

Raleigh

A REED FAMILY  
IN AMERICA

With special reference to the family and descendants of William Reed  
(1818-1895) whose ancestral home was in Itawamba County, Mississippi

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*Hugh Coffee*

*front page*

## THE COFFEE FAMILY

Among our earliest ancestors of record in America were those who bore the name Coffee. It was often spelled "Coffey" in many of the older records but "Coffee" came to be the more accepted form.

Most of the Coffees came from Ireland and settled first in Virginia. This was early in the eighteenth century about 1709 or 1710. Their descendants moved to all parts of the country. Many migrated to Tennessee. Coffee County, Tennessee, was named in honor of General John Coffee who won fame in the Indian wars under General Andrew Jackson. General Coffee commanded the Tennesseans under Jackson in the War of 1812 and was in the thick of the fight at New Orleans.

The Coffees were among the Scotch-Irish who settled in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and the Carolinas.

## HUGH COFFEE (1700?-1767?)

Our first ancestor of whom we have certain knowledge was Hugh Coffee who came to Virginia as a young man about 1725. Although the genealogical records are scarce it is believed Hugh Coffee was not married when he came to this country. He probably landed in Maryland and went from there to Harper's Ferry, Virginia, from where he moved to what was later Augusta County, Virginia—referred to as a frontier "Scotch-Irish" area. There are many references to him in Chalkley's Augusta County, Virginia, records which indicated he lived on Cowpasture River.

New counties have been created since that time and it is probable that Hugh Coffee lived either in the northern part of what is now Botetourt County or the southern edge of Alleghany County since Cowpasture empties into the James River near the line between. One of the old Chalkley records refers to Hugh Coffee's land as being "on the corner of John Conoly's land, crossing Cowpasture River." In another reference Hugh Coffee is recorded as having lived at the lower end of Cowpasture on Carter's Mill—possibly referring to Carter's Mill Creek. His land was about 20 miles due west of Lexington. This is near the present town of Iron Gate, a few miles south of Clifton Forge, Virginia, in the Appalachian Mountains.

The name of Hugh Coffee's wife is not known. It is certain that one of his sons was named John and it is probable that he had at least two other sons named William and Benjamin.

Hugh Coffee died at his home or plantation on Cowpasture River in 1766 or 1767. This area is near the famous Shenandoah Valley.

A son, whose name was William, remained on the land which was owned by his father and he probably added considerable acreage. Apparently "William" was the most common family name used by the Reeds. This William Reed who married Margaret Currey was born in 1791 and died in 1863 as indicated by the Waxhaw records. According to a tradition in the family he had an adopted daughter although the records show that he had one daughter whose name was Nancy Louisa. Our tradition points to the fact that this adopted daughter married a Hood and one of the Waxhaw records indicates that Nancy Louisa Reed married Captain John Hood. All of the members of the family are buried at the Shiloh A.R.P. Cemetery. A tomb there contains the following inscription: "In memory of Margaret Davis who departed this life in the year 1850 aged about 90 years. By her son William Reed."

This is all we know about the Reeds of South Carolina except for one incident. Soon after the close of the War Between the States, William Reed of Mississippi (1818-1895), a nephew of the William Reed of South Carolina, (1791-1863), and grandson of the original immigrant from Ireland, visited his uncle's South Carolina plantation home. The South Carolina Reed had owned many slaves. They had been freed but continued to live there having no desire to leave the old home place. William Reed of Mississippi had been invited to participate in the settlement of the estate of his uncle but it was of little value because of the war's devastation. The amount inherited by the Mississippi nephew was \$60.00.

This is the last bit of knowledge we have of any communication between our Reed family of Mississippi and their relatives in South Carolina.

John Reed, born in 1790 married Jincy Coffee in Lancaster County, South Carolina, about 1817. After their first child was born they moved to Alabama in 1819. These were our ancestors and since the Coffees were earlier immigrants to this country the next chapter concerns the Coffee family.

In fact, the county seat of Augusta County, Staunton, is in the center of the Valley. It was the birthplace of Woodrow Wilson.

Very little is known about the life of Hugh Coffee. He is referred to occasionally in legal records as an appraiser in land transactions. Doubtless, Hugh Coffee came to this region because many of his friends and relatives preceded him there. Other Coffees are mentioned in the early records. This was a remote, pioneer country amid rugged mountains and swiftly flowing streams with difficult roads and few communications—the raw American frontier.

Williamsburg was the colonial capital of Virginia. The Coffees lived in Virginia during the colonial period when all the Governors were appointed by the British King. Among the Governors holding office while Hugh Coffee lived in the western part of the state were Colonel Hugh Drysdale, Colonel Robert Carter, Colonel William Gooch, William N. Keppel (Earl of Albemarle), Commissary James Blair, Colonel John Robinson, Colonel Thomas Lee, Colonel Lewis Burwell and Robert Dinwiddie.

Governor Dinwiddie commissioned George Washington to make his famous surveying trip when Washington was 21 years old. During this period a number of great Virginians were born. Washington was born in 1732, Thomas Jefferson in 1743, and James Madison in 1750.

Our ancestry is traced through Hugh Coffee's son, John Coffee.

#### JOHN COFFEE (1730?-1800?) AND SUSANNAH WATSON

John Coffee was born in Augusta County, Virginia. We have no exact record of the date of his birth but it was probably around 1730. He grew up there where he married Susannah Watson. He owned land in Augusta County and later moved to a location near Harper's Ferry from where he moved to South Carolina with his family about 1754.

John Coffee is mentioned often among the records of Lancaster County. He is referred to as a planter in Lancaster County, Camden District, South Carolina. One record says his land was in the Waxhaw Settlement and it adjoined the land owned by James and George Walker. This is also referred to as being on the west side of Cane Creek near the Charlotte Highway six or seven miles north of the county seat, Lancaster. Another reference indicates the land also adjoined that of James Huey and Hugh Montgomery.

We have many descriptions of conditions at that time especially with reference to the Indians and their customs. The Catawba River flowed through this part of the country which was named for the

Catawba Indians who lived there. Lancaster County, South Carolina, adjoined Mecklenberg County, North Carolina. It is often difficult to determine in just which state many of the settlers lived and as a matter of fact the line itself was in dispute for many years. It was during this period in the lifetime of John Coffee and his sons that Andrew Jackson was born, there in the same vicinity, in Lancaster County, South Carolina, on March 15, 1767.

We have been unable to learn exactly when John Coffee and Susannah Watson Coffee died but their deaths apparently occurred sometime towards the latter part of the eighteenth century near 1800 since we find no mention of them after that date. They were buried in Lancaster County probably in the old Six-Mile Church Graveyard - about six miles north of the town of Lancaster.

Lancaster is a very old South Carolina town in the northern part of the state. It has a population of approximately 8,000 and is quite prosperous, especially has it become so during the years since World War II. It is noted for its large textile mills there and in Lancaster County. I have been in Lancaster several times, having made it a point to go there mainly because of its historic associations with our family.

#### CHILDREN OF JOHN AND SUSANNAH COFFEE

HENRY. Born in Virginia, 1748. The name of his wife was Mary but we do not have her maiden name. He served in the Revolution as a Lieutenant and Captain in Sumpters Brigade. He moved to Davidson County, Tennessee, in 1793 making his home in or near Nashville. We know of only one child of Henry and Mary Coffee. Her name was Margaret--born in 1771 and died in 1795. She had married and her husband's name was McMeans. She was buried in the Waxhaw Cemetery, Lancaster County, South Carolina.

HUGH. Born in 1750 near Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Died in 1827 in Lancaster County, South Carolina. He was married to Agnes Montgomery. She was born in 1755 and died in 1838. They were lineal ancestors of our Reed family and more detailed information about Hugh Coffee will follow. We have definite and positive proof that he served in the American Revolution.

JOHN. Born in 1752 in Virginia. His wife was name Susannah which makes it easy for the records to become confused since his father and mother were named John and Susannah.

We know of two children of this family: a daughter, Elizabeth Coffee, born in 1773 and a son, John M. Coffee, born in 1785. Eliza-

both Coffee married James Craig and John M. Coffee married Sarah W. Morrow in 1820. Elizabeth Coffee who married James Craig moved with him to Sim's Settlement in Alabama then to Lincoln County, Tennessee and from there to Giles County, Tennessee, in 1804 where they spent the remainder of their lives. John Coffee, son of John and Susannah Coffee, was also a soldier in the Revolution serving under his brother, Captain Henry Coffee at Hanging Rock.

**NATHANIEL.** Born in 1754 in South Carolina. He served in the Revolution probably under Captain Anderson Thomas. No other information is available about him.

**ELIZABETH.** No information available about her except that her name is in the census records in 1797.

**MARY.** Also referred to as Polly. It is not known when she was born but she was married to James Huey. They were married shortly after the Revolution but Mary Coffee died soon afterwards.

**JOHNATHAN.** No information except that he is listed in the records and owned land in the same vicinity where his father lived.

#### **HUGH COFFEE (1750-1827) AND AGNES MONTGOMERY (1755-1838)**

Hugh Coffee an ancestor of our family was born May 13, 1750, near Harper's Ferry, Virginia. He moved with his parents to Lancaster, South Carolina when he was about 4 years old. He grew up in Lancaster County and was married there to Agnes Montgomery who was born May 15, 1755. We have definite proof that Hugh Coffee was one of our ancestors who served in the American Revolution during the entire period of the war. The National D.A.R. Magazine, Volume 43, December issue, page 725 lists Revolutionary soldiers of South Carolina as follows: "Hugh Coffee under Captain Henry Coffee of Colonel Hampton's Regiment at Blackstock." There are also many other historical records of his service.

Agnes Montgomery, wife of Hugh Coffee, was the daughter of John Montgomery who mentioned her in his will on file at Abbeville, South Carolina dated January 4, 1777.

Apparently Hugh Coffee owned land and lived in the same general vicinity as his father, John Coffee. At one time he was thought to have lived in Mecklenberg County, North Carolina, but it may be this was at the time when the line between North and South Carolina was in question. It is possible that Hugh Coffee and his family lived at the same place but was recorded as being in different states during this period of confusion regarding the state line.

Hugh Coffee died April 26, 1827. His wife, Agnes Montgomery,

died May 10, 1838. They probably were buried at the old Six-Mile Church Graveyard where as it has been stated most of the older Coffees were interred.

**CHILDREN OF HUGH AND AGNES MONTGOMERY COFFEE.**  
**HUGH.** Sometimes referred to as Hugh, Jr. Born in Lancaster County, South Carolina about 1770. Married Margaret Moore. Both died and are buried in Maury County, Tennessee. This Hugh Coffee was a lineal ancestor of our family and there will be more about him in the next chapter.

**JOHN.** No information except a record indicating that he was the second son of Hugh and Agnes Coffee.

**MARY.** No information except that she probably was the third child and married a McWhorter.

**HENRY.** Born in 1787. Died in Marion County, Georgia in 1827. Married in 1821 to Rebecca Kirk—born in 1792. Henry and Rebecca Coffee were known to have 3 children, Jane, Mary and James.

**ALEXANDER.** Born June 15, 1801, in Lancaster County, South Carolina, died in 1876. He married, first, Margaret Hood who was born June 25, 1804, and died August 13, 1860. Then Alexander Coffee married Sarah Ann Cathey Gillespie born in 1828 and died in 1848. His second marriage took place at Fort Mills, South Carolina in 1861. Alexander Coffee was the father of 3 children, Hugh, Fanna and Sarah. Apparently Sarah was known as Sally who married a Brock. She was living at Salisbury, North Carolina, as late as 1940. Alexander Coffee died in Lancaster County, South Carolina, on June 7, 1876.

There were probably 2 other children of Hugh and Agnes Coffee. One named Jane who married a Nesbit. Another named Jean married Daniel Nelson.

#### **HUGH COFFEE (1770?-1840?) AND MARGARET MOORE (1770?-1840?)**

Hugh Coffee was born about 1770 in Lancaster County and as we stated he is sometimes referred to as Junior to distinguished him from his father of the same name. He married Margaret Moore who was born about 1770 also. We do not know the exact date of their marriage but it was before 1793. They were lineal ancestors of the Reed family. Margaret Moore was the daughter of William Moore who lived in Mecklenberg County, North Carolina. Hugh Coffee may have lived, after he was married, at least for a while in Lancaster County where he grew up but it is evident that he and his family also lived in Mecklenberg County.

Hugh Coffee, his wife and family left South Carolina before 1820 and moved to Maury County, Tennessee. It was thought they possibly lived in Williamson County, Tennessee, also but no record of this could be found and it is possible they lived near the line between Williamson and Maury County. We know they lived in the Carter's Creek community in Maury County where many of the Caskeys and Coffees lived. They spent the rest of their lives there and are probably buried at the old Lockridge Cemetery some two miles west of Carter's Creek.

A lease executed in 1821 shows some land was leased for life to Hugh and Margaret Coffee by Samuel Stephenson who was their son-in-law, the husband of their daughter Susan.

Records of this Hugh Coffee are very scarce. We do not know when he or his wife died. They may have been living in 1840. There are references pointing to the fact that both were living after 1835.

#### CHILDREN OF HUGH AND MARGARET COFFEE

**MARY.** Married Thomas Caskey in 1809 at Lancaster, South Carolina. They moved to Maury County, Tennessee before 1820 and probably at the same time her father and mother and other relatives left South Carolina for Tennessee. Her son, a well-known minister of the Christian Church, T. W. Caskey, said his family lived near Spring Hill, Tennessee, which was not far from Carter's Creek.

**JINCY.** Born in 1799 in Mecklenberg County, North Carolina. She was an ancestor of our Reed family. She was married to John Reed.

**SUSAN.** The census records show that she was the daughter of Hugh and Margaret Coffee. She married Samuel Stephenson who also went to Maury County, Tennessee.

**HUGH M.** Born July 14, 1802, in Lancaster County, South Carolina, moved to Maury County, Tennessee, when he was a child. Hugh M. Coffee was a Baptist minister. A sketch of his life is given in a book "Tennessee Baptist Ministers" by Borum, published in 1880. It was stated in the book that Hugh M. Coffee came from Lancaster District, South Carolina where he was born, to Williamson County, Tennessee. This biographical sketch indicated that his father and mother, Hugh and Margaret Coffee, came first to Williamson County, then moved to Lincoln County and still later to Carter's Creek in Maury County.

Hugh M. Coffee, the minister, was described in the sketch as a man "six feet tall, with dark, graying hair, gray eyes, weighing 170 pounds. He had a sense of humor and was not given to religious controversy."

#### JOHN REED (1790-1874?) AND JINCY COFFEE (1799-1874?)

John Reed, son of William and Margaret Davis Reed, was born on the sea in 1790 when his parents were enroute from Ireland to America. The census of 1850 indicates that he claimed to have been born in Lancaster, South Carolina. This, we believe, was a custom of the children of immigrants who were born on the sea to state that America was their birthplace and it accounts for the fact that John Reed indicated his birthplace was Lancaster. We feel sure, because of the positive tradition, that he was born on the sea before the arrival in this country.

Jincy Coffee, wife of John Reed, was born in 1799 in Mecklenberg County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Hugh and Margaret Coffee. Evidently the Irish tradition remained strong with the Coffees since her descendants remembered that she could speak the old Irish or Gaelic language. Her name was sometimes spelled "Jensey" or "Jenny" but in a deed I saw it was "Jincy."

John and Jincy Coffee were married in 1817 in Lancaster County, South Carolina. Their first child, William Reed, was born December 23, 1818. Three weeks later or in January 1819 John and Jincy Reed with their infant son together with many relatives, including sisters of John, and friends set out for the West. How long it took them we do not know but they settled in northwestern Alabama in what is now Lamar County. This was referred to by them as "in the fork of Sipsey Creek and Buttahatchie River." There is a small stream in the vicinity called Lost Reed Creek. The exact location of the home in Alabama is not known but it was near the Mississippi line, east of Monroe County, Mississippi, about 4 miles northwest of what is now the town of Sulligent, Alabama.

John Reed and his family lived in this location from 1819 to 1833. No stories of their life in Alabama are known except William Reed, son of John Reed, who lived there until he was about 15 years old, told his children of the plentifulness of game and fish which indicated no scarcity of food for these pioneer settlers.

The Chickasaw Indians occupied the northeastern part of Mississippi at that time. Little progress was made in the settlement of that part of the state until a treaty between the Chickasaws and the United States government was signed in 1832 by terms of which the Indians agreed to relinquish their claim to this section for lands in the Indian territory.

The lands ceded became known as the "Chickasaw Cession of 1832."

John Reed moved to this part of Mississippi in 1833 locating in what is now Itawamba County. The site of his original residence was about 8 miles southeast of Fulton in the present Tilden Community about 100 yards east of the house owned for many years by his grandson, Dr. M. L. Reed. This is on the north side of Highway 25 and only a short distance north of the Union Grove Cemetery.

John Reed owned a considerable amount of land which extended all the way west to the Tombigbee River. A part of this land near the river was later owned by several Clayton families and was known for a long time as the Reed Old Field. They lived here in Mississippi until 1849 when they moved to Louisiana. A deed dated March 19, 1849 records the transfer of half interest in 320 acres in Itawamba County from John and Jincy Reed to their son, Andrew Reed. Apparently John Reed and his son, William Reed had purchased 320 acres from a man whose name was Snallwood which is now referred to as "Old Reed Place" where William Reed lived for the rest of his life. Later a post office was established there known as Reedsville. The land is described in the deed as follows: "The North half of Section 20 and Township 10 of Range 9, East of the Basis Meridian of the Chickasaw Cession, containing 320 acres more or less with mill and tools." The relinquishment of dower was signed by Jincy Reed on April 10, 1849 before R. F. Shamon, Justice of the Peace. Edwin G. Thomas was Clerk of the Probate Court at the time in Itawamba County. The road from the highway through the land is Reed's Mill Road.

John and Jincy Reed with their children except the two older sons, William and Andrew, moved to Claiborne Parish, Louisiana, establishing their residence 12 miles north of the town of Homer. This was near, possibly a mile east, of what is now the town of Haynesville.

It is not known when John and Jincy Reed died. They died sometime in the 1870's and it is possible that both may have lived until 1874.

We have no physical descriptions of either. Nothing is known of their church affiliation if they had any at all which was not uncommon in those days, although this does not imply they were not believers in Christianity.

## CHILDREN OF JOHN AND JINCY COFFEE REED

WILLIAM. Born in Lancaster County, South Carolina, December 23, 1818. Married Elizabeth Moore Wilson in 1843. They were among the ancestors of our Reed family about whom more will follow.

ANDREW. Born in 1825. We are not positive about his place of birth but presumably it was in Alabama. His wife was born in 1824 in Alabama but only her first name, Elizabeth, is known. Andrew Reed was a miller who owned a half interest in a mill and 320 acres with his older brother, William, in Itawamba County on Reed's Creek. He died about 1855. His widow, Elizabeth Reed, was married a second time to a man named Shannon. She was remembered by her relatives in Mississippi as "Aunt Betsy."

HENRY. Date and place of birth not recorded but was believed to be before 1830 in Alabama. He was a shoemaker by trade. He served in the Confederate Army in the War Between the States and was engaged in making boots and shoes for the Army somewhere in Louisiana where he was captured and killed by a detachment of Federal troops.

JOHN G. Not certain about his place of birth but believe it was in Alabama. He was known as "Jack." He was born in 1830. Moved with his parents to Louisiana in 1849.

MARCUS. Known as "Mark." Born in 1831 and according to the census of 1850 his place of birth was in North Carolina. The family was supposed to have been living in Alabama at that time but may have gone back to North Carolina temporarily when he was born. He moved with his parents to Louisiana in 1849 and died sometime in the 1870's by accidental death while digging a well. He has a number of descendants living in or near the town of Haynesville. One of his daughters married a Spencer.

GEORGE. Born in 1833 in Mississippi. Moved to Louisiana with parents in 1849.

MARTIN. Born in 1837 in Mississippi. His full name was Martin Van Buren and was called "Van." He was, also, a Confederate soldier in the War Between the States and was killed in action at the Siege of Vicksburg.

ELIZABETH. Born in 1838 in Mississippi. She moved with her family to Louisiana in 1849. She was the only daughter listed in the 1850 census. No other records available.

Very little information has come down to us about the John Reed family after they moved to Louisiana. Travel was quite difficult then

but it is known the Reeds of Mississippi and Louisiana heard from each other occasionally. Sometime during the 1870's, two sons of William and Elizabeth Reed, William and John, went with their families to Cleburne, Texas and visited their grandfather's family in Louisiana.

It is believed this is the complete list of children of John and Jincy Reed. The names mentioned above are those who were known to be living in 1850 when the Federal census was taken. Nothing is positively known of the descendants now living of the Reeds in Louisiana. There is a vague tradition that a descendant of one of these Reeds was the late James Reed of Lonoke, Arkansas, who was at one time a member of Congress.

Haynesville, Louisiana, is in Claiborne County in the northern part of the state near the Arkansas line. It might be considered an oil town since a number of oil wells have been developed in that vicinity. My travels have taken me through Haynesville at different times. It is in the heart of a growing and prosperous area. Many of the descendants of our people live in and around there. I was not able to locate any by the name of Reed but there were a number of Hartsells related to Elizabeth Wilson Reed, and I was told that a daughter of Mark Reed married a Spencer. If she is not living, her children and grandchildren are probably residing there. Haynesville was not in existence when the Reeds went to Louisiana in 1849.

## WILLIAM REED (1818-1895)

We now come to the one who, for the purposes of our story is the central figure in this history of the Reed family since it concerns principally his descendants.

William Reed was born in Lancaster County, South Carolina, December 23, 1818 when James Monroe was President of the United States. The exact site of his birthplace is not known but in view of many references in the Lancaster records, it was probably six or eight miles north of the town of Lancaster not far from the North Carolina border. Incidentally, this area was the birthplace of Andrew Jackson who, according to Jackson's own statement, was born one mile south of the state line in Lancaster County, South Carolina, in 1767.

We know definitely that William Reed was the son of John and Jincy Coffee Reed and the records indicate he was the grandson of William Reed and Margaret Davis who emigrated to America from Ireland in 1790.

William Reed moved west with his parents from Lancaster County, South Carolina in January, 1819. They arrived at their destination sometime early that year and settled near the Mississippi line in what is now Lamar County, Alabama. The location is described as being in fork of Sipsey Creek and Buttahachie River. It was a few miles northwest of the present town of Sulligent. The Reeds had relatives in that area, some of whom lived in Monroe County, Mississippi, just across the line. Many of the descendants have often heard reference to relatives who lived on Weaver's Creek in Monroe County by the name of Flint who were rather closely related to the Reed family. They also mentioned the village of Splunge, in Mississippi, near their home.

In our family tradition, we do not have much information about the Reeds while they lived in Alabama except for the fact that William Reed often told his sons about the bountiful supply of game in those pioneer days. There were numerous wild turkeys, squirrels, opossum, fox, wolves, deer, bear, raccoons, beaver and even the buffalo, to say nothing of the abundance of fish in all the rivers and streams. It would have been a paradise for modern day hunters and fishermen.

It was in 1833 that the Reeds moved to Mississippi, to what is now Itawamba County. We are not sure about the exact date. William Reed told his children that he was about 15 years old when they moved to Mississippi. They settled and probably built a log cabin eight miles southeast of Fulton, about 100 yards east of where William Reed's grandson, Dr. M. L. Reed lived most of his life. This was





Hiram Coffee

b.	1800	Tenn - parents unknown	
m.	before 1820	? to Elizabeth, Sarah, b 1798 Va	
		children	
not listed	1820	Matilda, Franklin Co In	1. Lorinda Anziline 1843 Mo
		m. James Henry Farbot 1842 Mo	2. Sarah Elizabeth 1844 TX
			3. James Thomas 1847 TX
			4. Robert Thompson 1851 TX
2 @	1822	Lucinda	5. Nancy Lucinda 1854 TX
		m. ALLingsworth @ 1837	6. George Washington 1856 TX
3	1823	James S.	1. Benjamin 1850 Ark
			2. William 1852 "
4	1829	George Washington	3. George 1855 "
		m. Percilla	4. Sarah 1857 Ca
			5. Linda 1859 "
5	1831	E / I	
		m. Eliza b 1832	1. George Washington 1855 TX
		ANN Huffs tutter Jan 7 1852	2. Matilda 1857 TX
			3. Eldred 1860 Ca
6	1834	Hiram	
7	1838	Robert Thompson	
ch	1851	Grayson Co Texas	