
Documents and DNA Identify a Little-Known Lee Family in Virginia

By Judy Kellar Fox, CG

DNA test results reveal or rule out biological relationships. Documentary genealogical research provides the information needed to specify the kinship link. Together they propel a modest family into an unexpected past.

A middle-aged settler with a common surname leaves no record of parents or origin. Although documentary research provides inconclusive results, when combined with DNA testing it can reveal the settler's origin.

Charles Lee and his teen-aged sons first appear in Orange County, Virginia, in the mid-1700s.¹ Owing little land and no slaves, Charles died intestate about 1770, leaving no estate records.² He lived a century before Virginia required vital record registration, and present-day descendants had no record or knowledge of his existence. In a state where Lee connotes "General" and "illustrious family," his common surname compounded the difficulty of researching this family of modest means. Y-chromosome DNA testing, however, produced unexpected results leading to Charles's long-forgotten birth family, some hundred miles and several counties east.

DOCUMENTS SUGGEST CHARLES LEE'S FAMILY

Extensive research in Orange County records preceded the DNA testing. It yielded a deed, mortgage, will, and court record, which together suggest relationships.

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1. Charles Lee had three tithables in 1765, likely himself and two sons. See Orange Co., Judgments bundles, November 1765, tithables list; County Court, Orange, Va.; microfilm 1,863,152, Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City. Virginia law then defined tithable persons as "all male persons of the age of sixteen years and upwards." See "An Act concerning Tithables," October 1748, in William Waller Hening, ed., *The Statutes at Large: Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia from the First Session of the Legislature in the year 1619*, 13 vols. (Richmond, Va.: privately printed, 1819–23), 6:40–41.

2. Orange Co., Va., Will Book 2, index and page-by-page search covering 1768–75; Courthouse, Orange, Va.; FHL microfilm 33,000.

Charles Lee's Deed

Charles Lee bought land in Orange County on 24 September 1767. "Being part of a Tract of Land the said Joseph Boston bought of the Estate of John Spotswood Dec'd Which . . . Contains Sixty acres," the parcel was half a 120-acre lease to Robert Boston and his son Robert, carved out of Alexander Spotswood's tract on 27 August 1746.⁴ On 13 April 1767 executors of Spotswood's son John had sold the parcel to Joseph Boston, who four months later resold it to Charles Lee.⁵ Since Joseph Boston had held the parcel for such a short time, it likely was known as Robert Boston's land. Lee's deed names neighbors Sleet, John Boston, and Willis.³

John Lee's Mortgage

The Lee deed takes on added significance when a similar description appears in a mortgage by John Lee dated 9 March 1775:

In the county aforesaid [Orange] and supposed to be Sixty Acres being Part of Robert Bostons Lott and Joins Philison Sleets John Bostons Deced. and Elizabeth Willis's.⁶

Although the mortgage lists no metes and bounds, the land's size and adjacent owners identify the land Charles had purchased in 1767.⁷

John Lee described his property as "all my Land that Fell to me at my Fathers Death by Heirship."⁸ Because Charles Lee died intestate while primogeniture was in effect, his land had passed without record to his eldest son.⁹ This places John as Charles's eldest son, bringing other family members into focus.

Charles Lee's Will

Charles had died by 9 March 1775, when his son John mortgaged his land. Five months later, on 10 August 1775, another Charles Lee wrote his will, bequeathing personal belongings: a mare with bridle and saddle, a colt, a chest, his clothing, his gun, a note, and two sums of five pounds.¹⁰ These belongings do not signal a mature man with an established farm and family. He also named "my Mother Jenne Lee," suggesting he was young and unmarried.

3. Orange Co., Deed Book 14:234–35, Boston to Lee; Courthouse, Orange, Va.; FHL microfilm 33,015.

4. Orange Co., Deed Book 10:397–401, Spotswood to Boston; FHL microfilm 33,014. The deed includes a plat of the parcel.

5. Orange Co., Deed Book 14:151–53, Spotswood to Boston, and 14:234–35, Boston to Lee. The Spotswood deed bears a marginal notation: "Spotswoods Exors to Jos. Boston Ex[ecute]d & Del[ivere]d to Chas Lea Augt 1767."

6. Orange Co., Deed Book 16:318, Lee to Moore; FHL microfilm 33,016.

7. Orange Co., Deed Book 10:397–401.

8. Orange Co., Deed Book 16:318, Lee to Moore.

9. For a discussion of primogeniture, see St. George Tucker, ed., "Of Title by Descent," in *Blackstone's Commentaries: With Notes of Reference to the Constitution and Laws of the Federal Government of the United States and of the Commonwealth of Virginia*, 5 vols. (1803; reprint, Union, N.J.: Lawbook Exchange, 1996), 3:214–15.

10. Orange Co., Will Book 2:497–98, Charles Lee (1775); FHL microfilm 33,000.

This Charles's will indicates a possible relationship with the other, presumably older, Charles: he left his colt to "Richard Lee, the son of John Lee." The elder Charles's eldest son, John of Orange County—known from his mortgage of his late father's land—had a son Richard. Listed first in a chancery case involving John's estate, Richard was likely John's eldest son, therefore, young Charles's nephew.¹¹ Besides his mother, Charles identified his brother Jesse Lee and named, without identification, four other Lees—John, Betty, William, and Daniel—and Absolum [sic] Wood. Establishing them as relatives, although reasonable, requires more evidence.

Jesse Lee in Court Minute Book

Young Charles's brother Jesse died in 1781 after dictating a deathbed will.¹² Virginia law required two witnesses to prove such nuncupative wills and the court to summon next of kin who might challenge the will.¹³ Jesse's survivors complied on 27 September 1781:

Absalom Wood and John Lea ~~ea~~ both came Into Court to Prove Each a Non cupical [sic] Will of Jesse Lee Deced and Each claimed Admⁿ of the Estate_[r] [The judge] Ordered that Rich^d Lee. W^m Lee & Betty Lee ^{next of kin to the Deced} [written above the line] be Summoned to the Next Court to Contest the Same if they Please.¹⁴

Jesse's witnesses were his kinsmen John Lee and Absalom Wood. The next of kin also included Richard, William, and Betty Lee—apparently Jesse's siblings. The court record repeats names in his brother Charles's will, excluding Daniel but adding Richard. It does not name their mother, Jenne, suggesting she died between 1775 and 1781.

Tithables

Virginia law required any "master, or owner of a family" to report annually the number of tithable persons in his household. These were "all male persons of the age of sixteen years and upwards, and all negroe, mulatto, and Indian women of the same age," including the household head's sons and slaves, if any.¹⁵ Increases in tithable numbers might indicate sons turning sixteen; decreases might indicate sons becoming independent and appearing separately on the list.

11. Orange Co., Chancery Causes, Lee v. Lee & c., 1816–23, case no. 1823-013; Local Government Records Collection, Orange County Court Records, The Library of Virginia (LVA), Richmond; LVA Orange Co. microfilm 517; copy of transcription by Harriet Lee Welch in author's files.

12. A transcription of the will was not recorded. See Orange Co., Will Book 3, index and page-by-page search covering 1781–82; FHL microfilm 33,001. Orange Co. Court Minutes for 1778–1800 are missing. See FHL microfilm 33,038. Judgments between March 1779 and June 1783 also are missing. See FHL microfilm 1,863,118. Extant judgments do not mention Jesse Lee.

13. See "An Act directing the manner of granting probats [sic] of Wills, and Administration of Intestates Estates," October 1748, in Hening, ed., *Statutes at Large*, 5:456–57.

14. Orange Co., Minute Book 2:161, court session of 27 September 1781, Wood and Lea appearance for will of Jesse Lee; Courthouse, Orange, Va.; FHL microfilm 33,043.

15. See "An Act concerning Tithables," October 1748, in Hening, ed., *Statutes at Large*, 6:40–41.

Orange County tithable lists name Charles Lee from 1753 through 1768. In 1753 he counted two tithables, himself and another male of sixteen or over. In 1764 he had four. John Lee began to appear separately in 1766, supporting the theory that he was Charles's eldest son. That year Charles was excused from paying taxes because of advanced age.¹⁶

Assembling a Family

Orange County records make a good case for the elder Charles Lee's family:

- The names associated with young Charles and Jesse Lee suggest Charles's tithables were his sons. His sixty-acre plantation hardly required slaves with so many family members to tend to his crops. Charles's four tithables in 1764 imply that with John, listed separately, he may have had at least four sons. Young Charles's will names the possibilities: John, William, Daniel, Jesse, and himself, Charles. Jesse's next of kin adds another possible son, Richard.¹⁷
- Betty, named in the wills, may have been Charles's daughter. John Lee named a daughter Betsy, and William had a daughter Elizabeth, both names akin to Betty and supporting her identification as the men's sister.¹⁸
- Absalom Wood could have been a son-in-law.
- If young Charles was son of the elder Charles, then his mother, Jenne, was the elder Charles's widow.

Y-CHROMOSOME TESTING

With the above information on Charles Lee's family, a descendant of John Lee and a descendant of William Lee ordered Y-chromosome tests. DNA test results reveal or rule out common ancestry, but documentary research is needed to identify the ancestors. Both descendants had documented six generations back to men believed to be Charles's sons.¹⁹ They ordered thirty-seven-marker Y-chromosome tests, the minimum to determine kinship in a documentable time frame. Their values are identical, predicting a 95 percent chance of a

16. Orange Co., Judgments bundles, tithables lists. For November 1753, see FHL microfilm 1,863,138; November 1755, FHL microfilm 1,863,111; November 1756, FHL microfilm 1,863,140; November 1757, FHL microfilm 1,863,115; August 1758, FHL microfilm 1,863,141; September 1759, FHL microfilm 1,863,142; November 1762, FHL microfilm 1,863,145; November 1764, FHL microfilm 1,863,148; November 1765, FHL microfilm 1,863,152; November 1766, FHL microfilm 1,863,153; November 1767, FHL microfilm 1,863,154; and November 1768, FHL microfilm 1,863,156. For Charles's advanced age, see Orange Co., Order Book 7:374 and Minute Book 1:99; LVA Orange Co. microfilms 33 and 37, respectively.

17. As post-1769 tithable lists are not available, one of Charles's proposed sons may have turned sixteen after that year, explaining Richard as a sixth son. Richard could also have been Charles's grandson, named as Jesse's heir by right of representation (for example, as Daniel's son).

18. For Betsy, daughter of John, see list of John Lee's children in Orange Co., Chancery Causes, Lee v. Lee, "1823, July 29, Final decree for plt." For William's daughter Elizabeth, see Orange Co., Will Book 4:381-82, William Lee (1810); FHL microfilm 33,004, item 2.

19. John's descendant identifies his father. For Robert Errol Lee's father, see Health Report and Memorandum, 19 December 1934, Rob't. Errol Lee; Sheridan Funeral Home, Sheridan, Oregon. For John Robert Lee's father, see Standard Certificate of Death no. 24, Jno Robert Lee,

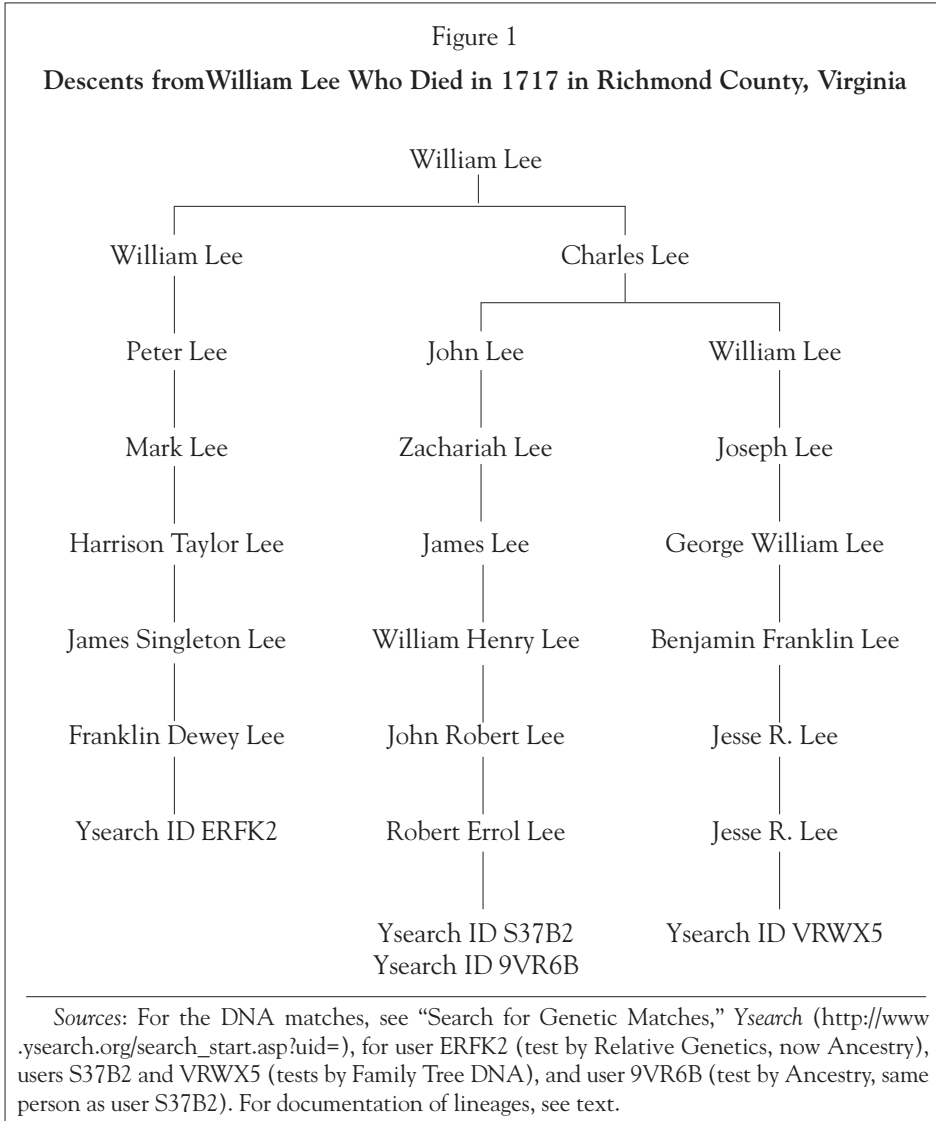
common ancestor within seven generations.²⁰ See figure 1. These results support the documentary evidence suggesting John and William Lee of late-eighteenth-century Orange County, Virginia, were brothers.

The test identified a previously unsuspected DNA match. A third man traces his ancestry one generation further through William Lee, born 1704 and married to Mary Thornton, to his father, William Lee, who had died by 4 December 1717 in Richmond County, Virginia.²¹ A different company had tested the third sample, however, and between them, the companies had tested only thirty-two markers in common. To compare values from equal tests, the second company re-tested one of Charles's descendants. This produced a perfect forty-six-marker Y-chromosome match between Charles's and William's descendants. See figure 1. For the Lee haplotype, see table 1.

17 February 1917; Oregon Center for Health Statistics, Portland. For William Henry Lee's father, see Rockingham Co., Va., Statement of a Marriage, William H. Lee and Nancy Jane Spicer, 1855; Courthouse, Harrisonburg, Va. For James Lee's father, see Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts, Rockingham Co. Personal Property Tax Lists, 1836, p. 21; FHL microfilm 1,905,715, where James's name is bracketed with John and Moses Lee, sons of Zachariah Lee. For Zachariah's father, see Orange Co., Va., Chancery Causes, Lee v. Lee. For John Lee's father, see Orange Co., Deed Book 10:397–401. William's descendant identifies his father. For Jesse R. Lee's father Jesse, see 1930 U.S. census, Rockingham Co., Va., population schedule, Ashby, enumeration district (ED) 7, sheet 5B, dwelling 113, family 114, Jessie R. Lee household; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publication T626, roll 2459. For Jesse R. Lee's father, see 1900 U.S. census, Rockingham Co., Va., pop. sch., Linville, ED 61, sheet 17B, dwell. 326, fam. 329, Franklin Lee household; NARA microfilm T623, roll 1726. For Benjamin Franklin Lee's father, see Rockingham Co., Marriage Licenses, 1850–1934, Lea–Lipscomb, loose leaf notebook, alphabetically arranged by groom's surname, for B. F. Lee; Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society, Dayton. This collection of marriage licenses was photocopied from originals at the County Clerk's Office that are now unavailable to the public. For George William Lee's father and Joseph Lee's father, see Virginia, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Death Registers, Orange Co., 1857:2, line 11, Joseph Lee; FHL microfilm 2,048,579. The informant was Joseph's son George, who named "W^m Lee" as Joseph's father. Tentative identification of William's father was based on similar residence and economic level and the evidence discussed above.

20. Family Tree DNA, "How Many to Test? 12, 37, 67 Markers?" *FamilyTreeDNA* (<http://www.familytreedna.com/faq-markers.aspx>), Table 1, "Probability for Most Recent Common Ancestor (MCRA)."

21. William's descendant identifies his father. For Franklin Dewey Lee's father, see 1920 U.S. census, Vermillion Parish, La., pop. sch., Police Jury Ward 7, ED 112, sheet 10B, dwell./fam. 187, James S. Lee household; NARA microfilm T625, roll 634. For James Singleton Lee's father, see 1880 U.S. census, Vermillion Par., La., pop. sch., Vermillion, Ward 7, ED 20, p. 8, dwell. 57, fam. 59, Harrison T. Lee household; NARA microfilm T9, roll 473. For Harrison Taylor Lee's father, see Leslie Broussard to C. Anson Jones, letter regarding heirs of Rachel, widow of Mark Lee, 14 April 1883; Anson Jones Papers, 1809–1910, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. For Mark Lee's father, see St. Martin de Tours Church (St. Martinville, La.), Marriages, Folio F, Mark Lee and Rachel White (1821). For Peter Lee's father, see North Farnham Parish (Richmond Co.), Register, 1672–1800, third alphabetical list, p. 135, line 13, Peter Lee entry; County Clerk's office, Warsaw, Va.; FHL microfilm 32,637. For William Lee's father, see *ibid.*, p. 131, line 14, William Lee entry. For William's death, see Richmond Co., Order Book 7:226–27, William Lee (1717); Courthouse, Warsaw, Va.; FHL microfilm 33,707.



The Y-DNA match a generation before Charles prompted research in Richmond County records. Registers from the county’s North Farnham Parish show the 18 September 1706 birth of Charles Lee to William and Dorothy Lee.²² By mid-century this child would have reached middle-age, consistent with Orange County’s Charles Lee.

22. North Farnham Parish, Register, third alphabetical list, p. 131, line 15. The register comprises five alphabetical handwritten transcriptions, some covering the same time period as others. Lists 1–4 are somewhat sequentially numbered on right-hand (odd-numbered) pages. List 5, paginated with stamped numbers, appears to be an attempt to recopy earlier entries in order, but it stops after letter-C entries.

Table 1
**Y-Chromosome Haplotype of
 William Lee Who Died in 1717 in Richmond County, Virginia**

LOCATION (DYS)	VALUE (ALLELES)	LOCATION (DYS)	VALUE (ALLELES)	LOCATION (DYS)	VALUE (ALLELES)
19a	14	442	12	462	11
19b	–	444	12	463	25
385a	11	445	12	464a	15
385b	13	446	13	464b	15
388	12	447	25	464c	17
389-1	13	448	19	464d	17
389-2	29	449	30	464e	–
390	24	452	30	464f	–
391	10	454	11	GGAAT1	10
392	13	455	11	YCA II a	19
393	13	456	17	YCA II b	23
426	12	458	19	Y GATA A10	12
437	15	459a	9	635	23
438	12	459b	10	Y GATA H4.1	22
439	12	460	11		
441	13	461	11		

Source: “Search for Genetic Matches,” *Ysearch* (<http://www.ysearch.org>), for users 9VR6B (descendant of Charles Lee) and ERFK2 (descendant of elder William Lee). Ancestry (formerly Relative Genetics) performed both tests. Values for the following markers have been modified to conform to Ysearch nomenclature: DYS441, DYS442, YGATA A10, Y GATA H4.1. See “Markers that may need to be converted,” *Ysearch* (http://www.ysearch.org/conversion_page.asp).

Documentary research combined with Y-DNA test results suggest the elder William Lee was the elder Charles’s father. See figure 1. Matching Y-chromosomes had been transmitted on three male lines for eight generations with no changes or mutations in forty-six tested areas. Documentary evidence supports the linkage.

A FRESH LOOK AT ORANGE COUNTY RECORDS

North Farnham Parish registers show that in 1737 Charles Lee and his wife Jane had a daughter, Kathrine.²³ The younger Orange County Charles spelled

23. North Farnham Parish, Register, third alphabetical list, p. 134, line 25.

his mother's name as *Jenne*.²⁴ Spoken, *Jenne* likely is *Jennie*, a nickname for *Jane*. The Orange County clerk who recorded *Jenne* as a surety of the will spelled her name *Jane*. *Jenne* aka *Jane*, mother of young Charles and widow of the elder Charles of Orange County, likely was the wife of Charles Lee in Richmond County.

Absalom Wood provides further evidence that Charles of Orange County and Charles of Richmond County were one man. Young Charles's will names Absalom along with Lee siblings.²⁵ With John Lee he was a kinsman-witness to the nuncupative will of John's brother Jesse.²⁶ Further, Elizabeth Lee, probably Charles's daughter Betty, witnessed Absalom Wood's will.²⁷ Finally, a Wood deed and Absalom Wood's will name his wife Catherine.²⁸ The relationship of Absalom Wood to Orange County's Lee family and his wife's given name suggest she was Kathrine Lee, born in Richmond County, 18 May 1737, to Charles and Jane.²⁹ As Charles and Jane's son-in-law, Absalom acted for his wife in family legal matters.

DOCUMENTING A MIGRATION: RELATIVES

Orange County records reveal a web of people, like Charles, associated with both Orange and Richmond counties. Charles appears in Orange County documents mentioning surnames Lee, Cribbin, Croucher, Thornton, Boston, and Branham. Dorothy, mother of Charles Lee in Richmond County, links many of these families.

Dorothy's father may have been a Taylor. Elizabeth Taylor's will, naming daughter Dorothy "Crutcher" and grandson William Lee, brackets Dorothy's three husbands:³⁰

1. William Lee. Their children included William, born in 1704, and Charles, in 1706.³¹ The elder William had died by 1717.³²

24. Orange Co., Will Book 2:497-98, Charles Lee (1775).

25. Ibid.

26. Orange Co., Minute Book 2:161, nuncupative will of Jesse Lee (1781).

27. Orange Co., Will Book 3:374-75, Absalom Wood (1796).

28. Orange Co., Minute Book 2:356, Howmer and Wood to Hornsey, 27 April 1786, "Absalom Wood & Catherine Wood his wife." Also, Orange Co., Will Book 3:374-75, "my wife Cathrine Wood."

29. The author acknowledges Harriet Lee Welch's outline of the Absalom Wood-Catherine Lee case.

30. Richmond Co., Will Book 5: 531-32, Elizabeth Taylor, dated 11 May and proved 7 September 1747; FHL microfilm 33,677, item 1. Elizabeth names her daughter Dorothy "Crutcher," leaving her father's surname unknown.

31. North Farnham Parish, Register, third alphabetical list, p. 131, lines 14 (William) and 15 (Charles).

32. Richmond Co., Order Book 7:226-27, estate of William Lee (1717). The record names Dorothy.

2. [—?—] Cribbin. This was a short marriage between 1717 and a 1724 Richmond County lawsuit against Dorothy Croucher, “formerly Dorothy Cribbin.”³³
3. Richard Croucher. He and Dorothy had a daughter Catherine.³⁴

Dorothy died in Amelia County, Virginia, in 1754.³⁵

Lee

On 24 February 1742/3 William Lee of Richmond County attended Orange County Court as a witness:

W^m Lee from Richmond County having made oath that he had attended fo[u]r Days as an Evidence for Samuel Pound . . . twice coming and going One hundred & seven Miles In all.³⁶

William Lee, born in Richmond County 14 May 1704 to William and Dorothy Lee, was thirty-eight when he appeared in court.³⁷ In 1736 Samuel Pound of Orange County had made the reverse trip to Richmond County to testify on William’s behalf.³⁸ William’s residence in Richmond County and his connection with Orange-County-resident Pound support William’s identification as Charles Lee’s older brother.

Cribbin

On 27 May 1748 charges against William Cribbin in Orange County, indebted for six hundred pounds of tobacco, showed he had “privately removed himself out of this County.” The court recovered part of the debt from Charles Lee: “a box, an old Gun barrel, a pair of bullet moulds and a shot bag.”³⁹ Cribbin, or Cribben, is an unusual surname in Orange County. Charles’s holding William Cribbin’s belongings suggests they were related, likely stepbrothers in the Richmond County household of Dorothy ([Taylor?]) Lee Cribbin.

33. Richmond Co., Order Book 9:155, 162, and 170; FHL microfilm 33,708.

34. The division of Richard Croucher’s estate names his wife Dorothy Croucher, late son William Croucher, and daughter Catherine Brannan, and it identifies Catherine’s mother as Dorothy. See Richmond Co., Account Book 1:357–58, Croucher estate division, 1752; FHL microfilm 33,679.

35. Amelia Co., Will Book 1:108, Dorothy Croucher, 25 February 1754; Courthouse, Amelia, Va.; FHL microfilm 30,449, item 2.

36. Orange Co., Order Book 3:352, 24 February 1742/3, William Lee; FHL microfilm 33,036.

37. North Farnham Parish, Register, third alphabetical list, p. 131, line 14.

38. Ruth Sparacio and Sam Sparacio, *Richmond County, Virginia, Order Book Abstracts, 1735–1736* (McLean, Va.: Antient Press, 2000), 57, citing Richmond Co. Order Book 10:431, 6 July 1736.

39. Ruth Trickey Sparacio and Sam Sparacio, *Orange County, Virginia, Order Books*, 10 vols. (McLean, Va.: Antient Press, 1997–2000), 1:98.

Croucher

Two William Crouchers fathered children in North Farnham Parish in the mid-1700s.⁴⁰ One, likely Charles Lee's stepbrother, died in Richmond County in 1752.⁴¹ The other died in Orange County about 1758.⁴² He appears in Charles Lee's earliest known Orange County record, a September 1742 petition for a road.⁴³ Although Croucher might not have been closely related to Charles Lee, both may have been part of the same Richmond-County-to-Orange-County migration.

DOCUMENTING A MIGRATION: ASSOCIATES

Local history sheds light on the migration of Charles Lee and other Richmond County natives to Orange County. Destined for unsettled frontier land, they followed the 1716 Spotswood Expedition route, up the Rappahannock Valley and along the Rapidan River.⁴⁴ In 1732 Alexander Spotswood had obtained letters patent for forty thousand acres, which he called the Spotsylvania tract.⁴⁵ Within two years the western lands were sufficiently populated to establish Orange County.⁴⁶ Eight years later Charles Lee and his associates began appearing in its records.

In 1742 Charles and thirty neighbors lived on Chestnut Mountain, a low ridge within the Spotsylvania tract south of the Rapidan River. They sought a court order to reopen a road so they could roll hogsheads of tobacco to Fredericksburg. William Croucher, John Branham, and several Thorntons—all from Richmond County—signed the petition.⁴⁷

40. North Farnham Parish, Register, fifth alphabetical list, p. 19, Caty Croucher, 24 September 1749 and (another) Caty Croucher, 24 January 1752.

41. William Croucher's estate inventory was presented to court pursuant to an order of 7 July 1752. See Richmond Co., Will Book 5:709, Croucher's Inventory; FHL microfilm 33,677, item 1.

42. Deeds involving the "Negro Woman Named Sabra" connect William Croucher and Anne ([—?—]) Croucher and suggest his death after 17 August 1758. See Orange Co., Deed Book 12:477–78, William Croucher to Priscilla Mooney, 17 August 1758; FHL microfilm 33,014. Also, Orange Co., Deed Book 13:316, Anne Croucher to Browning Williams, 29 January 1763; FHL microfilm 33,015.

43. Orange Co., Judgments bundles, September 1742, A–S, Francis More [sic] et al. petition; FHL microfilm 1,863,106.

44. Delma R. Carpenter, "The Route Followed by Governor Spotswood in 1716 across the Blue Ridge Mountains," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 73 (October 1965): 405–12.

45. Virginia Land Office Patents 14:378–81, Alexander Spotswood, 11 April 1732; digital images, "Virginia Land Office Patents and Grants/Northern Neck Grants and Surveys," *Online Catalog: Library of Virginia* (http://lva1.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/F/?func=file&file_name=find-b-clas30&local_base=CLAS30).

46. Patricia J. Hurst, *The History and People of Clark Mountain* [formerly Chestnut Mountain], Orange County, Virginia (Rapidan, Va.: privately printed, 1989), 3 and 5. Also, William Wallace Scott, *A History of Orange County, Virginia* (Richmond: Everett Waddey, 1907), 26.

47. Orange Co., Judgments bundles, September 1742, A–S, Francis More [sic] et al. petition.

After 1740, when Alexander Spotswood died, his executors leased one-hundred- to two-hundred-acre plantations to local residents. The lessees include signers of the 1742 road petition and others from Richmond County, like Branham, Thornton, and Boston—but not Charles Lee.⁴⁸ Perhaps he lacked the means to lease a plantation, but he knew and associated with the men of his community.

Branham

John Branham signed the 1742 petition and four years later leased 150 acres from the Spotsylvania tract.⁴⁹ In 1727 he had married Rachel Gower in Richmond County.⁵⁰ Branham named “my well beloved wife Rachel Bramham” in his 1761 Orange County will, confirming their identity and migration from Richmond County.⁵¹ The 1746 Spotswood tract lease was made to “John Bramham and his assigns for and During the Natural Lives of Spencer Thadeus Bramham and Daniel Bramham.”⁵² Son Spencer was born in North Farnham Parish in 1729 and remained in Orange County at least through 1787, when the County Court appointed him to report on a proposed road.⁵³

Charles Lee’s apparent half sister, Catherine Croucher, and stepbrother, William Croucher, married siblings Thomas and Eleanor Branham.⁵⁴ Thomas and Catherine (Croucher) Branham migrated southeast to Amelia County, Virginia, with Charles’s mother, Dorothy.⁵⁵ William and Eleanor (Branham) Croucher remained in Richmond County.⁵⁶ Thomas and Eleanor’s relationship to the Branhams who migrated to Orange County is unknown. Although Charles’s Branham in-laws apparently did not migrate, they probably were related to the Branhams who did.

Thornton and Boston

Others who signed the 1742 road petition include five Thorntons: James, Luke, Mark, John, and Thomas. The first three lived in Richmond County in

48. Orange Co., Deed Book 10, index. Spotswood entries appear on pp. 335–471.

49. Orange Co., Judgments bundles, September 1742, A–S, Francis More [sic] et al. petition. Also, Orange Co., Deed Book 10:335–38, Spotswood to Bramham, 27 August 1746. The surname is spelled Branham, Bramham, Brannan, and Brannon in Richmond County records and Bramham, Branam, and Branham in Orange County records. Branham is common to both counties and will be used except in reference to specific sources.

50. North Farnham Parish Register, fourth alphabetical list, p. 189.

51. Orange Co., Will Book 2:315–16, John Bramham, 1761.

52. Orange Co., Deed Book 10:335–38, Spotswood to Bramham, 1746.

53. For Spencer’s birth see North Farnham Parish, Register, fifth alphabetical list, p. 11, 22 October 1729. Also, Ann Brush Miller, *Orange County Road Orders*, 2 vols. (Charlottesville, Va.: Virginia Highway and Transportation Research Council, 1984–89), 2:179.

54. In his 1749/50 will, Caran Brannan named the Brannan children and Croucher son-in-law. See Richmond Co., Will Book 5:620.

55. Dorothy (Taylor?) Lee Cribbin Croucher’s 1754 will names daughter Catherine Brannon and son-in-law Thomas Brannon. See Amelia Co., Will Book 1:108.

56. Richmond Co., Will Book 5: 709, Croucher’s inventory.

the early 1700s and in Orange County in the 1730s and 1740s.⁵⁷ Thomas leased land from the Spotswood trust.⁵⁸ These Thorntons perhaps were related to Mary Thornton, wife of the younger William Lee of Richmond County.⁵⁹

Charles Lee's Orange County land was half a tract that Robert Boston of Richmond County had leased from the Spotswood trust.⁶⁰ Robert married Margaret Thornton on 14 September 1727 in Richmond County.⁶¹ Presle[y] and James Tho[r]nton witnessed the Bostons' signatures on Charles Lee's deed.⁶²

Bostons, Thorntons, Branhams, Cribbins, and Crouchers migrated upriver from Richmond County to settle in the new Orange County. These folks, connected socially and/or by marriage, probably either traveled together or, hearing good reports, followed one another and other associates who also made the trek. The land attracted them, and eventually nearly all owned at least small plantations. Charles Lee and his young family joined them.

CONCLUSION

Together, documentary genealogical research and DNA testing place Charles Lee in his parental family. Documentary evidence tentatively identified his wife, children, and associates in mid-eighteenth-century Orange County, Virginia. Y-chromosome DNA test results pushed his roots back to Richmond County, Virginia. Further research in both counties verified Charles's origin and migration to Orange County.

57. Nancy Carr Royce, "Thornton Families of Richmond County, Virginia," 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14; report prepared in 1991 and updated in 2006; author's files. The report cites: for James Thornton, Richmond Co. Order Book 9, 3 November 1731, and Orange Co. Deed Book 6:157, 26 March 1739; for Luke Thornton, North Farnham Parish, Register, marriage 2 January 1727/8, Spotsylvania Co. (from which Orange County was created in January 1734/35), Deed Book C, 30 November 1734, and Orange Co., Order Book 6, 27 November 1760, when Luke was "an antient poor man"; and for Mark Thornton, Richmond Co., Deed Book 8:689, 16 February 1733/4, and Orange Co., Tithables, 1739.

58. For Thomas Thornton's lease, see Orange Co., Deed Book 10:394-7, Spotswood to Thornton (1746).

59. Louisiana christening records of the children of Peter Lee identify their grandparents as William Lee and Marie Thonten [sic] of "Richmond & Frederick County," Virginia. See Donald J. Hébert, *Southwest Louisiana Records: Church and Civil Records*, rev. ed., 5 vols. (Rayne, La.: Hébert Publications, 1996), 1-A:509 (Anne Lee) and 510 (Mary Meriard Lee) and 1-B:459 (Emily Lee).

60. For the land's chain of title, see Orange Co., Deed Book 10:397-401, 14:151-53, and 14:234-35. For a discussion of the evidence of Boston family relationships, see pjsroots (who requests anonymity), "Robert Boston Story," media object attached to page for Robert Boston (birth before 1710), 3 October 2009, in John H. Hackett, "Hackett Family Tree," *Ancestry.com* (<http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/9501375/person/-181224712/media/3>). Y-chromosome testing supports Robert as Joseph's father. See "Boston Surname DNA Project: About This Group, Results," *Family Tree DNA* (<http://www.familytreedna.com/public/bostonsurnamednaproj/>).

61. North Farnham Parish, Register, fourth alphabetical list, p. 189, and fifth alphabetical list, p. 11.

62. Orange Co., Deed Book 14:234-35, Boston to Lee.