

Ancestry of the Willis of  
Locust Grove  
Culpeper County,  
Virginia

By George B. Loeffler, Sr.

The earliest known ancestor of this family was John (1) Willis, Sr. (d. between 7 June 1715 and 6 July 1715) (see Richmond Co. Va. Will Book #3 pp 214-217). The first record we find of him was on 21 Oct. 1669 when he was granted 261 acres of land by Governor Sir William Berkeley (see Bk. #6, p. 283 of Va. Land Patents.) He was 21 years old or older at this time in order to receive this grant and so had to have been born by or before 1648. On 27 February 1690/1, 185 acres were granted to John Willis and John Powers by Philip Ludwell, Deputy to the Proprietors in England. On 22 July 1693 he made his mark to a marriage contract between him and Matilda Thacker (widow of Henry Thacker). There were no children from this marriage.

On 1 December 1694 (Richmond Co. Va. Deed Book #2, p81) John (1) Willis deeded to his eldest son John (2) Willis, Jr., for love and affection, "a parcel of land taken up by myself and John Powers, Sr. patented 27 February 1690/1, of 185 acres, and also 100 acres of a tract of 261 acres patented by me on 21 Oct 1669. He made his mark in lieu of a signature to this deed. William (2) Willis witnessed this will by making his mark. On 26 April 1701 (Richmond Co., Va. Deed Book #3 p68) John (1) Willis, Sr. deeded to his son William (2) Willis, for love and affection, 161 acres, part of 261 acres -- out of which 100 acres was previously deeded to John (2) Willis, Jr. on 10 December 1694. (The correct date was, I believe, 1 December. See the beginning of this paragraph.)

The following is the will of John Willis, Richmond Co. Va. Will Book #3, pp214-217.

"In the name of God Amen the Seventh Day of June 1715 I John Willis Senr. of the County of Richmond & Parish of Hanover in Virginia being in health of body & of good & perfect sense & memory thanks be God Doe make this my Last Will & Testament in manner & forme following that is to

Q  
the said Mary Cullins her heirs Law-  
fully Begotten of her Body for Ever-  
more But if in Case Ye said Mary  
should Dye without Ishew Lawfully  
Begotten as aforesaid that then and  
in such case the said land wholly to  
return to my Son Charles Willis and  
his heirs for Evermore. I Doe also  
give unto Mary Cullins aforesaid One  
fether Bedd and one Rugg which is now  
in my house and one small Iron Pott one  
Blankitts and one pare of new  
Bell settle spice Morter and pestle  
and one Dozen of Pewter Spoons which  
are new and one new pewter Sazon and  
Bright Bay Mare with a Starr in the  
forehead and Spring taile and also one  
Ewe and Lambe and one pide heffer  
about two years old with all and  
every of their fewter Increase to her  
and her heirs for Evermore Butt if in  
Case the said Mary should Dye without  
Ishew then all and whatsoever I have  
hereby Given to the said Mary of  
personall Estate to Returne, and bee  
Divided amongst all and every one of  
my Children Sons and Daughters. And  
I doe also Give unto the Said Mary  
Cullins One Oaken Chest and one trunk  
which Chest and trunk are to return  
as aforesaid if in Case Mary should  
Dye without Ishew as aforesaid.

"I Doe Give and Bequeath unto my  
Son Charles Willis the Plantation and  
Land I now Live on and also that  
Plantation whereon the said Charles  
now Liveth together with all the Land  
contained and held by Pattent of  
Grant for this tract and two Planta-  
tions hereby given to the said Char-  
les Excepting that part which I have  
heerby Given to Mary Cullins afore-  
said My Will is that the whole re-  
maining part to this tract or Divid-  
entwith the two Plantations aforesaid  
Doe belong wholly to my Son Charles  
& Mattildoe his new wife for and  
dewring His and her naturall Lives  
and from and after the Death of the  
said Charles & Mattildoe the said  
land and premises to belong wholly  
to John Willis Son of the said Char-  
les to him and his heirs for Evermore.  
My will is that my Son Charles Doe  
not sell nor Imbezell no tisber from  
off the said Land But to make use of  
what hee hath needfel Ocation of  
making no waste.

"Itt being the Will of my Late  
wife Mattildoe Willis that my son

Charles Willis aforesaid and Matilda  
doe his wife their heirs .....  
should have out of Estate the father  
Beds which I now have and furniture  
Curtains and Vallins Rugs and Blank-  
etts and Sewistex and Pillows theire  
belonging and four Young Cows and a  
Young Mare, my Will is that my wife's  
Desier bee fulfilled and that for  
the said Charles and Matilda the  
said Beds and Cows and Mare doe  
wholley belong to them and their  
heirs for Evermore together with  
the Increase of the said Cows.

"And for the remaining part of my  
Cattle and also my whole Stock of  
hoggs Sheep excepting one Ewe and  
Lambe hearby Given to Mary Cullins I  
Doe Give to my Son Charles and his  
heirs for Evermore I Doe also Give to  
my Son Charles One small Iron pott and  
my least or smallest Brass Kettle, and  
all the Insewing Cropp of Indian Corn  
and the Insewing crop of tobacco I Doe  
give to my Son Charles and my Son  
William to be Equally divided between  
them the said Charles and William  
paying out of the said Cropp to my  
Daughter Sewsannah five hundred pounds  
of tobacco. And paying also out of  
the said Cropp to Mary Gardner five  
hundred pounds of tobacco.

"I Doe Give to my Son Charles  
three thousand nayles or thereabouts  
being all the Nayles that I have in  
my house and also all my powder and  
Stroll which is in my house My Will  
is that forthat part of my Plantation  
which I have hearby Given to Mary  
Cullins my Son Charles Willis aforesaid  
have Liberty of Pasture Ground  
therein and also William Fullin to  
have the same Liberty of pasture  
Ground therein. I Doe Give unto  
Cullins aforesaid all the Rents of  
Plantation which William Fullin  
Liveth on being five hundred pounds  
of tobacco to bee paid Dewly and  
Yearly Dewring the term of his lease  
which is Nine Years from ye Date  
hearof and one Years Rent which is  
not yett paid but Remains Due being  
five hundred pounds of tobacco when  
tenn Years Rent I Doe Give to Mary  
Cullins aforesaid and her heirs for  
Evermore Butt in case she should  
without Ishew the Rents or tobacco  
return to all and every one of my  
children and to bee Equally divided  
amongst them all Sons and Daughters

Charles Willis aforesaid and Mattil-  
doe his wife their heirs . . . . .  
should have out of Estate the fether  
Bedd which I now Lyeon and furniture  
Curtains and Vallins Rugg and Blank-  
itts and Boulster and Pillows theirto  
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Young Mare, my Will is that my wife's  
Desier bee fullfilled and that for  
the said Charles and Mattildoe the  
said Bedd and Cows and Mare doe  
wholley belong to them and their  
heirs for Evermore together with  
the increase of the said Cows.

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my Son Charles One small Iron pott and  
my least or smallest Brass Kettle, and  
all the Insewing Cropp of Indian Corne  
and the Insewing crop of tobacco I Doe  
give to my Son Charles and my Son  
William to be Equally devided between  
them the said Charles and William  
paying out of the said Cropp to my  
Daughter Sewsanah five hundred pounds  
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is that forthat part of my Plantations  
which I have hearby Given to Mary  
Cullins my Son Charles Willis afore-  
said have Liberty of Pasture Ground  
therein and also William Pullin to  
have the same Liberty of pasture  
Ground therein. I Doe Give unto Mary  
Cullins aforesaid all the Rents of the  
Plantation which William Pullin now  
Liveth on being five hundred pounds  
of tobacco to bee paid Dewly and  
Yearly Dewring the term of his Lease  
which is Nine Years from ye Date  
hearof and one Years Rent which is  
not yett paid but Remains Due being  
five hundred pounds of tobacco which  
tenn Years Rent I Doe Give to Mary  
Cullins aforesaid and her heirs for  
Evermore Butt in case she should Dye  
without Ishew the Rents or tobacco to  
return to all and every one of my  
children and to bee Equally Devided  
amongst them all Sons and Daughters. C

COUNTY, VA.  
Loeffler, Sr.

I say first I Bequeath my Soul & Spirit into the hands of the Almighty God my heavenly Father by whom of His Mercy & only Grace I Intrust to be saved & Redeemed into Eternal Rest through the Death of my Saviour & Redeemer Jesus Christ in whose precious Blood I sett the whole & only hope of my Salvation in hope of a joyful Resurrection; My Body I comitt to the Earth to bee Buried with such Charge as Itt shall please my Executors hereinafter named.

"I Give & Bequeath unto my Son in Law Thomas James and Mary James his new wife all that Plantation and parcell of Land whereon they the said Thomas and Mary now liveth for and dewring his and her Naturell Lives and from and after his Decease and the Death of the Survivor and longest Liver of them the said land and premises to belong wholly to David James Son of the said Thomas James to him and his heirs Evermore, which said Land joins upon the Land of Mr. John Wormley and upon the Land of Isaac Arnold and Runing from the Land of the said Isaac Easterly with the fence of the said Thomas James the Fence being the Bounds on that side the said Land and from the said Fence Easterly as aforesaid not touthching any part of my Cleared Ground to a Line of marked trees being the Bounds of the said Land hereby given unto the said Thomas James aforesaid Running to the Line of John Wormley aforesaid thence along the said Wormleys Line to the Land of Isaac Arnold aforesaid thence with the said Arnolds Line to the place where it Began; I doe also Give unto Thomas James aforesaid one Young cow called Browney with all her fewter Increase.

"I doe Give and Bequeath unto Mary Cullins which now Liveth with mee all that Plantation or parcel of Land whereon William Pullin now liveth together also with some part of my Cleared Ground according to the trew Bounds and Distances which I have Lastly Given which said Land joyne upon the Land of John Combes and also being some part of my Plantation as aforesaid the said Land I doe Give to

My Will is that Isaac Arnold and  
William Willis as Guardians to the  
said Mary Cullins doe Look after  
and here by Impowered to Look after  
that I see that William Pullin aforesaid  
doe take into his  
Cows and his or their care all  
at my condition and that hee or they Doe  
doe the tobacco Stock Goods and Moveables  
that whatsoever hee or they Doe  
doe the said Goods and Stock in tobacco  
and Deliver all such to-  
tobacco and Goods and Stock when she  
shall arrive to the age of Sixteen or  
eighteen or the first Day of Marriage if  
she be married before Sixteen and further if  
Cullins case the said William Pullin his  
and heirs & . . . . . shall neglect or delay  
so the payment of such tobacco Stock and  
on periods when the same shall become Dew  
due that the same be taken out of his  
lands by the Guardians, and they to  
be that shee the said Mary hath the  
same trewly and honestly paid her.  
"My Will is that what Goods and  
Moveables soe Ever and all other  
things that opertains to my Estate  
and is not yett Disposed of by this  
Last Will and Testament Goods pew-  
ter Brass and Iron and all other  
things theirto Belonging be Equally  
divided amongst all and Everyone of  
my children and Daughters. Each to  
have an Equall part thereof.  
"I Doe and apoint my Loving Son  
John Willis and Isaac Arnold my  
Executors of this my Last Will and  
Testament and in Conformation whereof  
I have hereunto sett my hand and fixt  
my Seale the Day Month and Year first  
above wrightne."  
The mark of John Willis -- Seal)  
Signed Sealed and delivered in the  
presence of us. Tho. Parker (mark),  
Augustine Blake (mark), Elliner Welsh  
(mark).  
This will was proved in Richmond Co.  
Court the Sixth Day of July 1715 by  
the oaths of Thomas Parker, Augustine  
Blake and Elliner Welsh witnesses  
hereto and admitted to Record. Test-  
Beckwith Clerk Court.  
From his will and from the deeds  
land to his sons John and William,  
we can conclude that John (1) Willis,  
when he made his will, had 3  
living sons and 2 living daughters,  
John (2) Willis, Jr., William (2)  
Willis, Charles (2) Willis, Mary (2)