives or they may have been removed elsewhere. James may have also remained on the property, enslaved by Allen Cocke, Elizabeth Allen’s grandson and the next owner of the property. According to her last will and testament, the remaining eight enslaved people were likely sold separately – as she
did not mention any specific plans for how these people were to be sold and who they were to be sold to. Therefore, any family units that may have been built prior to 1774, were likely dismantled – perhaps entirely. Given Allen’s substantial land holdings in Surry, Isle of Wight, Williamsburg, and James City County, it is likely that she owned additional enslaved people throughout her life. The people shown here are who were included in her final will and estate inventory. We do know, however, is that she actively bought and sold enslaved people during her lifetime, including children like Mercury who was either taken from her estate or purchased explicitly to be given to her great grandson James Allen Bradby in 1769.

**Allen Cocke: Natural Reproduction and Slave Breeding**

In 1774, the Cocke family inherited Allen’s Brick House. Allen Cocke, son of Benjamin Cocke and Nancy (Kennon) Cocke, and grandson of Elizabeth Allen, became the fifth owner of Bacon’s Castle. Like Arthur Allen II, Arthur Allen III, and his grandmother before him, Allen Cocke was a slaveholder who owned and ran more than one plantation. Cocke owned enslaved people at the Brick House, as well as on a plantation in Fluvanna County, about 115 miles northwest of Surry County. When he died in December 1780, he divided all of his Brick House

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15 The “gifting” of Mercury from Stith to her great grandson James Allen Brady in 1769 as referenced in the APVA report written by Ywone Edwards-Ingram, PhD, *Africans and African Americans at Bacon's Castle, Surry County, Virginia*, report, Preservation Virginia (Richmond, VA: A.P.V.A., 2007), 27.
slave holdings, primarily a mix of women and young children, between his two daughters Ann and Catherine Cocke:

1. Ann received nine enslaved people plus their children from Bacon's Castle: **Sam, Martia** and her children, **Charlotte, Kitt, Tabb** and her children, **Sier** and her children, **Ben**, **Bridgett** and her children, and **Lucy** and her children. All of the children were under the age of fifteen years and therefore their names were not included in his will as they were not considered taxable property.

2. Catherine received eight people plus their children from Bacon's Castle, along with a group of thirteen women and young children from her father's Fluvanna County property. Cocke only specified the eight names and family units that came from Bacon's Castle: **Young Beck** and her children, **black Sam, Heziah** and her children, **Booker, Betty, Scott** and her children, **black Betty**, and **Sarah** and her children. As for the other thirteen people, Cocke stated that Catherine was to be given thirteen enslaved people (exclusively a mixture of women and children) from his Fluvanna plantation. Given that these enslaved people were not named, Catherine likely had the option of choosing whomever she wanted to take.

Allen Cocke directed that the majority of the enslaved people given to his daughters were to be women and their children. Very few enslaved men were mentioned by Cocke in his will, but it does appear that the aforementioned family units were able to stay at least partially intact, as mothers and their children remained together. In his last will and testament, he also
stated that his daughters were entitled to the offspring of these women "forever." This likely suggests that his intent for distributing his slave holdings in this way was meant to ensure that his daughters would have access to enslaved women who would continuously bare children. It is likely that Allen Cocke made these directives in order to ensure that the slaveholdings of his daughters would be able to continuously reproduce an enslaved labor force without having to purchase more enslaved people over time. In effect, Cocke bestowed upon his daughters the perfect environment for slave breeding. By the mid- to late eighteenth century, “natural” slave reproduction was a popular source for replenishing slave holdings rather than purchasing Africans through the international slave trade. This occurred throughout the British American colonies, thereby making the practice popular in Virginia, as well.

Richard H. Cocke: “John Claiborne” and the Nat Turner Rebellion

The relationship the Allen and Cocke families of Bacon’s Castle had with the institution of slave were typical, and were fraught with family separation, slave sales, and slave breeding. As a result of the institution of slavery and its effects on wider society, tensions had increased between white Virginians and free and enslaved African Americans by the nineteenth century. From 1800 to 1865, those tensions were continuously inflamed by the increasing threat of slave insurrections, anti-slavery ideology, and the debate over the morality and constitutionality of the institution of slavery. This tension was palpable for one Bacon’s Castle enslaved man whose

participation in the Nat Turner Rebellion in late August 1831 proved that Surry County was not immune to some of the most important events in Virginia’s history, as well as, the nation’s history.

John aka “John Claiborne,” was a man enslaved by Richard H. Cocke, then owner of Bacon’s Castle. John likely lived and worked on the Bacon’s Castle grounds. The earliest record of John appears to have been a public claim filed with the Surry County Court on behalf of Richard H. Cocke for the arrest and conviction of John in September 1831. Said claim states that on 26 September 1831, John, alias “John Claiborne”, a slave owned by Richard H. Cocke was tried and convicted in the Surry County Court for “having consulted, advised, plotted and conspired to rebel and make Insurrection” – in reference to his alleged participation in the Nat Turner Rebellion, which took place from August 21 to 23 of 1831. Post-conviction, John was initially ordered to be executed by hanging. The execution date was set for 28 October 1831. On 5 October, however, John was reprieved by Virginia Governor John Floyd. Instead of execution, he was sold and transported – presumably to Mississippi or Alabama – which were the popular sites for domestic transportation for “criminal slaves” at that time. Richard H.
Cocke was paid $400 by Surry County in compensation for John’s conviction and transportation.\(^\text{17}\)

The Nat Turner Rebellion originally erupted in Southampton County about 41 miles south of Surry County. As with many of Virginia’s slave insurrection cases, insurrections were often multi-county incidents. The wide-span of insurrectionist influence was noted by Governor Floyd in his message to the General Assembly regarding the Nat Turner insurrection on 6 December 1831:

There is much reason to believe that the spirit of insurrection was not confined to Southampton; many convictions have taken place elsewhere and some few in distant counties. From the documents which I herewith lay before you, there is too much reason to believe those plans of treason, insurrection and murder, have been designed, planned and matured, by unrestrained fanatics in some of the neighboring states, who find facilities in distributing their views and plans amongst our population, either through the post office, or by agents sent for that purpose throughout our territory.\(^\text{18}\)

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\(^{17}\) Public Claim of John alias John Claiborne filed by Richard H. Cocke, 5 October 1831, African American Narrative Digital Collection, Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA.

Possible evidence of the role Surry County played in the Nat Turner Rebellion is presented through the testimony of a fugitive slave called Stephen who was recorded as being an armed participant of the insurrection. According to the man who captured him, Stephen claimed that he had been forcibly conscripted by the fugitive rebels and was ordered by the “rebel leader” to go to the plantations in the surrounding counties that had the largest number of slaves on them and try to conscript people into joining the insurrection. According to his capturer, Stephen stated that he was told to invade the plantation of a major absentee slave owner who lived in Surry County. While it is unknown whether Stephen successfully conscripted any enslaved people from Surry County, this testimony coupled with the assertions by Governor Floyd regarding the multi-county nature of the Rebellion, open the possibility that John’s participation may have been influenced by enslaved people who traveled to Surry County from other areas during the Rebellion.

Living “Free” at Bacon’s Castle: The History of Martha and Cordelia Jones

Martha Jones (c. 1820-after 1871) worked as a maid and domestic servant for the Hankins family likely beginning sometime between 1850 and 1852. During this time she was

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19 A summary and analysis of the trial records of Stephen of Surry County, Virginia. Stephen’s Commonwealth Claim along with those of two other accomplices who made their way to Surry County during the Nat Turner Rebellion can be found in the Virginia Memory African American Digital Collection’s section of the Nat Turner court case documents at the Library of Virginia. The information referenced in those documents including the examination of Stephen’s participation in the Rebellion and his claim that the plot was intended to extend into Surry County can be found in: Patrick H. Breen, "Nat Turner's Revolt: Rebellion and Response in Southampton County Virginia," Vi (2005): 122, UGA GIL.
likely a permanent resident of Bacon’s Castle. Martha’s only child, Cordelia Jones (1852-1939), appears to have been conceived during the time in which Martha worked here. Cordelia was born at Bacon’s Castle in 1852. Her place of birth is substantiated by the information present on the death certificate of her son Albert Blizzard, who died in Surry County in 1948. The informant for Cordelia’s birthplace was her daughter-in-law Essie Blizzard (1905-1978), aunt of Brenda Blount-Hill (third great granddaughter of Cordelia Jones). The name “Patty” is likely a nickname or an incorrect dictation of a nickname provided to the county clerk by Essie Blizzard in 1948.

![Death certificate of Albert Blizzard, son of Cordelia Jones](image-url)
The biggest question regarding Martha and Cordelia’s relationship to Bacon’s Castle and the Hankins family is: were they free or were they enslaved people? While the descendants of the mother and daughter pair believed them to have been free, evidence does exist that suggests otherwise. The image below is page 4 of a letter written by Louisiana Hankins, wife of the owner of Bacon’s Castle, to her son, James DeWitt Hankins, on 3 September 1864. This letter can be found in the Hankins Family Papers which are currently housed in the manuscript collection of the Virginia Museum of History and Culture’s archives and library in Richmond, Virginia. This letter discusses the changing relationship between the enslaved community at Bacon’s Castle and the Hankins family during the final eight months of the Civil War.

Figure 3 A letter written by Louisiana Hankins to her son on 3 September 1864
Towards the end of this page, Louisiana Hankins informs her son of a group of black people from Bacon’s Castle who left property prior to 3 September. These appear to have all been enslaved people. The partial transcription for this section of the letter is as follows:

“I will give you the names of the negros who have left us. Walter, Emmanuel, Oscar, Jacob, Adeline, Lucy, Sam, Easter, Collier, Betty, Pocahontas, Fanny, [Lucy Joy?], Prince, Joe Fog, Martha, [and] Stephen ___Lyttleton.”

“We have four girls in Petersburg[:] Mary, Rachel, Rose, and Deliah. I am afraid the Yankees will get them.”

This section of the letter is very important to better understanding Martha and Cordelia’s relationship to slavery at Bacon’s Castle. None of Cordelia’s early descendants (her children and grandchildren) appeared to have known anything about the kidnapping and attempted killing of John Henry Hankins (owner of Bacon’s Castle) by fugitive slaves in December of 1864. The mention of the Martha and Deliah in the above letter might support why none of their early descendants were aware of this pivotal event in the lives of many enslaved people at Bacon’s Castle. If Martha and Cordelia had left or had been removed from the property by September of 1864, as this letter suggests, they never would have experienced the December event, which resulted in the liberation of several people enslaved by the Hankins family.

Are these the right ‘Martha’ and ‘Deliah’? Possibly. Given that ‘Deliah’ is referred to as a “girl” and Cordelia would have been about 13 years old at the time, this piece of information does appear to match. Further evidence exists in later county documents where Cordelia is

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21 For the incident’s description as told in the Hankins Family Papers: See page 27
formally referred to as “Delia” or “Delie” in official records such as marriage documentation, census records, and her death certificate. These items suggest that “Delia” was a common name by which Cordelia was called. The fact that the above-mentioned Martha left (or presumably escaped) Bacon’s Castle by September 1864 could account for why she (and Cordelia) were not recorded in any of the census records for Surry County prior to the Civil War. All Surry County census records that reference a “Martha Jones” include spouses and children that the accounts of Mildred Blount (second great granddaughter of Cordelia Jones - still living) could not corroborate as having been related to Martha in any way. Since they do not appear to have been recorded in any prewar censuses, but may have been mentioned by name amongst this list of runaway slaves, this potentially challenges the idea that Martha and Cordelia were free people. This discrepancy in documentation suggests that the lives of Martha and Cordelia were unusual and complicated compared to the wider free and enslaved black populations that lived in Surry County during this time period.

As for the lack of accounts from Cordelia for what took place in her life between 1861 and 1865 (the Civil War era), this might be explained by the way in which she described witnessing slavery at Bacon’s Castle during her childhood. According to her own words, the enslaved people who worked in the fields were “treated very bad” and that, as recounted by Mildred Blount, made her feel “really bad.” Slavery at Bacon’s Castle was harsh and likely abusive. This is reflected in the more than two dozen cases of enslaved people who ran away from Bacon’s Castle between 1861 and 1864. It is also reflected in how a group of armed fugitive slaves sought to kidnap and kill John Henry Hankins in December of 1864. Of that group of fugitives was a man named Collier who had run away from Bacon’s Castle the previous year.
Collier led the charge in the attempt to kill the man who formerly enslaved him. During that exact same span of time, the Hankins family took to removing dozens of their enslaved people from Bacon’s Castle and attempted to hide them or hire them out in Richmond, Petersburg, and Danville as a way to avoid Union soldiers and USCT from liberating them from enslavement. This turmoil happening around the young Cordelia, in particular, likely would have caused an immense amount of stress and fear. This might have been a period of time that she chose not to discuss often when she became an adult.

Ultimately, what has to be recognized is that the lives Martha and Cordelia Jones lived at Bacon’s Castle were very unique compared to the seemingly anonymous and unrecorded lives of the more than eighty African Americans who were enslaved by the Hankins family at Bacon’s Castle from 1850 to 1865. What appears to be clear at this point is that Martha and Cordelia Jones, regardless of whether they were enslaved or free, lived a “freer” existence than the average enslaved African American person at Bacon’s Castle during this time. In a sense, Martha and Cordelia appear to have lived in a gray-area between enslaved and free. This becomes more evident when considering Cordelia’s own accounts about her life at Bacon’s Castle. The main thing that stands out in the accounts of her descendants is the series of strange contrasts they retell. For example, she was never made to toil outside as the poorly treated and overworked enslaved were. According to Cordelia, she was treated like one of the Hankins children and freely played with them all throughout the house, but at the same time had to sleep in one of the cubby holes in the garret, which she referred to as “a hole in the wall”. While she was clearly not treated like a “typical” enslaved person would have been, she
was not wholly treated like a free person either or as a person equal to the Hankins children.  

The reason for her unusual circumstances is attributable to the likelihood that Cordelia was the product of a relationship Martha Jones had with John Henry Hankins. According to Brenda Blount-Hill, Cordelia spent her entire life believing that John Henry Hankins was her biological father, although the exact details of that relationship’s dynamic are currently unknown.

**John Henry Hankins: The Civil War and Black Resistance**

Surry County’s runaway slave registry from 1861-1862 shows how the Civil War (and likely growing anti-slavery sentiment) impacted Surry County’s enslaved population – included many of the enslaved people who lived at Bacon’s Castle.  

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22 “Interview With Brenda Blount,” interview taken by Peighton L. Young, Preservation Virginia (Peighton L. Young), transcript, June 12, 2019.  
The registry included eight fugitive slave men owned by John H. Hankins, all between the ages of 17 and 24, who ran away from Bacon’s Castle and escaped to Union army lines during Civil War, between 1861 and 1863:

1. John, aged 24
2. Austin, aged 19
3. George, aged 21
4. Archer, aged 24
5. Tom, aged 20
6. Frank, aged 19
7. Flemming, aged 17
8. Everett, aged 17

One of them, named Archer, was mentioned in one of letters as being “troublesome” in terms of his behavior.\(^{24}\) In an 1862 letter, concerned about the possibility of enslaved people running away from their property, Louisiana instructed her daughter not to tell the other enslaved people about the fugitive slaves in Surry who have been running away and escaping to Union lines. In a letter to her daughter Virginia, Louisiana Hankins implored her daughter to “be careful and not say before any servants about the servants in this part of the country going to the Yankees. I have no confidence in any [of the slaves]. I believe all the young negroes will go.”\(^{25}\)

Dozens of enslaved people were mentioned by name in the family’s letters. Louisiana noted that almost all the Hankins family slaveholdings had escaped by 8 September 1864. Some

\(^{24}\) Archer is mentioned in a letter John Henry Hankins wrote to his children in either May of June of 1862. In this letter, Hankins discusses the prognosis of Archer, who, in the spring of 1862, had been “very ill” with typhoid fever. Hankins employed a Dr. Crump to attend to Archer and visit him “every day for ten days” for treatment. Archer recovered. This note represents evidence that the Hankins provided doctors for ill enslaved people: Letter from Henry Hankins, 1862, Hankins Family Papers, Virginia History Society (Virginia Museum of History and Culture) Manuscripts Collection: Mss1 H1946 b 139, Section 11, Letters #6 and #7.

of the names of those who escaped were: Paulina, Gilly and his grandson, Arabella and her children, and Adeline – whom Hankins mentioned by name.26 Beginning in 1863, Louisiana, Virginia, John Henry, and James DeWitt Hankins frantically tried to remove all of their slave holdings from Surry in order to avoid slave escape apprehends as the war closed in. They had many enslaved people either hired out or placed in “safe places” in Richmond, Petersburg, and Danville.

Isaac: Enslaved Wartime Body Servant

Isaac was a man enslaved by the Hankins family at Bacon’s Castle during the Civil War. Little is known about his life or experiences at Bacon’s Castle, save for the fact that he acted as the field and body servant of James DeWitt Hankins during the Civil War. Hankins was a commissioned officer in the Confederate Surry Light Artillery, which was often stationed in and around Richmond, Virginia. Isaac was either sent to serve Hankins during this period or Hankins specifically chose Isaac to him in this capacity. A good sense of how James DeWitt Hankins viewed the “necessity” of Isaac’s role is discussed in a letter sent by James DeWitt Hankins to his father on 19 July 1861. In that letter, Hankins stated that “the service of a servant I find to be indispensable in a camp.”27

26 Hankins Family Papers, Section 11.
27 Hankins Family Papers, Section 11, Letter #5.
Wartime letters sent from Hankins to Louisiana and John Henry Hankins show that Isaac functioned in this capacity from 1861 to sometime after April 1863. It is difficult to pinpoint when he left this post as Isaac is mentioned in the Hankins family letters infrequently. One of Isaac’s duties appears to have included providing Hankins with intelligence. Based on the correspondence Hankins had with his mother, Louisiana, the intelligence provided by Isaac would have often included information regarding the growing presence of Union soldiers, USCT, and armed runaway slaves in Surry County and the impact they had on the stability of the area. By 1863, Isaac’s intelligence gathering would have been necessary in order to keep James DeWitt Hankins informed as the African American community in Surry began to rise up against slaveowners; executing plantations raids, damaging property, and liberating many enslaved people. At present, there is no evidence that Isaac relayed the names of specific participants of the Surry uprisings to Hankins or participated in them directly. Isaac was also likely used to bring supplies to Hankins from Bacon’s Castle, but he was not the only Hankins slave to act in this capacity. Another enslaved man named Oscar (who had escaped Bacon’s Castle by 3 September 1864), was also responsible for bringing supplies to Richmond for James DeWitt Hankins. On 12 February 1863, Oscar was unable to continue functioning in this capacity when he was afflicted with Rheumatism.

Isaac had family at Bacon’s Castle. In the aforementioned letter dated 3 September 1864, Louisiana Hankins told James DeWitt to “Say to Isaac his relations are well and send love.”

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28 Hankins Family Papers, Virginia History Society (Virginia Museum of History and Culture) Manuscripts Collection: Mss1 H1946 a 206-244, Section 12, Letter #2, page 4-5.
could the surname or names of any of his family members be identified in the Hankins papers. More research would need to be done in order to find out whether Isaac survived the Civil War and, if he did, what happened to him during the postwar years.

**Surry County Slave Revolt**

In late 1864, many fugitive enslaved people, including several of the Hankins’ runaway slaves, took up arms against the white population of Surry County. By the summer of 1864, both Louisiana and John Henry Hankins discussed at length the crisis of the armed fugitives pillaging homes and liberating the enslaved population of Surry. Their concern came to a head in December of 1864 when both James DeWitt and Louisiana Hankins discussed the kidnapping of John Henry by armed fugitive slaves. According to them, one evening that December, a group of armed escaped slaves raided Bacon’s Castle, robbed it, damaged property, liberated three enslaved people, and kidnapped John Henry Hankins by putting a gun to his side and “carrying him off.” Hankins was taken to the bank of the James River and tied to a tree, with an intent to whip him. The situation quickly devolved when the group then decided that they wanted to shoot him, instead. When Hankins asked “why?” the group stated that he had been a “bad master” to his slaves. Hankins denied this. Upon finding Collier, a man formerly enslaved by him, Hankins asked Collier to tell the group that he had not been a bad master. Collier replied by saying that Hankins was a bad master – “shoot him.” According to James DeWitt Hankins, John Henry Hankins’ “life was saved by the interposition of a negro that belonged to
Dr. [Cole], who said the charge of his having been a bad master was false.”29 This near-fatal encounter with Collier, denotes the abusive treatment that likely befell the enslaved people of Bacon’s Castle.

Given the familiarity by which Collier was discussed in the Hankins family letters coupled with the fact that he had been enslaved by Louisiana’s brother, likely meant that he was often present at Bacon’s Castle and had been exposed to the Haskins family’s treatment of enslaved people on the property. Considering the witness accounts of Cordelia Jones, her own words substantiate the notion that the Hankins family treated the enslaved people at Bacon’s Castle poorly. Collier, and several other enslaved people from Bacon’s Castle, participated in what was likely one of the largest uprisings of enslaved African Americans in Surry County’s history.

**From the Hankins to the Warrens: Post-Slavery Black Life at Bacon’s Castle, 1870-1972**

This section encompasses the remaining family histories provided by descendants of the enslaved and free black people who lived at Bacon’s Castle during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries:

**The History of Merritt Bains Poole and His Smithfield Funeral Home**

*(Interview conducted with Ernest Bains Poole on 22 May 2019 and Additional Research)*

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29 Collier in mentioned a letter from Louisiana Hankins to her son James DeWitt, written on 11 December 1864 (the same month John Henry Hankins was taken captive a band of “negro marauders”). Louisiana Hankins noted that Collier was amongst a group of “armed negros” traversing Surry County and the surrounding area. Hankins Family Papers, Section 11, Letters #8, #13, and #14.
Back in May, I spoke with a man named Ernest Poole. His family owns Poole’s Funeral Home in Smithfield – a business that is nearly 130 years old. Mr. Poole happily discussed the family business and his grandfather, **Merritt Bains Poole**’s relationship to it. Although he said he was aware that his grandfather had a connection to Bacon’s Castle, he did not know exactly how his grandfather was connected. As I have progressed through my research, Merritt Bains Poole appears several times in the death certificates of several sharecroppers and domestic workers who lived and died at Bacon’s Castle at the turn of the twentieth century. According to the death certificates signed by him, Poole was a resident of Bacon’s Castle between c. 1890 and 1949. Poole took care of the funeral and burial services for people who lived in Bacon’s Castle’s black community following the Reconstruction Era.\(^{30}\)

Merritt Bains Poole was born sometime between 1865 and 1868, possibly in Poquoson, York County, where he and his family were recorded as living in the 1870 census. He was described as a mulatto (as were previous generations of the Poole family). His parents were Reverend Thomas H. Poole (1834-1912) and Mary Jane Walden Poole (1839-1872). They were both from Surry County, originally. His father Thomas had a younger brother, **Sgt. Merritt Poole** (1840-before 1906), who enlisted in Company G of the 36\(^{th}\) Infantry, United States Colored Troops (USCT) on 3 October 1863. He served in the USCT from 1863 to 1865.\(^{31}\) Sgt. Merritt Poole is recorded as having been born in Surry County, along with all of his siblings and his

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\(^{30}\) “Interview With Ernest Poole,” interview by Peighton L. Young, Preservation Virginia (Peighton L. Young), phone interview, May 21, 2019.

parents Merritt Poole (c. 1810-1859) and Avy (or Avery/Avey) Poole (1813-1862). The elder Merritt Poole (born c. 1810) was recorded as a “free colored person” in the 1840 census for Surry County, living with his mother Elizabeth Poole. Subsequent county records place Merritt Poole as a farmer, as well as, a resident and owner of a small amount of property in Southwark Parish in Surry. The history of the Poole family, a free family of mix-raced origins, can traced back to Northampton County in 1740.

Merritt Baine Poole had one (full) sibling, Perry, born in c. 1866. Poole was living in the Cobham District of Surry County by 1880, where he was living with his father, by then a Baptist preacher, his step-mother Harriet Anna Wilson Poole, and nine half-brothers and half-sisters. He married Ellen Baird in 1889. The couple had ten children between 1891 and 1913. According to Ernest Poole, his grandfather Merritt opened up his funeral home in 1890, with a two horse drawn buggy. The horses' names were Sam and Dick. He did not get a proper hearse until 1893. Poole’s earliest record of residency at Bacon’s Castle may be in October of 1912, when his father died. Thomas H. Poole’s death certificate lists Merritt as the undertaker, who was recorded as resident at Bacon’s Castle on the document. Poole either rented one of the former slave cabins or a section of the main house.

Along with his father and other siblings, Poole also provided funerary and burial services for other Bacon’s Castle residents including Ellen (Ridley) Pierce, Robert Pierce Sr.,

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34 “Interview With Ernest Poole,” interview by Peighton L. Young.
Robert Pierce Jr., and Cordelia (Jones) Blizzard Jenkins. It is almost certain that Poole provided services for other residents of the black community at Bacon’s Castle. Merritt Bains Poole died on 7 July 1949.  

The Family History of Camilla “Millie” Pierce (Interview conducted with Barbara Anderson 22 June 2019 and Additional Research)

According to Barbara Anderson, Camilla Pierce had been enslaved to John Henry Hankins before he purchased Bacon’s Castle in 1844. She, as well as many others, remained enslaved on the property through the Civil War. Anderson said that those who were enslaved by John Henry Hankins, who were still on the property when the Civil War ended, remained enslaved at Bacon’s Castle after 1865. Anderson asserted that the Hankins family did not inform the enslaved people that slavery had ended, thus subverting the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery in 1865. This tactic was not uncommon amongst slaveholders who tried to hang on to their enslaved workforce after Emancipation.

Bacon’s Castle operations became unstable beginning in 1870 when, soon before John Henry Hankins death, Bacon’s Castle was mortgaged due to financial instability caused by postwar debts and a labor shortage caused by influences of emancipation and the Hankins’ persistent problem with enslaved people running away from the property during the Civil War.

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36 “Interview With Barbara Anderson,” interview by Peighton L. Young, Preservation Virginia (Peighton L. Young), oral history, June 22, 2019.
When I asked Anderson what happened to Camilla and her family during the 1870s, she said that once the financial situation became dyer, Virginia Hankins began “kicking people off” the property. With nowhere to go, many of the formerly enslaved ended up on Bell’s Plantation near Bacon’s Castle, where work was available. Some of the people who left for Bell’s were affiliated with the Pierce family. The following information is a combination of Anderson’s oral account, census reports, property tax inventories, and death certificates made available through the National Archives:

Camilla was born around June of 1835 (some census records also list 1833 or 1837) to a woman named Holland (or Harlan), who was born in 1813. According to Barbara Anderson, Camilla was enslaved by John Henry Hankins before arriving in Surry County. If this was the case, Camilla and Holland were likely enslaved at Cherry Hill in York County, the Hankins family home at the time. The 1851 property tax record for Surry County shows that John Henry Hankins had more than 63 enslaved people over the age of sixteen years that were resident on the Bacon’s Castle property. Given that Hankins was already a well-established plantation owner in York County before moving to Bacon’s Castle in 1844, it is likely that many of the enslaved people owned by Hankins during this time were originally for the Cherry Hill property.

In 1844, Hankins purchased Bacon Castle. Camilla, by now about nine years old, was living as an enslaved person on the Bacon’s Castle grounds. In 1852, around the age of seventeen, she had her first child, Alfred, with husband Albert Pierce. Natural reproduction of

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37 A transcription of Surry County Court, Property Tax Record from 1851. Typescript by Mary Ballard Fontaine Breath, April 1975, Hankins Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society (Virginia Museum of History and Culture) Manuscript Collection, Mss1 H 1946 b 139, Section 11, Item #4.
enslaved populations likely accounts for Hankins’ high number of slaveholdings during that time. As previously stated, the 1851 property tax record for Hankins shows that he had 63 enslaved people living at Bacon’s Castle who were over the age of sixteen. Large families were often encouraged by slaveholders and this could account for why Camilla created such a large family while still enslaved. Between 1852 and 1861, the couple had six children in total. Four sons: Alfred, Robert, Richard, and Charles. And two daughters: Francis and Lavinia. Camilla and Albert Pierce do not appear to have been legally married and likely died relatively young. In the 1870 census, Camilla is listed as “Camilla Pierce” along with her six children, but Albert is not included in that report, nor in any subsequent reports made between 1870 and 1900.38

Unlike some of the people formerly enslaved by the Hankins family, Camilla appears to have stayed at Bacon’s Castle for the rest of her life. On the 1870 census, Camilla and her family were listed as residents of the Cobham magisterial district of Surry County – which included the sizeable Bacon’s Castle plantation grounds and the area around it. Death records from latter members of the Pierce family show that Camilla and subsequent generations of the Pierce family, as well as several other black residents of the property, remained at Bacon’s Castle for several decades after emancipation and well into the twentieth century. Camilla, who was employed as a domestic servant (either at Bacon’s Castle or on another property), lived on the property as a “free person” from c. 1870 to c. 1905, the year she is supposed to have died.

The Pierce family line was continued on the property by some of her children. Her son, Robert Pierce Sr. was born enslaved at Bacon’s Castle in c. 1854 and died on the property on 3

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September 1930. He was described as having been “in bad health for a long time” at the time of his death. Robert Pierce Sr. worked as a farmer (likely a tenant farmer on the Bacon’s Castle property given the address listed on his death certificate). He was married to a woman named Ellen Ridley, who was born in Surry County in 1859 to Lucinda Ridley of Surry and an unidentified father. Between 1879 and 1902, Robert Sr. and Ellen had fifteen children: Albert, Fannie, Lucinda, Charlie, Robert Jr., Irene, Joseph, Virginia, Rogers, Tasey, Fahey, William Lee, Mary S., Lossie, and Walter. According to the Cobham District Census for 1900, Millie Pierce (Camilla) was living with her son Robert Sr., daughter-in-law Ellen, and ten of her grandchildren in the same household.

Ellen Ridley Pierce died at Bacon’s Castle after a month-long bout with typhoid fever on 24 November 1915. She was 56 years old. A disease commonly caused by food or water contaminated with fecal matter, typhoid fever is extremely contagious. 20% of untreated sufferers died from it. It would have been highly likely that typhoid fever affected other members of the black community living at Bacon’s Castle. Many of these people were farmers and therefore may have been exposed to contaminants such as livestock waste or may have lived in potentially less than ideal living conditions in terms of a lack of accessibility to safe waste removal. Arnold Johnson’s interview (on page 34) corroborates the notion that typhoid and other illnesses were caused by a lack of plumbing and proper sanitation. From 1951 to

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40 Typhoid fever was also mentioned by John Henry Hankins as having afflicted Bacon’s Castle enslaved man Archer in 1862 (See footnote #24 on page 24). The Bacon’s Castle area may have been prone to typhoid outbreaks. If this was the case, the State of Virginia, who recorded major disease outbreaks at this time, did not record an occurrence of a typhoid outbreak around November of 1915. The issue may have been localized to Bacon’s Castle, specifically.
1963, Johnson lived in one the old slave cabins constructed at Bacon’s Castle during the 1830s. According to him, that cabin “didn’t have a kitchen or toilet or running water.” According to Johnson’s cousin, Brenda Blount-Hill, 4x great granddaughter of Cordelia Jones, many Surry County homes did not have plumbing. Blount-Hill further stated during an interview in July 2019, that her home did not get plumbing installed until 1978, when she was in college.

After Ellen’s death, Robert Sr. continued to work as a farmer, living in the same rented home. By 1920, he was living with two of his children, Mary S. and Walter Pierce (by then, in their twenties) and two grandsons Ralls and Thomas Pierce, in the same home he shared with his mother, wife, and children decades prior. It is with Robert Pierce Sr. and Ellen Ridley Pierce’s children that we start to see a larger dispersal of people who were born to parents of Bacon’s Castle’s black community after slavery. Several of the Pierce children left Surry County. Some stayed as close as Petersburg or Norfolk, while others moved as far away as Philadelphia. Some of the Pierce children did, however, remain at Bacon’s Castle throughout their lifetimes.

One of those offspring was Robert Pierce Jr., who was born at Bacon’s Castle either on 5 October 1883 or 7 October 1885. Robert Jr. was a resident of the Bacon’s Castle property as a child and as an adult. He was a farmer who likely worked as sharecropper on the property. The 1910 Cobham census shows that twenty-five year old Robert Jr., then-unmarried, was living alone in a rented plot upon the property on which he farmed. He worked on his “own account.” In 1911, he married a woman named Hattie Hardy. By the time of his death, the couple had divorced. They appear to have had no children. Robert Pierce Jr. died at Bacon’s Castle on 17

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41 A quote from the Interview with Arnold Johnson.
42 Taken from the second Interview with Brenda Blount-Hill.
April 1946, aged 61 or 62.\textsuperscript{43} His death was confirmed by his sister Irene Pierce, whose listed address was also Bacon’s Castle, although she did eventually move to Norfolk in her later life.

The Early Life of Arnold Johnson at Bacon’s Castle
(Transcription of Interview Conducted on 30 July 2019)

\textbf{Me}: “Where were you born and what is your relationship to Bacon’s Castle?”

\textbf{Mr. Johnson}: “In Surry County. I was raised at Bacon’s Castle when I was young. I lived there 60 years ago. I’m 74....75 now.”

\textbf{Me}: “When did you live at Bacon’s Castle? What part of the property did you live on? Did you live in the house or one of the slave cabins?”

\textbf{Mr. Johnson}: “I lived in a little slave house that was built in the 1830s. The house didn’t have a kitchen or toilet or running water. We moved there in 1951. My mother was a midwife. Her name was Juliana Johnson. She delivered 341 babies. She delivered me herself.”

\textbf{Me}: “Juliana Johnson wasn’t your birth mother?”

\textbf{Mr. Johnson}: “No. She adopted me.”

\textbf{Me}: “If you don’t mind me asking. Who was your birth mother?”

\textbf{Mr. Johnson}: “My birth mother was a woman named Jesteen White. Her married name was Twine. She was about 18 or 19 years old. She wasn’t married. She was single. She had ten children all together. Including me.”

\textbf{Me}: “Did she live in the Bacon’s Castle area as well?”

\textbf{Mr. Johnson}: “No. She lived at another home.”

\textbf{Me}: “In Surry County?”

\textbf{Mr. Johnson}: “Yes.”

Me: “Can you tell me about more about your parents’ lives at Bacon’s Castle when you were a kid?”

Mr. Johnson: “My father was Artis Johnson. He worked at Fort Monroe.

Me: “And how long did your mother work as a midwife?”

Mr. Johnson: “A lot of people came after Juliana, she’d go to their homes and deliver children.

Me: “Did she deliver just black babies, or did she also deliver white babies? I’ve heard of midwives being asked to deliver both.”

Mr. Johnson: “Black babies. But I don’t know if she delivered white babies.”

Me: “Okay. How long was she a midwife in Surry?”

Mr. Johnson: “She stopped working in 1967. I left in 1963. We moved to Isle of Wight. She died last year. She was 103.”

Me: “That’s amazing. She lived a very long time. What was life like at Bacon’s Castle when you were a kid?”

Mr. Johnson: “It wasn’t the best experience. Well… I don’t know. I went to the hickory grove school. That’s where the children went.”

Me: The children that lived on the Bacon’s Castle property or around that area?

Mr. Johnson: Yes.

Me: Do you remember where your house would have been located? I recently spoke to a descendant of the Twines who lived in an old slave cabin out behind the main house in the woods. The lived next to Lucy Grain’s house.

Mr. Johnson: I know Lucy Grain, but my cabin wasn’t in the woods. It was right next to the Castle.

Me: Close by?

Mr. Johnson: Yes. You could walk to it. It wasn’t far. We had neighbors. We lived next to the Prices. They were a white family. They had a better house, compared to ours. They lived there for years.

Me: “And were a lot of children your age in the area for you to play with growing up?”

Mr. Johnson: “There were a few, but not many. There were some children in the area, the Spratleys, the Browns, the Lytles.”

Me: “I’ve come across several people whose ancestors worked as sharecroppers at Bacon’s Castle or as housekeepers and domestic servants. Did you ever work at Bacon’s Castle?”

Mr. Johnson: I never worked there. Some people were sharecroppers. I met this lady at Bacon’s Castle. Her grandfather and grandmother worked as sharecroppers in the ’20s and ’30s. Her
name is Diana Keen. She worked inside the home. She is related to the Warren family on the mother’s side. I think that family owned the home since 1870s. Keen’s mother was born at Bacon’s Castle. Her family lived there for more than 20 years. Diana Keen was married there, and she and her son continued to work there. Her mother was a midwife and so was her grandmother.

**Me:** Do you remember how black people were treated at Bacon’s Castle? What was the quality of life?

**Mr. Johnson:** They were treated fine. There was an owner who was mean. Not a Warren. Life was normal life growing up.

**Me:** “Would you say that Surry was an integrated area?”

**Mr. Johnson:** “It was integrated. Well. Not really. There were much more black people than white living there.”

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**Information Gathered From an Interview with Spencer McCall**

**Conducted on 22 August 2019 (Needs Further Review and Research)**

Spencer McCall, a current resident of Florida and former resident of Chatham County, North Carolina, claims that he is the tenth great grandson of Arthur Allen II. His identifies as an African American person. His proof for this claim comes in the form of detailed family history that begins in France. According to McCall, his connection to the Allen family began with white French ancestors. This story began with a man named Henri Cabanis (1675-?) who, along with his wife Marie and his son Henri, boarded a ship called the Mary and Ann in England with the intent of escaping the persecution of the Huguenots in Europe. On 31 July 1700, Cabanis and his family docked on the James River just north of present-day Richmond. He, along with several hundred French Huguenots, were promised substantial land grants in Lower Norfolk County,

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44 “Interview With Arnold Johnson,” interview by Peighton L. Young, Preservation Virginia (Peighton L. Young), oral history, July 30, 2019.
near Jamestown. Instead, they were settled in an abandoned Monacan Native American Village, then known as Manakin Town in what is now present-day Henrico County, Virginia.

Cabinis’s son, Henri Caviness (1699-1771), married a woman named Jane Allen, whom McCall claims is a granddaughter of Arthur Allen II. Jane Allen’s father was supposedly William Allen, member of the House of Burgess – but is unclear whether the dates of Allen’s service to the House of Burgess (1758-1761) match up with the timeline of his daughter’s marriage to Henri Caviness. Henri and Jane had a son named Matthew Caviness. Matthew married a woman named Ann and moved to Mecklenburg County, Virginia where they had a son named John in 1787. The couple and their son moved to Chatham County, North Carolina on 24 January 1799 and settled in Cedar Creek (present-day Bennett, North Carolina). John married a woman named Elizabeth “Betsy” Walden, who was a part of the free mulatto Walden family of Chatham and Randolph County, North Carolina. Many of the Walden family were described as “white passing” people. The children subsequently had by John and Betsy formed the familial link with Arthur Allen II’s family line in Surry County, Virginia.45

*The above described relationship between the Allen, Caviness/Cabanis, and Walden families will need further research in order to make sure the claims made by McCall are accurate.

**Other descendants that should be spoken to if and when the opportunity arises:**

- Adrian Whitmore
- Lucy Grain
- Thomas Hardy

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45 "Interview With Spencer McCall," interview by Peighton L. Young, Preservation Virginia (Peighton L. Young), oral history, August 22, 2019.
Primary Sources


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