

From the "Centralized Abney Archives"

"The Abney Family Researcher"

Newsletter

October, 2000 Volume IV, Issue II

*Dedicated to discovery, correction, and communication of ABNEY & related family
information since November, 1996*

"New Beginnings"

dedicated to "Jesse" Abney (due 10 Mar 2001)

Centralized Abney Archives

founded in 1993 by *Raymond "Robert" Abney Jr.*

Raymond "Robert" Abney Jr., Curator

Gina L. Abney, Chief of Informational Services

Abney H. Brewer, Technical Support

Joe H. Baker Jr., Advisor (English Lines)

Jennie H. Abney Gant, Advisor (American Lines)

John R. Hensell, dec., past Advisor (Medieval Lines)

The Abney Family Researcher
first published November, 1996 by R.R. Abney Jr.

Raymond "Robert" Abney Jr., editor

Tammy R. Abney, Corrector of the Press

The Centralized Abney Archives Web Site

created May, 1998 by Gina Lyn Abney

Gina Lyn Abney, Web Master

Generation One
(the first ABNEY's born in America)

At this time, we will consider the following to be the most accurate depiction of the first ABNEY's born in America. These ABNEY's were born in the British Colony of Virginia. Throughout this newsletter, references will be made to these nine children of Dannett ABNEY Sr. m. Mary (LEE?):

1. Ursula ABNEY (bapt.1693)
2. Dannett ABNEY Jr. m. Mary (MEREDITH?)
3. George ABNEY m. Unity
4. Paul ABNEY (bapt.1699) m. n.n.
5. Martha ABNEY m. William SPRAGGINS
6. Dr. Abraham ABNEY (bapt. 1702) m. Cassandra (MEREDITH?)
7. Bathshua ABNEY m. Thomas HILL
8. Mary ABNEY m. John BERNARD
9. Abner ABNEY m. Anne (KEY?)

(see my article *Generation One of America* on page 2)

A Message from R. Robert Abney Jr.

Greetings dear cousins,

This issue of *the Abney Family Researcher* is appropriately entitled "New Beginnings".

What a fantastic "welcome back" I have received from you, my dear cousins! I'd like to thank each of you for your warm-hearted messages; and let you know that I missed y'all too!

Cousin Gina ABNEY will be upgrading and remodeling our CAA website. Look for some very exciting changes thereto! We'll also be adding the latest section to the website, the Official *Abney Hall of Records*.

A backup of my 1998 database has been recovered. Much thanks to VANTAGE Technologies. I highly recommend their services! (see their ad in this issue)

This backup database is not as up-to-date as the main database (I am missing the lines of 62 cousins!). I have been engaged in the tedious task of going through thousands of old email messages to add these lost lines. This is very time-consuming because I have to go through all messages to find missing data. You can help by sending me a GEDCOM of all ABNEY descendants in your own database. Even those who have sent GEDCOM's before should consider sending an updated version.

Get involved in the CAA! Contact us today!

Your cousin,

R. R. Abney Jr.

Fortiter et Honestè

~ New Beginnings ~

Generation One of America
We have to start somewhere...

We must have a beginning, and the best way to find that beginning is to take the facts as we know them, apply logic, build a logical foundation on which to work, & call it: *Generation One of America*.

Fact: Dannett ABNEY Sr. was bapt. 26 Feb 1659.

Since February was the last month of the year, and the Church of England baptized as soon as possible after the birth of the child, we can rest assured that Dannett Sr. was born in 1659. Moreover, clues to Dannett's month of birth are given by the births and baptisms of his brothers, Lt. Paul ABNEY (b.14 Jan 1653 & bapt. 22 Jan 1653) and Abraham ABNEY (b. 07 Sep 1655 & bapt. 12 Sep 1655). From these records, we see that Dannett Sr.'s brothers were baptized within 5-8 days of birth. It would be safe to assume, therefore, that Dannett was b. Feb. 1659.

Dating the birth of Mary (Dannett Sr.'s wife) is a very difficult proposition. Firstly we have to assume that she was his only wife, and mother of all his children. This is a safe assumption because she was named as Mary in the baptismal record of Ursula. In that of Paul, only "Deanit" was named, and in that of Abraham, the mother was identified only as "his ["Deanit's"] wife". However, Dannett Sr.'s wife was identified as "Mary" in all records (deeds & his will) discovered. Therefore, we must assume this Mary, widow Mary, and Mary (mother of Ursula are one).

Secondly we must assume that Ursula was the eldest child. This assumption can only be based on the mostly incomplete records of the Church at Abingdon Parish. Therefore, it is not a strong assumption, but it's all we have to work with.

Since Ursula was born 1693, Mary could have been born 1680 and would still have been old enough to be her mother. For the sake of argument, if we split the difference between Dannett's birth year and 1680, we come up with a birth year of est. 1670. However, that would make Mary age 23 when her first (?) child was born, which would be unlikely as in that era, she would have been considered an "old maid". Therefore, we are safer putting Mary's birth year at est. 1675. This makes her 18 at Ursula's birth, and about 16 years younger than her husband, which is acceptable. Therefore, we can safely assume that she could have been bearing children as late as 1715 or possibly even a little later.

Thirdly we must assume that we have discovered all the children of Dannett Sr. & Mary; And that none (save possibly Ursula) died unmarried; And our last assumption is that there were no multiple births (twins, triplets, &c.).

Now, we know that children were born on the average of 2 years apart in the beginning of a woman's child-bearing, and about 3 years apart toward the end. Therefore, given the known baptismal dates of three of Dannett Sr.'s children (and applying the same reasoning for their birth year as we did for Dannett Sr.) we can create an outline, adding the possible birth years of Dannett Sr.'s & Mary's other children, and attempt to fill them in by a greater weight or preponderance of the evidence:

1. **Ursula bapt. 11 Jun 1693; b. Jun 1693**
2. (n.n.) b.est. 1695
3. (n.n.) b.est. 1697
4. **Paul bapt. 24 Dec 1699, b; Dec 1699**
5. **Abraham bapt. 27 Dec 1702; b. Dec 1702**
6. (n.n.) b.est. 1705
7. (n.n.) b.est. 1708
8. (n.n.) b.est. 1711
9. (n.n.) b.est. 1714

Dannett Jr. is the first to appear in the records as an adult. On 07 Jul 1724, Dannett Sr. & DJ were trading for land. This record shows that DJ was already on his own, as he was living in Spots. Co. while his father was in King W^m Co. Therefore DJ appears to be the next eldest. Although the first son wasn't always named for his father, he was in many cases. Moreover, aside from Abner's Will (discussed later), DJ's Will (prob. 07 Jul 1757) was filed before the rest of his brethren, that we can determine.

George ABNEY appears in the records near the same time as Abraham. However, George is on his own in Henrico Co., while Abraham is still in Spots. Co. This may be an indication that George was older than Abraham, and moved away sooner. Moreover, George's Will was next probated (16 Oct 1766). To write that George was named for his grandfather would be unfair. For it appears that he was named for his uncle as well. It is notable that Dannett Sr. named a son after each of his brothers. The author had earlier believed that George was the eldest son, and named for his grandfather. However, in light of the deductive

reasoning used above, the author believes that DJ was born before George. Hence George could logically occupy the 1697 birth year.

Next we have Paul (named for his uncle), born 1699 by fact of his baptism. We know that he was still alive on 30 Sep 1786 when he gave consent for his granddaughter, Elizabeth, to marry. How much longer he lived is not known. However, we know Paul lived at least into his 80's and possibly longer.

Next we have Dr. Abraham ABNEY (named for his uncle), born 1702 by fact of his baptism. This could have begun the estimated 3-year cycle for Mary's child-bearing years. Keep in mind this is an *average* birth-span. Abraham also lived into his 80's.

Martha almost has to be the next child. Her son, Thomas SPRAGGINS was born around 1720 or so. If Martha was born around 1705, this would place her around at age 15 giving birth to the eldest child, and would appear to be correct for that era.

A bit of deductive reasoning places Bathshua (named for her grandmother) next in the family. Since we can show Abner & Mary in their places (as discussed later), and Bathshua appears to have had children prior to either of them, we can place her b.est.1708.

Now we'll discuss Abner ABNEY. Having named a son after all his brethren, his father, and himself, Dannett Sr. & Mary chose the Biblical name, Abner, for the boy who appears to have been their youngest son. The author believes Abner to be the next child for the following reasons, to wit: According to his father's Will (written 05 Feb 1732), Abner was to receive, in part, that plantation wherein Dannett Sr. lived (Abner's brother, Paul to receive the other part). Abner also signed as witness to the Will. Now, by Virginia Colonial Law, Abner only had to be age 14 to witness the Will. However, Dannett Sr. was devising land to Abner. Granted, it was to be given to Abner after Mary's death, but Dannett surely didn't know when that would be. Therefore, since Dannett Sr. did not use a phrase such as "to my son, Abner...when he arrives of age" or something comparable, we must assume he was already of age to inherit the property. Moreover, the signature doesn't look like that of a 14-year old boy. For Abner to be 21 in 1732, he must have been born no later than 1711; And this is exactly where he is placed in the author's rendition of Generation One.

But what of Abner's Will being the first written of Gen. One? Abner appears to have died a middle-aged man. The reason isn't known, but perhaps an illness shortened his life. Nonetheless, the naming of only three children in his Will (and Milly was an infant), seems to back up the author's theory.

Having Abner born est. 1711 would also explain why the first record (apparently of his adult life) found is the Will of his father. After Abner Abney's death, it appears his widow, Anne (Key) remarried ca.1760 to Samuel Taliaferro (who was granted guardianship to Milly Abney, daughter of Abner and Anne).

According to Overton & A. Rodney BERNARD (grandsons of Mary ABNEY m. John BERNARD), Mary & John married ca.1730 (Ted BERNARD gives 02 May 1729). Therefore, if Mary was born est. 1714, she would have been about age 15/16 when she married. Mary's birth places her near the estimated end of the child-bearing age of her mother.

From these facts and assumptions, we can now construct the following Family Group Sheet:

1. **Ursula bapt. 11 Jun 1693; b. Jun 1693**
2. Dannett Jr. b.est. 1695
3. George b.est. 1697
4. **Paul bapt. 24 Dec 1699; b. Dec 1699**
5. **Abraham bapt. 27 Dec 1702; b. Dec 1702**
6. Martha b.est. 1705
7. Bathshua b.est. 1708
8. Abner b.est. 1711
9. Mary b.est. 1714

It is the author's opinion that this is absolutely the best, most logically deduced, rendition of the family of Dannett ABNEY Sr. and Mary to date.

The author will base each succeeding newsletter on the assumption that the family is correct as above-written, unless and until further evidence causes us to correct or add to it. Your comments are most welcome, pro and con. If you have information that can improve the accuracy of this family group, please contact the author!

The Favored Sons

The question has been asked, "why do you think in his Will, Dannett ABNEY Sr. favored Paul & Abner over his other children?" The author believes it may be possible to shed a little light on the subject, should the reader be interested. Again, keep in mind this is purely theoretical (albeit an interesting theory), and only the author's belief.

By the time Dannett ABNEY Sr. wrote his will (05 Feb 1732), all of his children appear to have been grown. However, there also seems to be underlying circumstances as concerns the special mention of Paul and his brother Abner in their father's Will.

Abner (b.est.1711 as above-theorized), was younger than the other brothers. He also appears to have gotten a little later start in life. It is probable that at the time Dannett Sr. wrote his Will, Abner, although a grown man (about age 21), was still at home. Perhaps Dannett saw this as being dutiful to him and his wife, and thought Abner should get a greater share of the estate. Moreover, Abner living on his father's property could explain his absence from the early Virginia records.

But what of Paul? Paul (b.1699) was about 33 years old at the time his father wrote his Will! He had apparently already been married and sired what appears to be two children. But, yes, the author has a theory about Paul.

It appears that Paul may have sired two children only, which is unusual for any man of that era. However, we have found many of his grandchildren, so where are his children? Unless Paul had a large number of girls (which are more difficult to locate), and only one son, the author has theorized the following:

Paul may have lost his (1st?) wife early in their marriage, or she became ill. There could be numerous reasons, and all would be speculation, but dying in child birth was quite common in the 18th century. But before the author's discovery of John "the Lost Son" ABNEY/ ABNER, no children of Paul could be shown with any certainty. The author also believes that Lucy, wife of John WITT Sr., was a daughter of Paul ABNEY (which will be discussed later).

If, as the author suggests, Paul's wife died early (possibly in child birth), Paul may have returned to the home of his parents, and that with two babies. The obvious reason for his return to his parents' home would be to get assistance raising his children. A return to his mother's care would be just as logical if Paul's wife became very ill. Perhaps Paul was as much a help to the parents as they were to him. It is known from certain court records that Dannett Sr. was

infirm in his old age. "If" Paul was living there, it may have been a blessing for all involved.

Paul was a very poor man, which again seems unusual for an ABNEY of the 18th century. However, there are several instances confirming Paul's poverty in the "Fredericksville Parish Vestry Book 1742-1787" transcribed & edited by Rosalie Edith DAVIS *1978 & 2nd printing 1981 (special thanks to Cousin Carolyn B. Pruitt for sending me these records). These records show:

09 May 1776: Order'd that the wardens provide coarse linen for Two Sheets & 2 pr. Breeches for Paul Abney

17 Dec 1777: At a Vestry held for Fred. Par. at the Poor House this day: To Paul Abney 1 year to commence from 1st Jany. 1778 5.

At a Vestry held for Fred. Par. at Stephen James's Feby 15th 1779: To Paul Abney for 1 year comm'g from 1st Jany last 20.

At a Vestry held for Fred. Par. at the Widow Fergusons Sept. 8th 1780: To Paul Abney & wife for their support to the 1st Jany. next 100.

Feby. 25 1781: At a Vestry held for Fred. Par. the 26th of Feby. 1781 at Charlottesville...To Paul Abner & wife do (support pr. year) 600.

These, therefore, may be the reasons Paul and Abner appear to have been "favored".

Database Reconstruction Project

As mentioned in the editorial, the CAA database is being reconstructed from the recovered 1998 backup; and the information from the members on their individual line. You can help by sending in the most recent version of your data.

It is, of course, my desire, not only to add to the database, but to restore the 62 lost lines. Thanks!

**PROFESSIONAL DATA RECOVERY & RESTORATION FOR ALL TYPES OF
DISK, TAPE, & OPTICAL STORAGE MEDIA**

The Original 24 Hour Data Recovery Hotline:

1-800-ITS-LOST



**4 John Tyler Street
P.O. Box 1570
Merrimack, NH 03054**

<http://www.vantagetech.com/Toll-Free> (US & Canada): 800-487-5678

Highly recommended by R. Robert Abney Jr. and the Centralized Abney Archives, who wish to express their sincere appreciation for the recovery of the Centralized Abney Archives database!

~~~~ This ad donated by the CAA ~~~~~

---

## A Reunion 75 years in the making!

Sound amazing? It is! More than a decade the author has been searching for his "Uncle Jay" Abney. Although Uncle Jay is now deceased, contact has been made with Uncle Jay's descendants. Thanks to the *Missing Persons* section of the CAA Website, Cousin Coren Marie ABNEY of Delaware saw Uncle Jay's picture, which just so happened to be a picture of her grandfather! After contacting the author, and exchanging email messages for a few months, she drove down to Louisiana and spent 3 days visiting with the author and his family. What a glorious occasion! The reader may see pictures of that reunion on the CAA website.

Are you missing an ABNEY relative or friend? Send us a picture and short biography. We'll put it on the website and, who knows, maybe that person will be located! It worked for Cousin Coren and the author...it can work for you!

### *Corrigenda to Vol.IV Iss.I*

- ✿ Vol. IV, Iss.I (August 2000) was erroneously called Vol.III, Iss.I. Sorry!
- ✿ The birth year of Nathaniel ABNEY m. Sarah CANADA was erroneously given as ca.1800. Per census records, he was born ca.1790.

### *The ongoing saga of the address change:*

As the author printed in the last issue, plans were made to move to Florida! Well...there's a baby on the way; And Tammy has had three deliveries from the same doctor and would like to have the fourth by him, too. So are we moving? For the time being, no. However, plans have now been made to move after the end of this school year. But where? Back to beautiful Mississippi. I have 20 acres in Pearl River County. I think it's high time I enjoyed them.

---

Unresolved Problems presented in Previous Issues of  
*the Abney Family Researcher*

**Volume I**

- 3. Leonard ABNEY of TN - **RR**
- 9. James T. ABNEY - **NR**
- 10. Mary Agnes ABNEY - **RR**
- 17. Charles ABNEY (gs/o Dannett ABNEY) - **RR/T**

**Volume II**

- 23. Mary Ann HOLMES GAUSDEN - **RR**
- 34. Parentage of Butler ABNEY - **NR**
- 37. Issue of W<sup>m</sup> ABNEY & Delilah RICHARDSON - **RR**
- 38. Husband of Melicent WILLS (ABNEY) - **NR**
- 39. Parentage of Benjamin "Ben" ABNEY - **NR**
- 40. Parentage of John B. ABNEY - **NR**
- 44. Cemetery of Kentucky ABNEY's - **NR**
- 45. Bathshua (widow of ABNEY & LEE) - **NR**
- 46. John ABNEY Jr. of South Carolina (1776-1823) - **RR**
- 47. OBNEY of Ohio, Pennsylvania, W. Va., & Virginia - **NR**
- 48. William Omer ABNEY (b.1878 Georgia) - **NR**
- 49. Pvt. William ABNEY's wives - **RR**
- 50. Ward Wilson ABNEY of Virmigy, Minnesota - **NR**
- 51. Robert ABNEY who m. Mary RODMAN - **NR**
- 53. John Joseph ABNEY of Louisiana - **NR**

**Volume III**

- 55. Parentage of Mary L. ABNEY - **NR**
- 56. Issue of Clem ABNEY - **RR**
- 57. Another Abner ABNEY - **RR/T\*\***
- 58. Parentage of Dr. James "Henry" ABNER - **NR**
- 59. Parentage of David ABNEY of SC - **NR**
- 60. Thomas ABNEY of Surrey, England - **NR**

---

**CODES**

**NR = No Response**

**R\* = Resolved (see this issue)**

**R\*\* = Resolved (see next issue)**

**RR = Responses Received**

**T = Theory Formulated**

**T\* = Theory Formulated (see this issue)**

**T\*\* = Theory Formulated (see next issue)**

---

Created & Distributed by the *Abney and Related Families Genealogical Archives*