

Nathan Pearce, I and his family of Franklin County, NC
UAFA Enrolled Family AFEF No. 4

I. Introduction:

This compendium for the descendants of Nathan Pearce is being created, maintained, and updated by the Upchurch and Allied Families Association and cooperators with the purpose of having at one online site details about this UAFA “enrolled” family. Today, thousands can trace their heritage back to Nathan Pearce.

Each UAFA enrolled family is served by a coordinator. Initially, the default coordinator of all enrolled families is Phil Upchurch, the founder of UAFA. Financial support is required to enroll and augment records for an enrolled family and to keep it online for the long term. The financial co-sponsors of the Nathan Pearce family and active supporters will be reported in periodic e-newsletters to the Nathan Pearce family. The ultimate goal is to have a minimal endowment of \$10,000 for this family, the earnings of which will support the records of this particular family and UAFA.

Historically, the records for the Nathan Pearce family have been found in a great many places. By “enrolling” this family under the auspices of UAFA, the intent is to have a central portal which will readily allow a member of this family to see and understand reference materials about their heritage. Much of this material exists in the Allied Family Archives amassed by Phil Upchurch over a forty-year period. This and other resources will set the stage for further research, or for the creation of a comprehensive family history. Progress will depend on collaboration.

Readers are aware of the large amount of conflicting data for any given family on Ancestry.com and other sites. It is difficult and essentially impossible to get these conflicts resolved online. Furthermore, some of these sites fade from view over time. The plan and intent of UAFA is to resolve both of those issues. It is our intent that content portrayed by UAFA for an enrolled family will be factual and subject to ongoing validation and that the content will remain online for the long term under the auspices of UAFA. To make this a reality, UAFA must be sustained by an active volunteer Board of Directors, volunteer cooperators must be active participants, and some hired help must be available. Tax-deductible financial contributions will be important to allow all of this to happen. You may go to the [Home Page](#) of Allied Families to find a membership/contribution form.

The concept of Allied Families Association, formed in 2013, traces back to Richard Upchurch, II (1725 – 1798), who lived in Franklin County, NC. Nathan Pearce, his wife Ann or Nancy, and his children arrived in about 1775 in the area of Wake County that would become Dunn Township of Franklin County. The Pearce and Upchurch families lived as close neighbors with many interactions, and eventually Pearce-Upchurch marriages took place. Thus, it is fitting that the Nathan Pearce family be enrolled as one of the key allied families on our Allied Families website as a companion to several enrolled families represented by patriarchs of the children of Richard Upchurch, II. Upchurch family

research dating back to the 1950s has often touched upon the Pearce family and many Pearce descendants have been cooperators during 37 years of publishing the Upchurch Bulletin. It gives great satisfaction to give added attention to the Pearce family through enrolling the Nathan Pearce family.

While not the burden of this presentation, a few comments can be made about the heritage of Nathan Pearce. He was the oldest of five minor sons who were named in the will of his father Philip Pearce (dated 16 January 1726/1727 and probated 22 April 1728, Isle of Wight County, VA, Will Book 3, pp. 77-78). The other minor sons were Arthur, Richard, Simon, and Thomas. The father, Phillip Pearce, was born before 1684 (probably in the Isle of Wight or Nansemond Co., VA) and the mother was Sarah whose maiden name is unknown. The grandfather was George Pearce who was born before 1648 in Virginia or England and died in 1705 in Isle of Wight Co., VA.

Later in this narrative a list will be given of the children and grandchildren of Nathan and their spouses. We will strive to digitalize and post the Biofiles of these individuals as we have for other patriarchs. In the meantime a brief listing of the known children of Nathan will allow us to comment on the early linkage of members of their family to our Allied Families network.

The children of Nathan Pearce I:

- 1 Stephen Pearce (1751? – 1831)
- 2 Phillip Pearce (1754 – 1812)
- 3 Arthur Pearce (1758? – 1795)
- 4 James Pearce (1760? – 1794)
- 5 Elizabeth Pearce (1767 – 1844)
- 6 John Pearce (1768 – 1843)

Stephen Pearce was likely the oldest Pearce child. He was born as early as 1751, from various census records, in Isle of Wight Co., VA, and died before Aug 1831 in Wake Co., NC. He produced seven to nine children. He may have had as many as seven children with a first wife (whose name is not known): five daughters Charlotte, Elizabeth, Mary, Cherry, and Nancy Pearce and possibly two sons in the 1790 Census, whose names have been lost. He also had two sons with his second wife Elizabeth Bryant Stallings: Calvin and Bryant Stallings. These children went on to marry into local families: Charlotte Pearce to Jubal Upchurch, I (a son of Richard, II); Elizabeth Pearce to Simion Carpenter; Mary Pearce to James Perry; Cherry Pearce to Drury Denton; Nancy Pearce to Brinkley Strickland; Calvin Stallings to Amenia Gay; and Bryant Wester Stallings to Nancy Gay.

Phillip Pearce was born 24 Jul 1754 in Isle of Wight Co., VA, and died 25 Feb 1812 in Franklin Co., NC. In 1778, he married Nancy Bunn from another pioneer family of Dunn Township. Their son Nathan Pearce, II, married Susan Upchurch, a granddaughter of Richard Upchurch, II. Nathan Pearce, II, had a son Acril Pearce (1814 – 1880), who is the ancestor of Tony Brooks Pearce, a cooperator and noted Pearce family historian. Tony has located the grave of Acril, fenced it, and arranged for its preservation. Another son of Phillip Pearce, John Pearce, II, married Frances Upchurch, another granddaughter of Richard Upchurch, II.

Arthur Pearce died in 1795 in Franklin Co., NC, leaving two minor children, Cordy and Willie. His nearby neighbor, Moses Upchurch, a son of Richard Upchurch, II, was named guardian of the two children. Both boys had moved to York Co., SC, by 1830.

James Pearce died in 1794 leaving his wife Mary and five young children: daughters Bedey, Bitsey, Penney, and Patsey and his son Willis. These children integrated into the community. Penney married Littlebury Horton, Bedey married George Bell, and Willis married Sarah Hoggwood.

Elizabeth Pearce and her brother John have a story that must be told together. Elizabeth married Thomas Ray in Wake Co., NC, in 1783. John Pearce apparently married Clara Upchurch, the daughter of Richard Upchurch, III, shortly thereafter. These two families eventually moved to Randolph Co., NC, to Rowan Co., NC, and finally to Shelby Co., IN. Descendants of Thomas Ray and Elizabeth Pearce formed the Nail – Ray Association in 1983 with the publication of a genealogy on the Ray-Pearce family. Our continuing collaborators from this group include Janet Ross and her husband David Ross.

It is almost impossible to study one of the Revolutionary War era families of Dunn Township in Franklin County, NC without treating other nearby families. So it is that as we place on the record more details about the family of Nathan Pearce, I, the more we will reveal about Allied Families. Therein lays the strength of our Upchurch and Allied Families Association, Inc.

II. An Overview of Nathan Pearce, I, and his Family

A. A brief review of the life of Nathan Pearce, I.

Much has already been written about this family in the Introduction. A few more details can be added. Like many Virginia settlers in the Colonial Era, Nathan Pearce was attracted by good, cheap land further south. He married Ann Westray, daughter of John Westray and Ann Exum, in Isle of Wight Co., VA, in the early 1750s, and they had moved to Northampton Co., NC, by 1760. He and Ann lived there until about 1774, when they sold their land and moved to Wake Co., NC, to the area that would become Dunn Township and Franklin Co., NC. Both Nathan Pearce, I, and Richard Upchurch, II, and their children benefitted by securing land grants. We still have much to learn about these families. Dunn Township of the Colonial Era and for decades thereafter was frontier country. There was no water transportation and roads were poor. Families were be largely self-sufficient farmers and likely also hunters. Life was writ small. Many early Pearce marriages involved couples who lived within a mile or so of each other. The community to which Nathan Pearce, I, his children, and his grandchildren was not just Dunn Township of Franklin Co., NC, but rather the Moccasin Creek area which also includes a part of Wake Co., NC. Their record trail is torturous and includes Johnston, Granville, Bute, Franklin, and Wake Counties in North Carolina.

B. A Presentation of Nathan Pearce, I, his children and grandchildren

Descendants of Nathan Pearce

Generation 1

NATHAN¹ PEARCE was born before 1725 in Isle of Wight Co., VA and died about 1796 in Franklin Co., NC. He married Ann Westray, daughter of John Westray and Ann Exum, in Isle of Wight Co.,

VA. Ann was born about 1734 in Isle of Wight Co., VA, and died after 1815 in Franklin Co., NC. Ann was also known by her nickname Nancy in some records.

Nathan Pearce and Ann Westray had the following six children:

1. STEPHEN PEARCE was born between 1751 and 1756 in North Carolina or Virginia and died before Aug 1831 in Wake Co., NC. He married twice. His first wife (whose name has been lost) apparently died between 1790 and 1800 in Franklin Co., NC. His second wife was ELIZABETH BRYANT. (Her first husband was Josiah Stallings.)
2. PHILIP PEARCE was born on 24 Jul 1754 in Isle of Wight Co., VA, and died on 24 Feb 1812 near Moccasin Creek, Franklin Co., NC. He married Nancy Bunn in 1778.
3. JAMES PEARCE was born between 1760 and 1765 in Northampton Co., NC and died in 1794. He married Mary (whose maiden name is not known). She died before Mar 1810 in Franklin Co., NC.
4. ARTHUR PEARCE was born between 1760 and 1765 in Northampton Co., NC and died before 26 Mar 1796 in Franklin Co., NC. He married Nancy (whose maiden name is not known).
5. ELIZABETH PEARCE was born about 1767 in Northampton Co., NC, and died on 27 Oct 1844 in Shelby Co., IN. She married Thomas Ray, son of William and Mary Ray, in Mar 1783 in Wake Co., NC (bond was dated 29 Mar 1783). Thomas was born about 1762 in Virginia or North Carolina and died on 16 Nov 1829 in Shelby Co., IN.
6. JOHN PEARCE was born in 1768 in Northampton Co., NC, and died on 03 Jan 1845 in Hancock or Shelby Co., IN. He married CLARISSA OR CLARA UPCHURCH?. She was born on 14 Oct 1764 in North Carolina and died on 04 Nov 1869 in Poweshiek Co., IA. (The Federal Mortality Schedule has Mar 1870 for her death date and age at death as 107. Her tombstone has her age as 105 years and 20 days.).

Generation 2

1. STEPHEN² PEARCE (Nathan¹) was born between 1751 and 1756 in North Carolina or Virginia and died before Aug 1831 in Wake Co., NC. He married twice. His first wife (whose name has been lost) apparently died between 1790 and 1800 in Franklin Co., NC. His second wife was ELIZABETH BRYANT. (Her first husband was Josiah Stallings.)

Stephen Pearce and his first wife had the following children:

- i. CHARLOTTE PEARCE was born about 1775 in North Carolina. She married JUBAL UPCHURCH. He was born about 1762 in North Carolina and died about 1836 in Franklin Co., NC.
- ii. EIZABETH PEARCE was born about 1789 in North Carolina and died on 14 Jun 1842 in Greene Co., AL. She married Simion Carpenter on 19 Mar 1808 in Franklin Co., NC.

- iii MARY PEARCE was born about 1793 in North Carolina. She married JAMES PERRY, Jr, 30 Dec 1812 in Franklin Co., NC.
- iv. CHERRY PEARCE was born about 1800 in North Carolina. She married Drury Denton in Oct 1815 in Franklin Co., NC (bond was dated 09 Oct 1815). He was born about 1784 in North Carolina and died between 1850 and 1860 in North Carolina.
- v. NANCY PEARCE died before 07 Mar 1814 in North Carolina. She married BRINKLEY STRICKLAND.
- vi. possible son PEARCE.
- vii. possible son PEARCE.

Stephen Pearce and Elizabeth Bryant (Stallings) had the following children:

- viii. CALVIN STALLINGS was born in 1811 in Wake Co., NC, and died in 1853 in Franklin Co., NC. He married Amenia Gay on 12 Jan 1835 in Franklin Co., NC. She was born in 1812 in Franklin Co., NC, and died in 1860 in Franklin Co., NC.
- ix. BRYANT WESTER STALLINGS was born in 1812 in Wake Co., NC, and died in 1884 in Wake Co., NC. He married Nancy Gay on 19 Feb 1836 in Wake Co., NC. She was born about 1822 in Wake Co., NC.

2. PHILIP PEARCE (Nathan¹) was born on 24 Jul 1754 in Isle of Wight Co., VA, and died on 24 Feb 1812 in near Moccasin Creek in Franklin Co., NC. He married Nancy Bunn in 1778.

Philip Pearce and Nancy Bunn had the following children:

- i. HENRY PEARCE was born 16 May 1779 in Franklin Co., NC.
- ii. NATHAN PEARCE was born on 23 May 1783 in Franklin Co., NC, and died on 11 Dec 1867 in Franklin Co., NC. He married SUSAN UPCHURCH. She was born in 1790 in Franklin Co., NC, and died in 1855 in Franklin Co., NC.
- iii. ELI PEARCE was born 30 Aug 1785 in Franklin Co., NC.
- iv. JOHN PEARCE was born 10 Nov 1787 in Franklin Co., NC. He married Frances Upchurch Dec 1808 in Franklin Co., NC (bond was dated 01 Dec 1808). She was born about 1790 in North Carolina.
- v. HALEY PEARCE was born 12 May 1789 in Franklin Co., NC, and died before Mar 1833 in Franklin Co., NC. He married Martha or Patsey Pearce in 1816 in Franklin Co., NC (bond was dated 10 Sep 1816).
- vi. HARDY PEARCE was born about 1792 in North Carolina. He married CLARA PEARCE (The US and International Marriage Records 1560-1900 database in Ancestry.com gives Clara's maiden name as Strickland).
- vii. CHLOE PEARCE was born about 1795 in North Carolina and died between 1861 and 1870 in Franklin Co., NC.

3. JAMES PEARCE was born between 1760 and 1765 in Northampton Co., NC, and died before 1794 in Franklin Co., NC. He married Mary (whose maiden name is not known). She died before Mar 1810 in Franklin Co., NC.

James and Mary Pearce had the following children:

- i. PENNY PEARCE was born between 1790 and 1794 in Franklin Co., NC, and died between 1840 and 1850 in Franklin Co., NC. She married Littleberry Horton on 21 Mar 1811 in Wake Co., NC. He was born in 1786 in North Carolina and died in 1861.
- ii. PATSY PEARCE was born before 1794 in Franklin Co., NC.
- iii. BETSY PEARCE was born before 1794 in Franklin Co., NC.
- iv. BEEDY PEARCE was born before 1794 in Franklin Co., NC. She married George Bell on 27 Aug 1816 in Wake Co., NC.
- v. WILLIS PEARCE was born before Feb 1794 in Franklin Co., NC. He married Sally Hoggwood on 12 Nov 1823 in Wake Co., NC.

4. ARTHUR PEARCE was born between 1760 and 1765 in Northampton Co., NC, and died before 26 Mar 1796 in Franklin Co., NC. He married Nancy (whose maiden name is not known).

Arthur Pearce and Nancy Pearce had the following children:

- i. CORDY PEARCE was born about 1791 in North Carolina.
- ii. WILLIS PEARCE was born about 1794 in North Carolina and died on 03 Sep 1842 in York Co., SC.

5. ELIZABETH PEARCE was born about 1767 in Northampton Co., NC, and died on 27 Oct 1844 in Shelby Co., IN. She married Thomas Ray, son of William and Mary Ray, in Mar 1783 in Wake Co., NC (bond was dated 29 Mar 1783). He was born about 1762 in Virginia or North Carolina and died on 16 Nov 1829 in Shelby Co., IN.

Thomas Ray and Elizabeth Pearce had the following children:

- i. HUTSON RAY was born about Aug 1784 in Franklin Co., NC, and died on 25 Aug 1857 in Shelby Co., IN. He married Margaret Byerly, daughter of Phillip Byerly and Mary "Molly" Brals, in Aug 1807 in Randolph Co., NC (bond was dated 09 Aug 1807). She was born about 1782 in North Carolina and died on 23 Apr 1863 in Shelby or Marion Co., IN.
- ii. JAMES WRAY was born on 13 Jan 1787 in Franklin Co., NC, or Virginia and died on 08 Oct 1865 in Shelby Co., IN. He married (1) TABITHA BASS, daughter of Jordan Bass and Rebecca Ivy, on 01 Dec 1808 in Randolph Co., NC. She was born on 05 Jul 1789 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 30 Mar 1851 in Shelby Co., IN. He married (2) MARIA HARSIN on 05 Nov 1851 in Shelby Co., IN (her 3rd husband). She was born in 1800 in Kentucky and died on 10 Dec 1887 in Shelbyville, Shelby Co., IN.
- iii. GILLA "GILLY OR GILLIE" RAY was born on 04 Oct 1787 in Franklin Co., NC, died on 24 Dec 1870 in DeWitt Co., IL. She married John Byerly, son of Phillip Byerly and Mary "Molly" Brals, in 1808 in Randolph Co., NC. He was born on 10 Feb 1785 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 10 Sep 1867 in DeWitt Co., IL.

- iv. SUSANNA RAY was born on 04 Apr 1797 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 13 May 1869 in Shelby Co., IN. She married Benjamin Willis Bass, son of Jordan Bass and Rebecca Ivy, about 1816 in Rowan Co., NC. He was born on 04 Apr 1796 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 26 Jun 1856 in Shelby Co., IN.
 - v. MARTHA "PATSY" RAY was born on 30 Jul 1803 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 13 Mar 1865 in Butler Twp., Montgomery Co., IL. She married John Nail, son of Henry Nail and Mary Keller, about 1820 in Rowan Co., NC. He was born on 06 Aug 1799 in Rowan Co., NC, and died on 31 Aug 1875 in Montgomery Co., IL.
 - vi. SARAH RAY was born about 1805 in Randolph Co., NC, and died before 1827 in Shelby Co., IN.
 - vii. CHANEY LEE RAY was born on 12 Jan 1806 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 27 Apr 1883 in Henry Co., IA. She married Hugh Campbell, son of Robert Campbell, on 22 Jul 1824 in Shelby Co., IN. He was born on 12 Feb 1801 in near Knoxville, TN, and died on 29 Sep 1870 in Henry Co., IA.
- 6. JOHN PEARCE** was born in 1768 in Northampton Co., NC, and died on 03 Jan 1845 in Hancock or Shelby Co., IN. He married **CLARISSA OR CLARA UPCHURCH?** She was born on 14 Oct 1764 in North Carolina and died on 04 Nov 1869 in Poweshiek Co., IA (The Federal Mortality Schedule has Mar 1870 for her death date and age at death as 107. Her tombstone has her age as 105 years and 20 days).

John Pearce and Clarissa or Clara Upchurch? had the following children:

- i. SARAH PEARCE was born about 1805 in North Carolina and died on 06 Mar 1861 in Eliza, Mercer Co., IL. She married SAMUEL FERGUSON. He was born about 1796 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 24 Dec 1855 in Eliza, Mercer Co., IL.
- ii. MARTHA PIERCE was born on 27 Feb 1812 in Franklin Co., NC. She died on 30 Jan 1896 in Shelby Co., IN. She married Zebedee Ray, son of Hutson Ray and Margaret Byerly, on 25 Dec 1832 in Shelby Co., IN. He was born on 24 Mar 1811 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 01 Nov 1868 in Shelby Co., IN.
- iii. SION PEARCE was born on 25 Feb 1816 in Randolph Co., NC, and died on 04 Dec 1902 in Seely Twp., Guthrie Co., IA. He married Sarah Elin Jackson in 1840. She was born in Aug 1815 in North Carolina.