

9 Mar 2026, from Tracey Marcelo

<tracey.marcelo@gmail.com>

Who Was the Father of Job Robins of Washington County, Pennsylvania?

A Proposed Identification: Joshua Robbins of Loudoun County, Virginia (d. c.1770)

Compiled March 2026 | Research in Progress

The Problem: A Family Without a Father

Among researchers working on the Robbins/Robins families of Washington County, Pennsylvania, and on the descendants of Daniel Robbins b. 1666 of Hunterdon County, New Jersey, one question has long gone unanswered:

The Unanswered Question:

Who was the husband of Ann Robins, who appears in Washington County, Pennsylvania in the 1780s as a widow with grown and nearly-grown children — and who was their father?

Ann Robins wrote her will on February 15, 1785, proved March 31, 1785, in Washington County, Pennsylvania. She named grandchildren Amos, James, and John Robins (sons of her deceased son Job), and left her wearing clothes to her three daughters: Leca Carter, Mary Phillips, and Agnes Donahue. Her best bed went to granddaughter Ann Phillips, daughter of Mary.

The names of Ann's children are well established from the combined evidence of her will, her son Job's estate papers, her son Daniel's will, and land records:

- Job Robins — died August 1777, Peters Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania
- John Robins — died before July 24, 1777
- Daniel Robins — wrote will July 24, 1777; died before March 1780
- Jacob Robins — died before March 1780
- Leca/Lesa Robins — married a Carter
- Mary Robins — married John Phillips
- Agnes Robins — married a Donahue

What was entirely unknown was who Ann's husband was, where the family came from before settling on Chartiers Creek, and how they connected — if at all — to the Daniel Robbins b. 1666 family of New Jersey.

The First Clue: A Striking Naming Pattern

The children of Ann Robins bear names that will immediately catch the attention of anyone familiar with the family of Daniel Robbins b. 1666 of Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Daniel's documented children included:

- Jonathan b. 1693
- John b. 1694
- Isaac b. 1697

- Lydia b. 1699
- Job b. 1701
- Elisha b. 1703
- Joshua b. 1705
- (plus five unidentified children)

Ann Robins' children included a Job, a John, a Daniel, and a Jacob — and Ann's husband, whoever he was, was presumably named for or connected to this same family tradition. The name Job in particular is rare enough to be significant: it appears in Daniel b. 1666's own family, and it reappears one generation later in Ann's family.

This naming pattern alone is not proof of a connection — but it is a flag. It points toward the Daniel b. 1666 line as the probable origin of Ann's family, and it motivated a search for a Robbins family somewhere in the migration corridor between New Jersey and Washington County, Pennsylvania.

The Discovery: Joshua Robbins of Loudoun County, Virginia

That search led to Loudoun County, Virginia — and to a second Joshua Robbins with sons named Job and John.

The Key Finding:

In Loudoun County, Virginia, a Joshua Robbins appears in records from 1765 through 1770, when he died intestate. He had at least two sons living with him: Job Robins (documented on the 1768 tithable list) and John Robbins (documented on the 1769 tithable list). An Anne Robins subsequently appears in his estate proceedings in 1771.

Loudoun County was created in 1757 from the western portion of Fairfax County. It lies in the northern Shenandoah Valley foothills of Virginia, and in the mid-eighteenth century it was a destination for migrants from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Jersey moving southwestward along the Great Wagon Road corridor.

The Robbins family presence in Loudoun County almost certainly predates the county's formation. A William Robbins appears in court records in 1757 — the very first year of the county's existence — suggesting he was already an established resident when the new county was organized around him. A John Robbins follows in 1762. Joshua Robbins first appears in 1765. The sequence strongly suggests a family already rooted in what had been Fairfax County territory, with earlier records likely to be found in Fairfax County records predating 1757.

Anne Robins in the Loudoun County Estate Proceedings

The appearance of Anne Robins in Joshua's estate proceedings is one of the most important pieces of evidence connecting her to this family. On June 20, 1771 — approximately six months after Joshua Robbins died intestate — the following entry appears in Loudoun County Order Book E:

**William Dixon Admr. Joshua Robins Plt. — Petition upon an Account
Anne Robins — Deft.**

This day came the Parties by their Attorneys who being fully heard It is considered by the Court that the Plaintiff recover against the said Defendant two pounds eleven shillings and his Costs by him in that behalf expended.

William Dixon, as administrator of Joshua Robins' estate, brought a petition against Anne Robins and won — she owed two pounds eleven shillings to the estate. This type of proceeding was common in estate settlements and does not by itself establish Anne's relationship to Joshua. She could be his widow, a daughter, or another family member with a financial obligation to the estate.

However, considered alongside all the other evidence presented in this document, the most straightforward interpretation is that Anne Robins was Joshua's widow — and that after his death c.1770, she eventually migrated with her children westward to Chartiers Creek, arriving in Peters Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania, sometime in the mid-1770s.

Note on spelling: The Loudoun County Order Book E record spells her name 'Anne.' Her Washington County will (1785) spells it 'Ann.' Variant spellings of the same name within the same individual's records are extremely common in eighteenth-century documents, where spelling was not standardized and clerks recorded names as they heard them. This discrepancy is not a contradiction and should not be read as evidence of two different women.

Proposed Migration Timeline

The following timeline is proposed based on the available evidence. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are confirmed by primary sources; others are inferences:

- * Pre-1757: William Robbins established in what becomes Loudoun County, Virginia (formerly Fairfax County territory).
- * 1757–1758: William Robbins active in Loudoun County court records.
- * c.1762: John Robbins active in Loudoun County — road crew, court cases, estate claims.
- * c.1762: Jemima Robbins purchases goods at Mary Patterson estate sale. Possibly John's wife.
- * c.1763–1765: Joshua Robbins arrives in Loudoun County, or becomes taxable there. Possibly John's son.
- * c.1765–1768: Job Robins marries Rebecca Thompson, probably in or near Loudoun County. Rebecca's sister Ruth Thompson also marries Benjamin Custard, probably in this same period and community.
- * 1768: Joshua and Job Robins listed together on Loudoun County tithables. Aaron and John Botts nearby.
- * 1769: Joshua and John Robins listed together on Loudoun County tithables. Joshua loses two court cases.
- * c.1769–1770: Job Robins and Rebecca Thompson migrate to Peters Township, Yohogania County, Virginia (present-day Washington County, Pennsylvania).

- * c.1770: Joshua Robbins dies intestate in Loudoun County. William Dixon appointed administrator.
- * 1771: Anne Robins appears in Joshua's estate proceedings.
- c.1771–1776: Ann Robins and remaining children migrate westward, following Job to Chartiers Creek. Route possibly via Redstone Fort, where John Robins is documented in early 1777.
- * 1777: Job Robins dies August 1777, Peters Township. John Robins dies before July 24, 1777 (at or near Redstone). Daniel Robins writes will July 24, 1777.
- * 1780: Amos Robins, as minor heir at law, claims land grants of deceased uncles John and Jacob in Ohio County, Virginia.
- * 1785: Ann Robins writes her will in Washington County, Pennsylvania. She dies shortly after.

Job Robins of Washington County, Pennsylvania: A Profile

Job Robins is by far the best-documented member of this family, owing to the survival of his extensive estate papers in Washington County, Pennsylvania. His records provide the clearest window into the family's relationships, community connections, and probable Loudoun County origins.

Marriage and Family

Job Robins married Rebecca Thompson, probably around 1768, likely in or near Loudoun County, Virginia. Rebecca was the daughter of James Thompson (died 1786, Washington County, Pennsylvania) and his wife Elizabeth. James Thompson's will named his daughter as 'Rebekah Custer' — confirming her subsequent marriage to John Custard after Job's death. Elizabeth Thompson later married Absalom Hankins as her second husband.

Rebecca's sister Ruth Thompson married Benjamin Custard/Custer, probably in the 1760s, likely also in or near Loudoun County. Benjamin Custard subsequently served as co-executor of Job Robins' estate alongside widow Rebecca — a role that reflects his close family relationship as Rebecca's brother-in-law.

At the time of Job's death in 1777, he and Rebecca had four living children:

- Amos Robins — age 8
- James Robins — age 6
- Anney (Ann) Robins — age 2½ (noted in estate records as having been born with a cognitive disability, described as 'born silly'; died young)
- John Robins — age 8 months

Death and Estate

Job Robins died in 1777 at the home of Benjamin Custard in Peters Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania (then Yohogania County, Virginia). His will was signed August 10, 1777 and proved August 25, 1777. The estate was subsequently re-probated in Washington County in 1792, producing a 23-page estate file including an appraisal of approximately £194 Virginia currency and a vendue held October 11, 1777.

Brothers: John, Daniel, and Jacob Robins

Job's brothers John, Daniel, and Jacob all died within approximately three years of Job, leaving no surviving children:

- John Robins died before July 24, 1777. He was at or near Redstone Fort in early 1777, where he was acting as Job's financial agent (see Joshua Botts receipt, below).
- Daniel Robins wrote his will on July 24, 1777, by which point John was already dead. Daniel bequeathed to Jacob 'one half of the legacy bequeathed me by my brother John Robins.' Daniel's will was not probated until September 5, 1797 — twenty years after it was written — almost certainly because it was lost or mislaid and only came to light decades later.
- Jacob Robins had made a settlement on Chartiers/Shirtee Creek in 1773. He died before March 29, 1780.

Key deduction: On March 29, 1780, young Amos Robins (then about 10 years old, acting through a guardian) claimed 400 acres on Shirtee Creek as heir at law of his uncle John Robins deceased, and an additional 400 acres as heir at law of his uncle Jacob Robins deceased. Under Virginia law, a surviving brother (Daniel) would take precedence over a nephew (Amos) as heir. Daniel's absence from the 1780 proceedings therefore confirms he was already dead by that date, placing his death between July 1777 and March 1780.

The Joshua Botts Receipt: Connecting Loudoun County to Washington County

Among the papers preserved in Job Robins' Washington County estate file is a receipt from Joshua Botts of Loudoun County, Virginia. This single document ties together the Loudoun County community and the Washington County estate in a concrete and documented way.

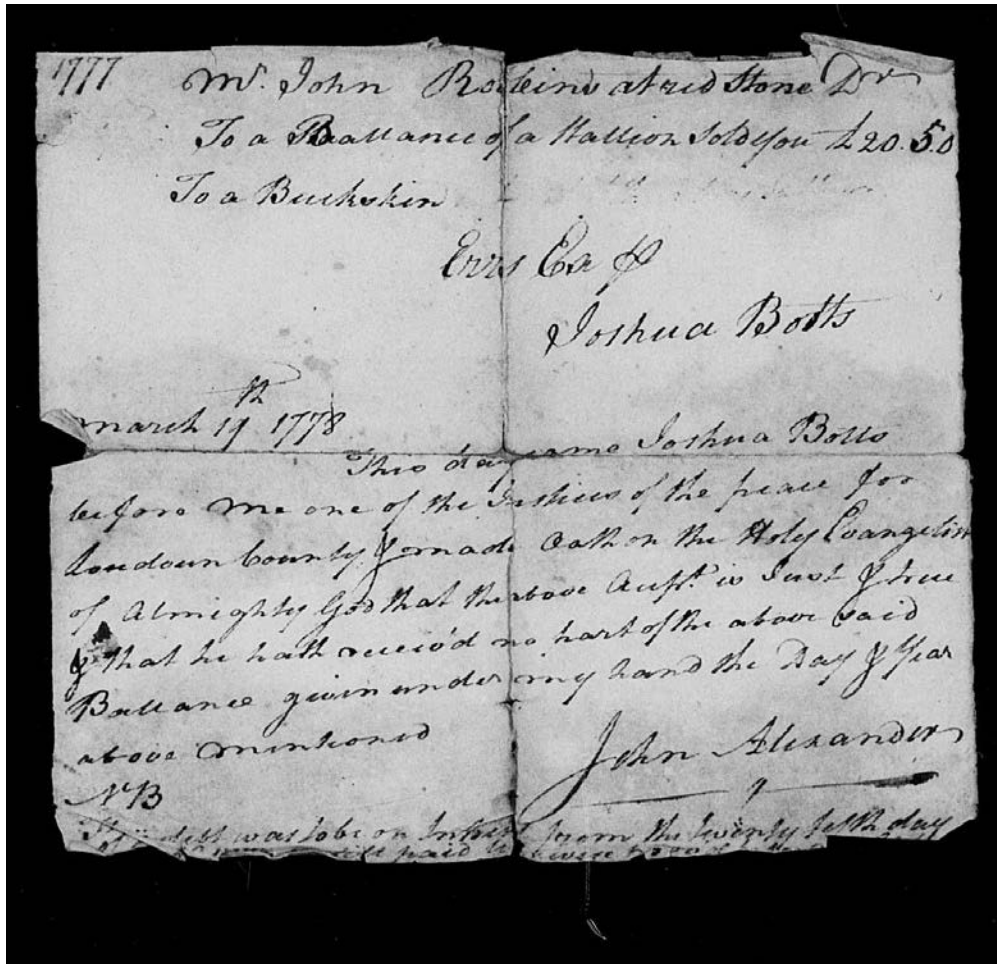


Figure 1: Receipt from Joshua Botts, Loudoun County, Virginia, 1777/1778. From the estate papers of Job Robins, Washington County, Pennsylvania.

Transcription

1777 Mr. John Robins at Red Stone Dr.
 To a Balance of a stallion sold you £20.50
 To a Buckskin
 Errors Excepted Joshua Botts

March 19, 1778 — This day came Joshua Botts before me one of the Justices of the Peace for Loudoun County and made Oath on the Holy Evangelion of Almighty God that the above Acct. is just and true and that he hath received no part of the above said Balance. Given under my hand the Day and Year above mentioned.

John Alexander J.P.

[Bottom, partially torn:] ...the debt was Job's on interest from the twenty fifth day... [until paid]

Analysis

The partially preserved notation at the bottom of the document is key to understanding this receipt: 'the debt was Job's.' Despite the header naming 'Mr. John Robins at Red Stone' as the party addressed, the debt itself belonged to Job Robins. The correct interpretation is:

- Job Robins was owed money by Joshua Botts — for the balance on a stallion sold to Botts, plus a buckskin.
- John Robins at Redstone was acting as Job's agent or representative, collecting the debt on his behalf.
- After both Job and John died in 1777, Joshua Botts swore before Loudoun County JP John Alexander on March 19, 1778 that the account was just and unpaid.
- The sworn statement was then delivered to Job's estate file in Washington County as documentation of an outstanding debt owed to the estate.

'Redstone' refers to the Redstone Fort area (present-day Brownsville, Fayette County, Pennsylvania), on the Monongahela River at the border of Monongalia and Yohogania Counties. John Robins' presence there places him at an intermediate point on the migration corridor — geographically between Joshua Botts (still in Loudoun County) and Job (established on Chartiers Creek).

The account is headed '1777' with no month specified. Since John was confirmed dead before July 24, 1777, the original account must date from the first half of 1777 when John was still alive and able to act as Job's agent.

Note on the Botts family: Aaron Botts and John Botts appear on the 1768 Loudoun County tithables in the same district as Joshua and Job Robins. Thomas Botts Jr. appears in a 1769 Loudoun County assault and battery case involving Conrad Custard (father of Benjamin Custard, co-executor of Job's estate). Joshua Botts and Thomas Botts Jr. are believed to be either uncle and nephew or first cousins, but the precise Botts family relationships have not yet been fully resolved. Online genealogical trees contain conflicting information that does not consistently match the Loudoun County documentary record.

The Elizabeth Hankins Statement: A Mother Identifies Her Daughter

A second key document from Job Robins' Washington County estate file provides direct, sworn genealogical proof of the Thompson family connection. This sworn statement, dated March 19, 1792 and recorded in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, was part of the 1792 re-probating of Job's estate.

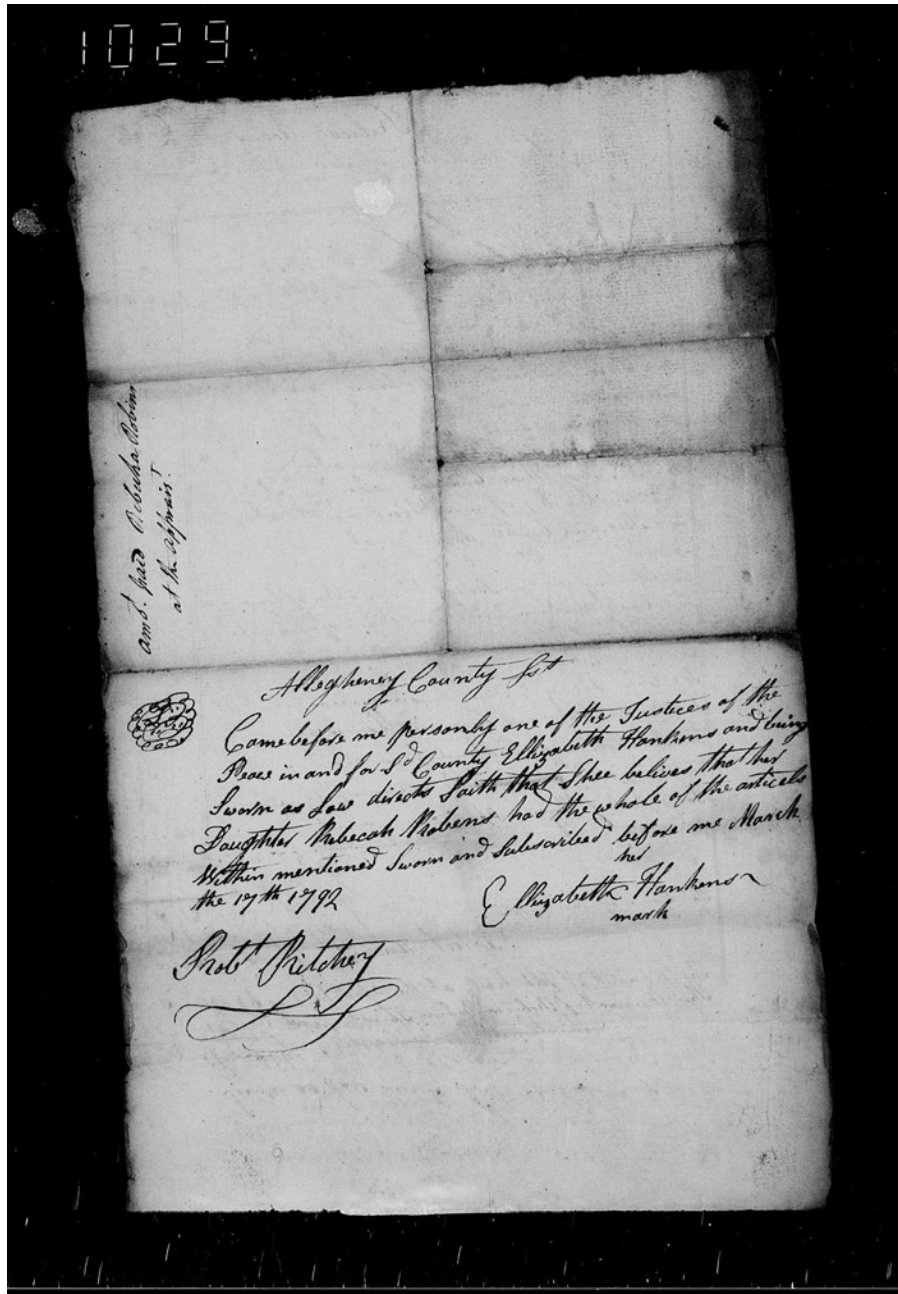


Figure 2: Sworn statement of Elizabeth Hankins, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, March 19, 1792. From the estate papers of Job Robins, Washington County, Pennsylvania.

Transcription

[Side notation, written perpendicular to main text:]

amt. paid Rebekah Robins at the disposal

Allegheny County Sct.

Came before me personally one of the Justices of the Peace in and for

Sd County Elieizabeth Hankiens and being Sworn as law directs Saith

that Shee believes that her Daughter Rebecah Robens had the whole
of
the articles Within mentioned Sworn and Subscribed before me
March
the 19th 1792

Elizabethte [her] Hankens
mark

Robt Ritchey [J.P.]

Analysis

This document rewards careful reading. Every sentence contributes something genealogically significant:

- “Her Daughter Rebecah Robens” — Elizabeth Hankins explicitly and under oath identifies Rebecah Robins as her daughter. This is a direct primary source statement of the mother-daughter relationship, sworn before a Justice of the Peace. It is the single clearest piece of evidence connecting the Thompson and Robins families.
- “Elieizabeth Hankiens” — By March 1792, Elizabeth had already taken the surname Hankins from her second husband Absolom Hankins, confirming that her remarriage had taken place between James Thompson's death in 1786 and this date.
- “Allegheny County” — The document is sworn before Robert Ritchey, a Justice of the Peace in Allegheny County. This does not necessarily mean Elizabeth or Rebecca had moved: Allegheny County was created in 1788 from the western portion of Washington County. Families living in that area simply found themselves in a new county without going anywhere. Elizabeth and Rebecca were almost certainly still living in the same place they always had been.
- “Rebecah Robens” — Rebecca is identified here by the Robins surname rather than Custard. This is simply contextual: this is Job Robins' probate file, and ‘Robins’ is the identity that gives Rebecca her legal standing in the proceeding as Job's widow and executor. Her father's 1786 will had already confirmed her marriage to John Custard under the name ‘Rebekah Custer.’
- “had the whole of the articles Within mentioned” — Elizabeth swears that Rebecca had possession of all the personal property items on the accompanying inventory. The side notation — ‘amt. paid Rebekah Robins at the disposal’ — is an administrative endorsement confirming that the amount due to Rebecca from Job's estate vendue had been paid.
- “Elizabethte [her] Hankens mark” — Elizabeth signed with her mark, meaning she could not write. The JP certified her signature. Despite her illiteracy, her sworn testimony carries full legal weight.

Context: This statement was made in connection with the 1792 re-probating of Job Robins' estate in Washington County, Pennsylvania — fifteen years after Job's death in 1777. The long delay between Job's death and the final estate settlement was not unusual on the Pennsylvania frontier, particularly where estates involved minor children (Amos would have come of age around 1786) or where property remained in the widow's possession during her lifetime or remarriage.

The Custard-Botts Connection: Further Evidence of a Shared Loudoun County Community

The Custard family provides striking additional evidence that the Robins, Thompson, Custard, and Botts families were all part of the same Loudoun County community before migrating west.

Benjamin Custard, who co-executed Job Robins' estate and was Rebecca's brother-in-law through his wife Ruth Thompson, was the son of Conrad Custard. A Conrad Custard — either the father or a son of the same name — appears in a 1769 Loudoun County court case involving Thomas Botts Jr. in an assault and battery matter. The full record is available at FamilySearch: [Conrad Custard / Thomas Botts Jr. case, Loudoun County 1769](#)

This means that in 1769 Loudoun County:

- Joshua and John Robins are on the 1769 tithable list — while Aaron and John Botts were in the same district the previous year (1768), alongside Joshua and Job.
- Conrad Custard (Benjamin's father) is in a legal dispute with Thomas Botts Jr.
- These are the very families whose children will be intermarried and co-executing estates on the Pennsylvania frontier less than a decade later.

This strongly implies that the marriages of Ruth Thompson to Benjamin Custard and Rebecca Thompson to Job Robins both took place in or near Loudoun County, before the families migrated west together to Chartiers Creek.

Complete Inventory of Loudoun County Robbins Records

All identified Robbins/Robins records in Loudoun County, Virginia, in chronological order:

Year	Record Type	Name	Details
1757	Court — Order Book A	William Robbins	Plaintiff vs Thomas Wells — dismissed/agreed
~1757–58	Court — Order Book A	William Robbins	Plaintiff vs Williams Morland — In Debt — won; represented by attorney Hugh West
~1762	Estate — Will Book A	Jemima Robbins	Purchased goods at Mary Patterson estate sale; possibly wife of John Robbins
Sept 1762	Court — Order Book B	John Robbins	Defendant vs John Munro — dismissed/agreed
Sept 1762	Road crew — Order Book B	John Robbins	Assigned to road crew alongside Thomas Green
1763	Estate — Will Book B	John Robbins	Claim against Samuel Patterson estate
1765	Tithables	Joshua Robbins	1 tithable; spelled 'Joshawa Robins'
1765	Court — Order Book C	Joshua Robbins	Defendant vs Malishiah Bonham — Alias Capias issued (not found)
June 1766	Court — Order Book C	Joshua Robbins	Bonham case; Plurius Capias issued (still not found)
Aug 1766	Court — Order Book C	Joshua Robbins	Bonham case proceeds; James Burson enters as bail

1768	Tithables — Aaron Powell	Joshua & Job Robbins	Listed together; Aaron Botts and John Botts in same district
1769	Tithables	Joshua & John Robbins	Listed together; John now taxable for first time
June 1769	Court — Order Book D	Joshua Robins	Defendant vs Bonham — jury verdict; 7 lbs 10 shillings against him
Oct 1769	Court — Order Book D	Joshua Robins	Defendant vs Isaac Nickols — failed to appear; 3 lbs 19 shillings against him
1770	Tithables	Joshua Robins	Listed alone; William Dixon in same district
Dec 10, 1770	Court — Order Book E	Joshua Robins	Died intestate; William Dixon appointed administrator; appraisers appointed
June 20, 1771	Court — Order Book E	Anne Robins	Dixon as administrator sues Anne Robins; court awards 2 lbs 11 shillings to estate
Nov 27, 1772	Court — Order Book E	John Robbins	Defendant vs Joseph Wood — discontinued/agreed

William and John Robbins: An Earlier Loudoun County Generation

The Loudoun County records reveal not just Joshua Robbins and his sons, but an earlier generation of Robbins family members who precede Joshua in the record by several years:

William Robbins (fl. 1757–1758)

William Robbins is the earliest documented Robbins in Loudoun County, active in the first year of the county's existence. He appears as plaintiff in at least two court cases, was represented by an attorney (indicating he was a man of some substance), and successfully collected a debt. He has not yet been identified in tithable lists, suggesting he died or departed before the surviving lists begin. His relationship to Joshua is not proven but strongly suspected.

John Robbins (fl. 1762–1772)

John Robbins is active in Loudoun County from at least September 1762 — three years before Joshua first appears. He served on a road crew, had claims against estates, and was involved in multiple court cases, all of which he settled rather than litigated to judgment. A Jemima Robbins, tentatively identified as his wife, appears in a 1762 estate sale. John continues to appear in records through November 1772, meaning he remained in Loudoun County for at least a decade after Joshua's death. Whether this is the same John Robins who appears at Redstone in 1777 requires further investigation.

Working Hypothesis: Proposed Family Structure

Based on the sequence of records and naming patterns, the following structure is proposed. All conclusions are preliminary and subject to revision as additional records are identified:

Proposed Identification:

Ann Robins of Washington County, Pennsylvania (will 1785) was the widow of Joshua Robbins of Loudoun County, Virginia (died intestate c.1770). Their children — Job, John, Daniel, Jacob, Leca, Mary, and Agnes — migrated to Chartiers Creek following Joshua's death, most likely in the early to mid-1770s.

- **William Robbins:** Generation 1 in Loudoun County —
 - Established before 1757 in what is now Loudoun County (formerly Fairfax County territory).
 - Possibly a son or grandson of Daniel Robbins b. 1666 of Hunterdon County, New Jersey.
 - Relationship to John and Joshua not yet proven from primary sources.
- **John Robbins:** Generation 2 in Loudoun County —
 - Active 1762–1772. Relationship to William Robbins not yet established from primary sources.
 - Wife possibly Jemima [maiden name unknown], fl. c. 1762.
- **Joshua Robbins:** Generation 3 in Loudoun County, then migrating west —
 - Appears 1765 in Loudoun County; dies intestate c.1770.
 - Possibly John's son.
 - Sons: Job (d. 1777, Chartiers Creek), John (d. before July 1777, near Redstone), Daniel (will 1777, d. before 1780), Jacob (d. before 1780).
 - Daughters: Leca/Lesa (married Carter), Mary (married John Phillips), Agnes (married Donahue).
 - Widow Ann Robins (will 1785, Washington County, Pennsylvania) — proposed as Joshua's widow.

The naming of Joshua's son 'Job' is potentially significant: Job b. 1701 was a named son of Daniel Robbins b. 1666 of New Jersey. Frontier families commonly named children after ancestors. If William Robbins was indeed a descendant of Daniel b. 1666, naming a son Job would be consistent with honoring that lineage.

Suggested Further Research

- Search Fairfax County, Virginia records (pre-1757) for William Robbins and any associated family members. This is the highest priority — earlier records may establish William's origins and confirm or deny a New Jersey connection.
- Search Fairfax County tithable lists c.1748–1756 for William Robbins.
- Examine the full Joshua Robbins estate file in Loudoun County (inventory and accounts) for names of family members that could further establish Ann's identity as his widow.
- Search New Jersey records (Hunterdon County and Sussex County) for a William Robbins who could be a son or grandson of Daniel b. 1666.
- Resolve the identity of Ann Robins in the 1771 Loudoun County estate proceedings — is there additional documentation establishing her as Joshua's widow rather than a daughter or other relative?
- Resolve the Botts family relationships in Loudoun County — clarify the connections between Aaron, John, Thomas Jr., and Joshua Botts, and determine their relationship to the New Jersey/Pennsylvania Botts community.
- Examine the Conrad Custard / Thomas Botts Jr. assault and battery case in full (Loudoun County, 1769): [FamilySearch link](#)

- Investigate James Thompson's origins — where was Rebecca and Ruth Thompson's father before he appears in Washington County, Pennsylvania records in 1784? A Loudoun County connection for the Thompson family would further confirm the community picture.

Sources Consulted

- Loudoun County, Virginia, Order Books A–E (1757–1773) — FamilySearch
- Loudoun County, Virginia, Rough Minute Book (1767–1772) — FamilySearch
- Loudoun County, Virginia, Tax/Tithable Records (1760–1775) — FamilySearch
- Loudoun County, Virginia, Will Books A–B with Inventories and Accounts (1757–1782) — FamilySearch
- Conrad Custard / Thomas Botts Jr. case, Loudoun County, 1769 — [FamilySearch](#)
- Washington County, Pennsylvania, Estate Papers of Job Robins (1777–1792)
- Washington County, Pennsylvania, Will of Daniel Robins (signed July 24, 1777; probated September 5, 1797)
- Washington County, Pennsylvania, Will of Ann Robins (signed February 15, 1785; proved March 31, 1785)
- Washington County, Pennsylvania, Will of James Thompson (signed March 4, 1783; proved May 2, 1786)
- Ohio County, Virginia, Land Claims, March 29, 1780 — Entries 326 and 387, Amos Robins as heir at law of John and Jacob Robins deceased
- Pettit family research: Frank C. Baldwin, published in The Pettit Correspondent (ancestraldata.com)

This is a working research document presenting a proposed identification, not a proven conclusion. All findings should be considered preliminary pending further primary source verification. Researchers with additional information on any of these families are encouraged to make contact.