

Fry Family Summary: Joshua Fry
By Aubin Clarkson Hutchison, 22 February 1999
Updated February 2015, by Pamela Hutchison Garrett

We have thought of Joshua Fry as one of our most interesting ancestors, and he so remains. He was the subject of my initial minimal searching because his name was passed down in our family as the commander of Lieut. (later president) George Washington. The sad outcome of that responsibility was that Joshua died in 1754 while making a hurried journey, with delayed supplies, to meet up with his lieutenant. They were embarking on a military mission against incursions of Indians and the French, assigned to Joshua Fry by Gov. Dinwiddie and the Council of Virginia, when he suffered such a bad fall from his horse that he died. An inglorious, but not uncommon accident as we've learned from other records of the times. George Washington and the small army of men buried Joshua Fry on 31 May 1754. The site, lost to history, was at Wills Creek near Ft. Cumberland, the present site of Cumberland, MD.

Many interesting facts have been uncovered about Joshua Fry. A fine, well-researched 180-page book by George W. Frye (1966) is the best source available. A photocopy is in my library. But his short, productive life deserves more attention and his English ancestors should be sought out and documented. Joshua Fry became quite famous before his death as the co-producer of the notable Frye-Jefferson map, the most accurate delineation of Virginia up to that time. He and his good friend and neighbor Peter Jefferson, father of our later president Thomas Jefferson, were the geographers appointed to the job, and completed it with such precision that it was even well known and utilized in Europe.

Only a few sources comment about Joshua Fry in England. One family paper we have by Susie Danforth Jones refers to DAR Patriots, and First Families of America, and claims that Joshua Fry was born in 1693, the son of Joseph Frye of Crewkerne, Somersetshire, England. I think S.D. Jones undertook some DAR application research for members of our family long ago. The "Dictionary of American Biography" by Johnson & Malone (1931) says Joshua Fry matriculated at Wadham College (Oxford) at age 18, on 31 Mar 1718. The county of Somerset is in the west country of England, touching on the Bristol Channel. However Crewkerne is in the far south of the county and is actually closer to, but does not touch, the English Channel. It appears that the primary town in the county is Taunton. Nearby is highway 303, a direct route to London probably less than 100 miles to the northeast, which of course may or may not parallel a route used in early times. Oxford is about the same distance but not as direct. Even nearer to the east are Salisbury and Stonehenge.



Wadham College - Oxford, England

It is important to discover if this Joseph Frye is truly Joshua's father and perhaps parish records are the source of the original claim. From studying my Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers it appears Crewkerne records were maintained in the archdeaconry of Taunton and the original records (1558-1954) should now be at the Somerset Record Office in that town. Phillimore's shows that some of those records (1687-1764) are already entered in the IGI, and if nothing is there showing Joshua, son of Joseph, we may be out of luck. In any event we should study all possible records of Crewkerne. Copies of the registers are at the Society of Genealogists, and data from the registers (1559-1812) was supposedly entered in Boyd's Marriage Index. LDSSL may have films of these records. On the Phillimore map of Somerset, and in the index, there are 22 more parishes in the map range of 2H and 3H that might be likely prospects for the Frye family suggested for Joshua's ancestry.

An article of 12 Oct 1984 in the Frederick, MD Post poses some generic thoughts on the name "Fry", saying it comes from the Norman or Icelandic "Frey" which in early England signified "free or noble." Its use as an English surname related to being free (not a slave), and sometimes to being free in speech (outspoken). A poetic example given is "the child that is so fry."

Though I have several folders of Fry notes, I limit details here since the primary purpose of my summaries is to prepare an "outline" to aid further research. From sources studied so far, the following semi-chronological data might provide at-a-glance clues toward seeking out more information. Since the opening of this summary provides the little background we have for Joshua in England, I'll begin with his first records in Virginia.

Several sources say Joshua Fry arrived in Virginia around 1720. I have not seen any records that prove that time of arrival. However, Lucian Fry in his "Fry History" (1992) says the name of Joshua Fry appears in Essex County, Virginia in "the parish register as vestryman, and in the court records as commissioner" between 1710 and 1720. [LDSSL 929.273 F945fr]. This information, if it refers to our same Joshua, seems to alter the thinking that he came to Williamsburg straight out of Wadham College, Oxford. Most have discarded the possibility that Joshua's parents were the first to come, accepting the theory of Joseph of Crewkerne, as father of our Joshua. But I'm not so sure.

The earliest record I have is a grant dated 11 June 1726 to Joshua Fry, gentleman of William and Mary College, from Hugh Drysdale, Lieut. Governor at Williamsburg, of 1000 acres in Spotsylvania, St. Georges Parish, on both sides of the Robinson River. This land, successively in Essex, Spotsylvania, Orange, Culpeper, and finally in Madison County, is at the junction of Robinson River and Crooked Run (formerly the Meander). There is also a transfer deed in 1728/29 of the property of W&M College from trustees to Professors and Masters, which lists Joshua Fry. But most early records of the college have been lost. The Rev. James Blair, who was sent as an Anglican missionary to Varina Parish on the James River in 1685, established William and Mary Grammar School in 1694, and the college in 1698. I have photocopied a picture of the first three buildings built at William and Mary which was published in "Planters and Pioneers" by James P. Rowse (1968). By 1729 all six charter professors had been brought from England and Scotland. Joshua was no doubt living in Williamsburg while teaching. In 1714 Spotsylvania had been formed from a western part of Essex Co and the Robinson River area (the 1726 grant) is over 100 miles to the northwest of Williamsburg. That grant may have been an enticement to get him to sign on at W & M. But what of his possible appearance in Essex records, 1710-1720? What about the Joshua Fry at Wadham College, Oxford in 1718? What about several men named Fry much earlier in VA. Were there two Joshua Frys in early Essex County?



The Colonial Schoolmaster

The Johnson & Malone source says Joshua came before 1720 and was made master of the grammar school at William and Mary in 1729. It also mentions his offices held in Essex Co and much of the same information found in other sources. One additional comment is that “according to a contemporary, Fry later removed to the back settlements in order to raise a fortune for his family. In 1744 he was living in Goochland County on Hardware River near Carter’s Bridge, between the present Charlottesville and Scottsville.” This location is, of course, in that part of Goochland that became Albemarle in 1745, and where Joshua’s home place was at the time of his death. Indicative of the contradictions that arise, another article that appeared in the Winchester (VA) Evening Star on 21 Aug 1958 says that in 1744 Joshua was living in Cumberland Co on the Hardware River near Carter’s Bridge, between the present site of Charlottesville and Scottsville. Another apparent boundary change?

Joshua served William and Mary in his two professorships from 1732 to 1737, when he was

succeeded by John Graeme. (Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography”: Tyler , 1915). Could this be “John Grymes”, a son of Joshua’s next neighbor mentioned in the Spotsylvania grants? In 1732 Joshua Fry, Robert Brooke, and William Mayo petitioned the House of Burgesses for aid in making a map of the Colony of Virginia. Some years later Joshua’s friend Parson Rose reports to him on the settlement of the estate of Robert Brooke. He was likely this same Brooke, and likely the Brooke whose home is located on the sketched map of Tappahannock I photocopied from the James Slaughter book on the History of Essex County. The debate continued for five years, ending with a vote to not undertake the project. It was during this time that Joshua married the wealthy, young widow Mary Micou Hill. It’s still not clear if our Joshua ever lived for a time in some part of Essex County before taking his position at the college, but he clearly was living in Essex after leaving the college.

Mary Micou’s first husband Leonard Hill died in 1734 in Essex County. She was indeed the inheritor of much wealth by the will of her first husband. Children of Col. Leonard Hill and Mary Micou were: Leonard Hill (m. 4 Oct 1752 Sarah Thacker, and died testate in 1756); Thomas Hill (m. 22 Sept 1758 Elinor Roy, and died 1765); and Mary Hill (m. John Lee). The editor of the Robert Rose Diary gives slightly conflicting data about these children and includes Elizabeth (m. James Dunlop), and Ann (m. Richard Tunstall).

In a grant of 1734 there is a reference to a 1731 grant. On 1 Aug 1734 Joshua was granted 2000 acres in Spotsylvania on the Robinson River to the line of John Grymes. he grant further states that it includes 1000 acres that was formerly granted by Lt. Gov. Wm.Gooch to “Mrs. Martha Fry” in Spotsylvania on the Robinson River, dated 26 June 1731. It’s possible that Martha Fry was Joshua’s mother (sister?), that there was an older Joshua Fry who was his father, and that our Joshua was not the one listed at Wadham College, Oxford, in 1718. On the other hand, if his parents came to Virginia, they may have

sent him back to England for his education as many who could afford it were inclined to do in those early days. On 27 Feb 1735/6 Lt. Gov. William Gooch granted to Joshua Fry 400 more acres on the Fork of Robinson River in Orange County, adjacent to the former Fry grant and on the line of Col. John Grymes. Orange County was formed from western Spotsylvania in 1734 with St. Mark's parish in the north and St. George's parish in the south. In 1748 Culpeper was formed from the north part of Orange and later adjustments developed Madison. Later (1774), Joshua's second son Henry (our ancestor), speaks of staying with Mr. Grymes in Culpeper when seeking spiritual help to combat extreme alcoholism. This is the Fry land where the Rev. Henry Fry eventually built his home, Elim.

To complicate matters even more, I have the following records to include from "Orange County VA Deeds and Judgements" [OSHS Library, F232.06 O59].

Book 1 and 2 (1735-1738; and 1735 judgements)

1735 Jul 14-15; Joshua Fry, near Robinson River, part of a patent of 24 Mar 1734/5; Witness: Thomas Walker

1736 May 18-19; Joshua Fry

1736 May 25-26; Joshua Fry, upper corner Meander Run

1738 Mar 22-23; Joshua Fry

Book 3 and 4 (1738-1741; and 1736 judgements)

Joshua Fry, a Branch of Bever Dam Run

So it is clear to see that there are various county records all around the place for Joshua Fry. We hope there was only one gentleman in Virginia by that name, but consideration ought to be given to the father/son possibility, at least as regards the 1710-1720 Essex County records mentioned above.

Several years ago I was able to briefly look at the "South Farnham Episcopal Church Vestry Book, Essex Co, VA". [LDSSL 33934]. My note indicates that very early in the record, probably within the first five pages of the film, it says Processioners processed the line between Mr. Joshua Fry . . . on Tuesday, 20 Nov 1739, signed Joshua Boughter. More Essex searching is essential as I did not have time to make further notes from that record.

The first child of Mary Micou Hill and Joshua Fry was born in 1737. From one of our most reliable sources, "Memoir of Colonel Joshua Fry . . . with an autobiography of his son, Rev. Henry Fry" by the Rev. Philip Slaughter, we have an accurate list of the children of Joshua and Mary:

John Fry; born 7 May 1737; m. Sarah Adams, before 1760; died 1778

Henry Fry; born 19 October 1738; married Susan Walker 16 June 1764

Martha Fry; born 15 May 1740; married John Nicholas

William Fry; born 6 February 1743; unmarried; died 1 July 1760

Margaret Fry; born 15 May 1744; married John Scott; died 1811

More details of these children will be included later. (Keep in mind the step-children of Joshua Fry who were Leonard, Thomas and Mary Hill, and possibly Elizabeth and Ann.) Our ancestor in the above generation was Henry Fry. From the birth dates above we might conclude that Joshua and Mary were married about 1735-1736. There is an unusual record shown by Wilkerson in her "Index to Marriages of Old Rappahannock and Essex Co's VA, 1655-1900" (1953). Formed in 1656 from Lancaster, Rappahannock was terminated in 1692 with the formation of Essex and Richmond counties. It simply gives a date of 1740 and shows that Joshua Fry married Mary Micou. Apparently reference for it is found

in W6/287, which must be Essex and Rappahannock Wills, vol 6. Not having seen this record I am left to think something in a record must be indicative of a marriage, but not its date.

I think it important to make this observation about the names of the children of Joshua Fry and Mary Micou (widow Hill). Considering the daughters, "Martha" was the first name used, and we need to think very carefully about that Martha Fry mentioned in the early land records of Spotsylvania County as having been granted in 1731 land adjoining (and in 1734 included in) a grant being made to Joshua Fry. It is a very curious description. Could that Martha Fry be our Joshua's mother or sister? The second daughter of Joshua and Mary was named "Margaret." Various historians think that the mother of Mary Micou Hill Fry was Margaret Cammack. And GWF claims Col. Joshua Fry had a sister Margaret Fry, wife of Thomas Hornsby, merchant of Williamsburg. This naming pattern may be important. On the other hand there appears to be no naming pattern used in regard to their sons John, Henry and William if we accept, as most propose, that Joseph Frye of Crewkerne, Somerset, England was the father of our Joshua. This encourages me to continue a suspicion about the parentage of Joshua. (Recall that children born to Mary Micou in her first marriage to Leonard Hill were: Leonard Jr, Thomas, and Mary Hill; possibly Elizabeth and Ann Hill.)

James B. Slaughter, in his "History of Essex Co VA 1608-1984" gives some very helpful information about that county and also mentions Joshua Fry's residence there. "In 1754, war erupted on Virginia's western frontier, which by this time had been pushed into present-day West Virginia, between white settlers and Indians. Beyond this frontier lay the rich and undeveloped lands of western Pennsylvania and Ohio. William Beverley of Essex and other wealthy men were speculating in millions of acres in these wilderness regions which they planned to fill with settlers. To protect its interests in these regions and to protect the settlers, Virginia asked its fellow colonies and England for help to fight the Indians and their French allies."

Joshua Fry was definitely gone from Essex by 1744, but may have been participating in much the same activities in his new home county, Albemarle. Slaughter continues: "Essex had ample manpower for the war in its fast-growing population of 7,000 people. The Essex militia was remarkably strong in the 1750s and sent many men to fight on the frontier. Over 60 percent of the county's 889 white men served in the county militia under the command of Colonel John Corbin. Other Essex gentlemen held the officer posts. Burgesses Thomas Waring and William Dangerfield served as the colonels of horse and foot troops while Francis Smith and William Roane were majors of horse and foot troops. Nine captains served under them with companies ranging from forty-three to seventy-three men. Far more than a military unit, the county militia was a key social group in Essex. The officers regularly mustered the militia in Tappahannock for day-long drills and festivities. The amateur soldiers attempted to imitate a regular military force for the day and were rewarded by their gentlemen officers with a keg of liquor on the courthouse green."

"The county's interest in the war (Fr/Ind) probably grew when former Essex Justice Joshua Fry received command of the Virginia Forces. Fry had immigrated from England to Virginia in the 1720s, where he taught mathematics at the College of William and Mary. In the 1730s the young professor married into the Essex gentry and became a gentleman planter. He and his wife, Mary Micou Hill, lived at the now-vanished Hill Park near Ware's Wharf. Fry had been in Essex little more than two years when the Governor's Council appointed him to the County Court with the same rank he held in Williamsburg. (Just what this refers to is not clear). Fry quickly assumed a high profile in the Essex gentry. He added to his military experience as a captain in the Essex militia. When the county enjoyed a wave of prosperity in the 1730s, Fry financed tobacco warehouses at Bowlers and Piscataway Creek. Fry's political aspirations,

however, could not be realized in a county teeming with wealthy and ambitious gentlemen. After losing a bid for the House of Burgesses, Fry moved to Albemarle County on the western frontier and was elected in 1744.”

The so called French and Indian War was formally declared 9 May 1756 and ended with the Treaty of Fountainbleau in Nov 1762. Joshua Fry was significantly involved with pre-war activities and conflicts. We are left with some slight differences of time and activities for Joshua, but Lucian Fry remarks that writers said he had “extraordinary industry and energy...” and later, between 1747 and 1753, he surveyed and recorded over 9000 acres for Albemarle residents. Once he got to Albemarle we at least know that’s where his home remained, though he was even more active than ever. His wife Mary Micou must have been a remarkable manager. The location of his home near Scottsville is marked appropriately today.

The Johnson & Malone source telescopes Joshua’s last ten years saying Joshua Fry, Gentleman, was made first Presiding Justice of Albemarle, Justice in the Court of Chancery, County Surveyor, and one of the first two Albemarle representatives the House of Burgesses, in which body he remained till his death. In 1745 he was named County Lieutenant, a position of great honor and responsibility, which in England usually accompanied knighthood. In 1746 Joshua Fry, Col. Lunsford, and Maj. Peter Hedgeman, agents of the King, helped settle the boundary controversy over the Northern Neck Fairfax Grant. Three years later, Fry and Peter Jefferson were commissioned to run part of the Virginia-Carolina boundary.

“In 1752 Fry was commissioned with three others to treat with the Six Nations, together with the Shawnee, Mingo and Delaware Tribes. They secured the timely and important treaty of Logstown (near the forks of the Ohio) in which these tribes promised not to molest the English settlers southeast of the Ohio. Fry was appointed commander-in-chief of the militia in the spring of 1754 to put an end to French encroachments at the head of the Ohio, but he died . . . One of the greatest services which Fry rendered the colony was the making, in connection with his friend Peter Jefferson, of a ‘Map of the Inhabited Parts of Virginia’ (1751), one of the first and most interesting of the maps of Virginia. Fry accompanied it with an account of frontier settlements and of western lands, which he drew chiefly from his unusually large collection of source material relating to New France, and from conversations with his neighbor, Dr. Thomas Walker.” (Johnson & Malone) This is repetitious of the Joshua Fry article by Burke Davis, but gives a slightly different picture of Joshua. Some selected sources given by Johnson & Malone, of special interest to us. are: “Virginians at Oxford”, W.G.Stanard in W & M Qtly, Oct 1892; “Journal of the Meetings of the President and Masters of W & M College”, W & M Qtly, Jan 1894; “Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, 2 v., ed. Brock (1884). Several others are shown.

Another source we might find helpful would be the Journals of the House of Burgesses:

Joshua Fry; 20 Feb 1745; 30 Mar 1747; 10 Apr 1749; 1 Nov 1753; 11 Jul 1746; 27 Oct 1748; 5 Feb 1752; 14 Feb 1754; 22 Aug 1754 (Joshua Fry died 31 May 1754)

John Fry (eldest son of Joshua Fry); 3 Nov 1761; 14 Jan 1762; 30 Mar 1762; 2 Nov 1762; 19 May 1763; 12 Jan 1764.

Henry Fry (second son of Joshua Fry): 30 Oct 1764; 1 May 1765

Until a thorough search is made of the records of all these counties a total picture of Joshua’s endeavors in Virginia eludes us. But the George Fry book is quite thorough. The following remarks, based on photocopies of 15 or 20 pages of a transcription of the Albemarle County Court Order Book, 1744/45 and 1745/46, shed additional light on Joshua Fry and /or Albemarle County during his time there.

On 4 Sept 1744 in Williamsburg the summoned General Assembly established, by Act, the County of Albemarle from the County of Goochland. An elaborate description is given of how various oaths were administered at the first meeting in Albemarle on 28 Feb 1745, to the several appointed Justices: Joshua Fry, Peter Jefferson, Allen Howard, William Cabell, Joseph Thomson and Thomas Bellew, gentlemen. It is pointed out that these are Oaths Appointed by Act of Parliament instead of Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy. In particular the Abjuration Oath, the Oath of Justice of the Peace, and the Oath of Justice of the County Court in Chancery are each administered to Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson, which they in part and in turn administered to others as appointed. Commissions to other offices were accepted including that of Joshua to be Surveyor of the Land of Albemarle County and Oaths taken accordingly. It was ordered that Joshua Fry, gentleman, meet persons appointed by Goochland to run the dividing line between the two counties. The Sheriff, Joseph Thomson, was to give public notice to all with a mind to undertake building a Prison, Court House and Stocks. The next court would be held at Mr. Scott's Plantation at Totier, and this court was adjourned by Joshua Fry.



Historic Marker placed at Viewmont by the Albemarle Virginia Chapter of the DAR, 1964.

On 8 Mar 1745 the next court was held “at the Court House” (most likely Mr. Scott’s place) and rates were established for liquors, diet and services provided by keepers of Ordinaries. The commission of Thomas Turpin was accepted to be Assistant Surveyor to Joshua Fry. Several road work problems and assignments were handled along with numerous complaints settled of neighbor against neighbor, all well described and settled or continued in what appears to be an orderly, legal fashion. Joshua had been a Justice in Essex, but one wonders just how much experience these new justices had. The Commission appointing Joshua Fry, Esq to be County Lieutenant is produced and proper Oaths taken, as are several other appointments and actions taken, including Peter Jefferson to be Lieutenant Colonel of the County. Sheriff Joseph Thomson says the house appointed as jail is not sufficient, and he is allowed to employ men to improve it and bring the bill to court for a Levy. Several estate matters are also entered into record, some misdemeanors handled, and the Church Wardens of St. Ann’s Parish are ordered to bind out a 17-year-old orphan to a resident to learn the trade of carpenter. Since no secretary is mentioned,

these very early original records, in beautiful script, may be in the hand of Joshua Fry, who signs. A signature example is similar in some letters, but not all.

25 Apr 1745. Five Justices present including Joshua Fry, but not Peter Jefferson. The sheriff was ordered to summon 24 Free Holders to the Court House on the 4th Thursday in May as a Grand Jury. Attention is given to roads (the historic Four Chopt Road is mentioned), binding out orphans, and a deed matter is taken up. 23 May 1745. Joshua Fry is present, and among matters taken up Joshua Fry and William Cabell are to contract with some Merchant to send for Weights, Scales and Measures, as standards for use in the county. Robert Rose, Clerk, and his wife Ann are mentioned as sellers of property to John Harvie. Robert Rose became a beloved pastor in the area, and very good friend of Joshua Fry as evidenced by Robert's diary (1746-1751) and indicated by some excerpts to follow. Samuel Scott, son of Edward Scott, decd, proposes to build a court house, prison, stocks and pillory at his own proper cost on his own land, as selected by the Court. A very generous and prudent offer. Since Robert Rose is titled "Clerk", he may have become Clerk of the Court.

27 June 1745. Joshua Fry, Peter Jefferson and others are present. Deeds, roads, ordinaries, and other matters are taken up, and in particular the matter of the building of the Court House. There is recorded "A true and perfect List of All the Surveys made by me in the County of Albemarle and Parish of Saint Anns &c" which includes owners and size of surveyed lands and is signed by Joshua Fry. It totals 12,313 acres. The road of the Rev. Mr. Stith is mentioned in one road work assignment. He is the author of an early Virginia history. The mouth of the Hardware River to the Court House is mentioned as is also the Three Notched Road. Surveyors of the several high ways in the county are ordered to set up Post with Directions at the several forks of roads within their several districts, according to law, and that the said directions be set up at least ten feet from the ground.

25 July 1745. Joshua Fry, Peter Jefferson, and other justices are present. The usual matters of roads, orphans, ordinaries, crimes, and misdemeanors are taken up. Records are beginning to sound even more "legal" as lawyers and juries are mentioned. Certain misbehavers are required to "keep the peace" and specific victims, as well as his Majesties League People, are mentioned to be the recipients of this "Good Behavior." Misbehavers are required to put up bond to insure their good behavior for 12 months and a day. Thomas and Caton Nunn make Oath in Court that they were imported 14 years ago from Scotland and have not yet received the rights due to them for their Importation. Witnesses are allowed a quantity of Tobacco as payment for their appearance in Court.

6 August 1745. An orphan's court was not attended by Joshua Fry, and only took up one matter of a deed. On 22 Aug 1745 a regular court was held which Joshua also did not attend. Peter Jefferson missed both of these courts also, so maybe they were out together surveying. The usual matters were taken up including allowing certain parties to keep a ferry across the North River. Mention is made of the "road from the Secretary's Foard to twelve Mile tree" to be cleared.

26 Sept 1745. Joshua Fry was present, though Peter Jefferson was not. The usual matters of deeds and roads are taken up, along with more unusual items. A lady complains of being detained in Servitude contrary to Law. A mulatto bastard child is to be bound out by the Church Wardens of St. Anns according to Law. And several charges of trespass, slander and assault are entered for Edward Watts by James Meredith, his attorney, against three residents of the county. A new appointment is made of two gentlemen to be Inspectors of Pork, Beef, Tar and Turpentine

27 Nov 1745. Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson were not present. Robert Rose, Clerk, and wife Ann are again parties to a deed of lease and release. Two men are presented for Profane Swearing. Several couples are presented for living in adultery, and one Elanor Crawley is found guilty of Petty Larceny in Stealing Linning to the value of eleven pence. For this she gets fifteen Laches on the bare back well laid on. Martin King is put in the stocks for one hour for Misbehaving before the Court. Two gentlemen request an appraisal of 2400 Albemarle acres, with improvements, and appraisers are appointed. The sheriff is ordered to give notice a Court will be held on 25 Dec next for Laying the County Levy. Other felonies, larcenies and misbehaviors are recorded, along with road work ordered.

22 Jan 1746. Joshua Fry present with several other justices. The usual matters are taken up. Thomas Walker (whose daughter married Joshua's son, Henry) petitions for a road from the North Garden of Albemarle through Ivey Creek Pass to Rockfish Road. Thomas Walker had married the young and wealthy widow of Nicholas Meriwether of Albemarle in 1741. She and Nicholas had no children. Robert Lewis appeared in court as executor of Nicholas Meriwether, against John Austin who was represented by attorney, Gideon Marr. The cause is not stated and the matter was continued. Dr. Thomas Walker was also a good friend of Joshua Fry, and spent more of his time exploring the west than in the medical profession for which he had trained. Credited with discovering the Cumberland Gap, several have written of him, including a disseration I have in my library. On Jan 24 and 25 this court was continued with Joshua Fry present, handling damages and making some appointments. The court was Adjourned till the Court in Course, and signed Joshua Fry.

These two order books appear to be the only ones found in the Albemarle Records, unless something new has been uncovered recently.

The Diary of Robert Rose, 1746-1751, adds considerable color to our story of Col. Joshua Fry. Rev Rose was serving St. Anne's Parish in Essex Co, VA when Vaughter's Church was erected in 1731. Probably it was in Essex County that young parson Rose and Joshua Fry first became fast friends. Excerpts from the Diary, related to Joshua Fry, are included in a related article titled, [Joshua Fry in excerpts from the Rose Diary](#).

In March of 1751 the Rev. Robert Rose helped his friend Col. Joshua Fry clarify the area of the Tye River where Rose lived for inclusion in the Fry-Jefferson map, almost ready for publication. A history of the map is included in "Maps of Ohio Valley" found at LDSSL, 973E3b, which I studied in May 1998, parts of which I quote as follows:

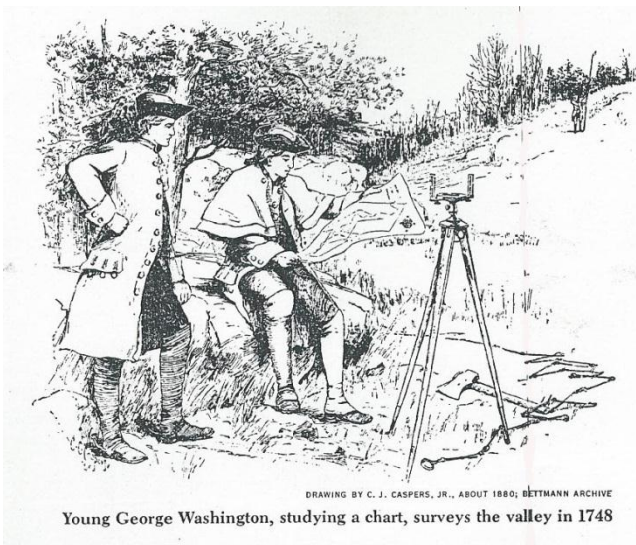
This important map was compiled by two distinguished gentleman surveyors. They finished it in 1751. However, proofs from the engraved plates were not pulled until after March 1752, and sometime before Jan 1755. Like the maps of Lewis Evans, Thomas Hutchins, and John Mitchell, this document had a long and checkered career. And like the others, it was altered several times by the compilers and the publishers, and was "adapted" and otherwise utilized by competitors who were obliged to lean on it in the absence of better information. As Coolie Verner points out, there were "multiple derivaties produced between the day it first came from the press and the year 1800." Many of these are hard to trace because of the fact that the original map base was so altered, for better or worse, that plagiarism or piracy would be impossible to establish.....

Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson were selected by Acting-Governor Lewis Burwell as the two "most proper and best qualified" men to draw a map of the interior of the country and the inhabited part of Virginia, in accordance with an order issued by the Lords of Trade dated July 19, 1750. The idea for such a map had

been proposed twelve years earlier by Joshua Fry, Robert Brooke, and William Mayo. In fact, Governor William Gooch had strongly advocated the project; but like many another mapping enterprise it was turned down by the government, presumably because of the exorbitant cost involved, and perhaps because there seemed to be little likelihood of the back country beyond the mountains ever growing up to amount to anything, anymore than the Ohio Valley would ever produce anything but large farms and enough "minerals" to supply a limited demand.

After the map was completed and a report was submitted to the Council, the work was formally approved, and each of the surveyors was voted 150 pounds sterling for his expenses and trouble. Virginia finally had a map of herself, and one that compared favorably with the best that had been made of any of the American colonies. Sometime between 1752, when the map was formally accepted by the home government, and 1754, the first impressions were pulled from the engraved plates.

The sins of omission on the Fry and Jefferson map are readily apparent, especially to anyone interested in the mapping of the Ohio River and its Valley. But if one bears in mind that the geography depicted in the northwestern area represents the knowledge or interest of most Virginians as of the year 1750, it is not surprising to find an Ohio River that meanders across the top of the early issues of the map, devoid of place names along its banks, and one that is labelled "Allegany or Ohio River." Moreover, the authors wrote that "Maps differ much in the Longitude and Latitude of the Lakes, and wether Lake Erie in this Map is in its proper Situation or not must be left to further Discoveries." In the eyes of most Virginians, their colony was plenty big enough, and someone else could survey the hinterland. The push to the Ohio had not yet begun.



The publication of the Fry and Jefferson map was an important event, but the revised editions, beginning in 1755, were even more so. The most significant changes in the map are to be found on the upper left sheet, where many important details have been added. The Ohio River no longer meanders aimlessly across the top. Some of its branches are shown and have acquired names; and the Forks, which were almost lost at the top of the plate, are nevertheless there, to the west of the Pennsylvania boundary line, as well as a note indicating a "Fort taken in 1754 called by the French F. du Quesne." Other important additions to the upper left corner of the map are (1) a note stating that "The Course of the Ohio or Alliganey River and its

Branches are laid down from Surveys and Draughts made on the Spot by Mr. Gist and others in the years 1751,2,3&4." (2) A table of distances and a note stating that "These Distances, with the Course of the Roads on the Map I carefully collected on the Spot and entered them in my Journal from whence they are now inserted. [Signed] J. Dalrymple--London, Jany ye 1st, 1755." In short, geographical information was now catching up with political events.

It is difficult to select the most important edition of the Fry-Jefferson map. Each change that was made on the plates was either for the correction and improvement of geographical information, or one that would illustrate a change in colonial affairs--both political and military. A thorough review of the map

and its various editions will be found in "The Fry & Jefferson Map of Virginia and Maryland, Published for the University of Virginia by Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1950. This work, ably edited by Coolie Verner, will give the reader additional references to the map. The original is at John Work Garrett Library at Johns Hopkins University.

A 1775 edition is described as 50 x 31 inches. From another book at LDSSL 975.5 R2h, "Surveyors and Statesmen, Land Measuring in Colonial Virginia" by Hughes, I photocopied an imprint of the 1751 map from the inside back cover. The French Ft. du Quesne was called Ft. Pitt by the English.

Another interesting source at LDSSL, 1703879, is a filming of the "Journals of Christopher Gist" written 1751-1759. Gist, an adventuresome woodsman/settler of the Ohio River area, was an agent of the Ohio Co. In a brief survey of the film I noticed an extract from a Joshua Fry letter that mentions the map of (Thomas) Hutchins, brother of our ancestor Col. Anthony Hutchins. There are several other mentions of the Fry-Jefferson Map which makes me think the Gist Journals might add more information related to the life and times of Joshua.

An article about Joshua Fry in the Winchester (VA) Evening Star of 21 Aug 1958, repeats much of the information already given, but mentions one additional endeavor he accomplished, the building of Fry Fort in 1752 on Cedar Creek in Shenandoah County. A picture of Fry Fort accompanies the article which says it has needed no repair in all these years. L. Adolph Richards, the author, says his grandmother inherited the fort from Joshua Fry, who was her grandfather, and says that many of his family were born "in this stone mansion." Possibly was built in 1752 when Joshua was commissioned with Col. Lomax and Col. James Patton to negotiate a treaty for the Ohio Company.

The Ohio Company was chartered by the British Government in 1749, and was granted 600,000 acres in the Ohio River Valley. Their commercial object was to explore the country and establish trading posts among the Indians, gaining their favor. This excited the jealousy of the French, who also wanted the cooperation of the Indians and control of the Ohio. Joshua's commission met the Indian representatives at Logstown, an Indian village about 18 miles below Fort Duquesne, now Pittsburgh. The Treaty of Logstown was secured 13 June 1752 and the "Six Nations", along with the Shawnee, Mingo, and Delaware, agreed to not molest the settlers south of the Ohio River. These Indians became allies of the English but the contest between England and France continued. An entry in the diary of Dr. Wm. Cabell (16 Oct 1752) says "Left the Doctor's in company with Col. Fry, who had a fall from his horse near Deep Run Chapel, and by it broke his collar bone and bruised his ribs, if not broke them. Taken in and kindly treated by Samuel Allen." Our Joshua was either a careless or daring horseman!

Frequently conflicting information is in print about Joshua. Page 376 of "Twelve Virginia Counties" says Joshua fought in The Battle of Great Meadows against French and Indian forces on 3 July 1753. This may be true, but a similar claim is made on page 589 of "Colonial Soldiers of the South" (Clark) mentioning Col. Joshua Fry's pay and muster rolls before the Battle of Bay Meadow, on 3 July 1754. The similarity of battle names and dates suggests possible duplication and we do know that Joshua died on 3 May 1754 at Wills Creek. Five weeks earlier his lieutenant, George Washington, had set out with a small advance party to clear a road and convey artillery up the Potomac to Wills Creek.

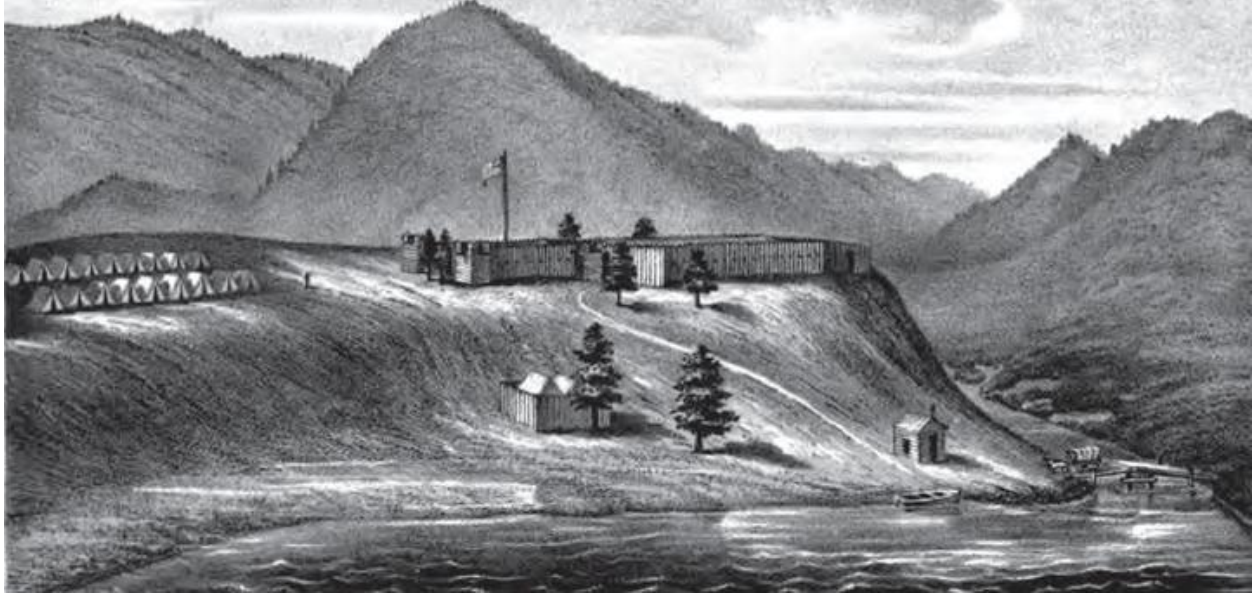
When Joshua was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Virginia Regiment in 1754, Governor Dinwiddie issued the following commission: "To Joshua Fry. His Majesty, by his royal instructions, commanded me to send a proper number of forces to erect and maintain a fort at the Monongahela and Ohio Rivers, and having a good opinion of your loyalty, conduct and ability, I do hereby institute, appoint and commission

you to be Colonel and Commander-in-Chief of the forces now raising to be called Virginia Regiment, with which and the artillery, arms and ammunition, necessary provisions and stores, you are with all possible dispatch to proceed to the said fort of Monongahela, and there act according to your instructions." This is quoted from the Lucian Fry report which lists several sources. In "The History of St. Mark's Parish" by the Rev. Philip Slaughter, the text is also quoted and he says the original 1754 commission was in possession of Francis Fry of Charlottesville. In the "Joshua Fry Memoir" Slaughter says it is in possession of Wm. O. Fry of Charlottesville. Joshua encountered difficulty procuring cooperation and desperately needed supplies in Alexandria and the delay caused George Washington to send him a dispatch seeking reinforcements. The sad result of Joshua's fatal fall from his horse upon finally reaching Will's Creek is history.

Slaughter says a contemporary notice of Joshua's death states: "He was a man of so clear a head, so mild a temper, and so good a heart, that he never failed to enjoy the love and esteem of all who knew, or were connected with him, and he was universally lamented." Having been told there was a portrait of Joshua hanging in Williamsburg, I contacted William and Mary College, but was told no portrait was known to them. However, the book published by George W. Fry contains a reproduction of a painting, most likely held by a family member, that is captioned "Joshua Fry". His undated will, admitted to record in Albemarle County 8 August 1754 is quoted by G.W. Fry. It is given in a related article titled, [Wills of Joshua Fry and Mary Micou Fry.](#)

G.W. Fry shows the several large and interesting inventories of Joshua's estate that in a future expanded work I may include. They were taken by several groups of men over a period from Dec 1754 thru Nov 1759 and are included in Albemarle records though the lands were in several counties. Apparently he had slaves on plantations at Albemarle, Culpeper, Tye River and Willises Creek but it doesn't appear from the articles listed that he had built a residence anywhere but at Viewmont on the Hardware River in Albemarle. He had many horses, cattle, pigs and sheep, and forty - eight slaves at his various plantations. At his homeplace one of the more valuable entries, aside from slave valuations, was: eight Feather beds, bouldsters, pillows, bedstead & cords, the total value of the bedding being forty pounds.

GWF contradicts the traditional family story of Joshua's death claimed to be found amongst Fry family papers by The Rev. Philip Slaughter, that Washington was present for the burial on 31 May 1754. We might consider that it was Christopher Gist who performed that service instead. GWF says that according to Washington's own diary (May 30) he "began to raise a fort (Ft. Necessity) with small pallisades, fearing that when the French should hear the news....." and then (June 1) "we are finishing our fort ." Whether that precludes him from burying Joshua or not, I don't know. A few days later (June 6) he writes "Mr. Gist is returned and acquaints me of the safe arrival of the prisoners at Winchester, and of the death of poor Col. Fry." In view of Washington's later fame as General and President near thirty-five years later, some family member may have mentally created the scene. On the other hand, could Washington have officiated, and then six days later discussed the death with Gist? Whatever happened, it was the accidental death of Col. Fry that gave twenty-two year old Washington his first command of troops in active service. GWF also adds that despite sentiment to the contrary, George Washington seemed disposed to complaining and haggling, and even complained directly to Gov. Dinwiddie about being a dependent at Col. Fry's table, and about his rate of pay and allowances. Fry was not a trained military man, nor was the rather petulant George Washington. Gov. Dinwiddie, who also showed little military discretion, rushed his appointments (and demands) when the French took a British fort under construction at the juncture of the Allegheny and Monongahela. Sufficient troops, supplies and funds weren't provided as pledged, but at the Governor's frantic urging the expedition went forth unprepared.



Fort Cumberland, 1755

Nearly 200 years later, historians and family members still searching for Joshua's grave became reinvigorated when Baltimore and Ohio Railroad workers made a deep cut for the bridges that carry Washington, Fayette, and Cumberland streets in Cumberland, Maryland. Human bones were unearthed there and carried to Rose Hill Cemetery, but documents of the move don't give an interment location. How unfortunate in these days of DNA, when those ancient bones could be identified. Another tradition, claimed some time ago, is that original Lot 154 on Cumberland Street (now divided to hold homes addressed as 214, 216, 218 Cumberland) is the location of the burial. Contemporary records indicate the painfully injured Joshua was treated in vain for several days by Dr. James Craik, Surgeon of the Virginia Regiment who eventually became Surgeon General of the Continental Army of the Revolution.

"According to a map of Cumberland in the British Museum in London, the barracks, parade ground, officers' quarters, commissary stores, hospital, guard houses, magazine and outer stockade covered a greater area than is generally supposed. The stronghold extended from in front of Emmanuel Episcopal church back to about Smallwood street and over to Fayette street and the former Roman property. If Fry's grave was between the fort and Wills Creek it might be anywhere from SS. Peter and Paul Monastery to the Cumberland street bridge on the ground that slopes to the creek. There were no streets laid out in 1754, and soldiers might have been buried on any portion of the ground that lay between the fort and Wills Creek." (Cumberland Sunday Times, Cumberland, MD.)

Mary Micou Hill Fry died August 20th 1772, having survived Col. Joshua by more than eighteen years. Her will, dated 10 September 1768, probated 11 October 1772, appears along with the Will of Joshua Fry.

Some heirs of Joshua Fry submitted a bounty land claim to the Council of Virginia on 4 Nov. 1773, and this should also be researched. Because of the use of the name "Joshua Fry" in later generations, confusion sometimes exists. But Joshua and Mary's children were: John, Henry, Martha, William and Margaret Fry. John and Henry each named a son Joshua Fry.

Do you want to know more?

[Link to Joshua Fry in the database](#)

[Joshua Fry, by Burke Davis, 1968, from his book "Williamsburg Galaxy"](#)

[Joshua Fry in excerpts from the Rose Diary](#)

[Wills of Joshua Fry and Mary Micou Fry](#)

About the Photos:

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The Colonial Schoolmaster

Historic Marker at Viewmont; photo accompanies a delightful article from the blog titled "Landmarks" by Allen Browne. [Article – Lottie Moon and Joshua Fry](#).

Virginia Surveyors; drawing by C J Caspers, Jr, about 1880, from the Bettmann Archive.

Fort Cumberland, 1755; Photo reproduced from "History of Cumberland Maryland" by William Lowdermilk, 1878.