

See the fourth <sup>5</sup> page <sup>6</sup> of this article for info relating to my ~~ancestors~~.

## THE COFFEY FAMILY

\*All this Information was found in the book entitled, "N. Carolina Biographies" the Greenville South Carolina Library.

Coffey's from Wilkes - My husband's great grandfather, Jesse S. Coffey, was born 17 July 1798, in Wilkes County, N.C. He lived there until he married 22 December 1821, Winneford Crumpton, born 20 November 1801, daughter of Jezeiah and Jane Crumpton of Wilkes County.

Jesse and Winneford moved to Jasper, Ga. They both died there and are buried at Long Swamp Church. Jesse died 8 October 1858 and Winneford died 11 November 1863. Jesse received land lottery in 1832 in Gwinett County, Georgia.

Jesse and Winneford had the following children: Larkin D., Lewis Elbert, Thomas W., William R., Eli C., Martin Van Buren, and John Gordon.

The father of Jesse remains a mystery but some believe that Thomas Coffey, born in Virginia, 7 March 1742 and moved to Wilkes County by 1780, was his father. This Thomas was mentioned as having a son named Jesse.

The last child of Jesse and Winneford was John Gordon Coffey, born 24 August (didn't give the year) in Pickens County, Ga., married Mary Monroe Pettitt born 15 September 1840, daughter of John and Hettie Mooney Pettitt. They were married 21 August 1859. He died February 1920, and Mary died 19 Feb., 1915. Both are buried at Long Swamp Church, Jasper, Ga. John Gordon Coffey was in the Civil War.

John Gordon and Mary Pettitt Coffey's children were: (1) James Elbert, born 24 May 1860, married Frances Crow; (2) Mary Ellen born 30 October 1861, married Tom Hamilton. (3) Martha Emiline, born 8 August 1864 married Thomas Pendley (4) Millie Angeline, born 14 March 1866 married John Fields. (5) Amanda Jane born 29 May 1868 died October 1868. (6) Fannie Permelia, born 5 October 1869 married William Lafayette Dilbeck; (7) Raymond Lucious, born 12 December 1871 married Fannie Mullinax; (8) Willie Eleanor, born 12 August 1874 married Robert S. Hammontree; (9) John Pettitt born 14 March 1877 married Susan first and married Addie Lindsay second. (10) Thomas Masterson (Jon's twin) married Dora King (11) Martin Dewitt born 15 November 1881, married Mary Laconia Hamilton; (12) Effie Susannah born 2 July 1884 married James Fann. (13) Dillie Pearl born 17 August 1887 married Berry Reeves.

Martin Dewitt Coffey, son of John and Mary was born 14 Nov., 1881 in Georgia and married 23 March 1905, Mary Laconia Hamilton in Lawrence County, Ala. Mary Laconia was born 16 October 1883 daughter of Thomas N. and Barbara A. Blaxton Hamilton.

Martin Dewitt died 6 September 1943. Mary Laconia died 14 Feb., 1964. They are buried in Lawrence County, Ala. Martin Dewitt was a farmer and active in the Baptist church.

The children of Martin and Mary were: (1) Clarence Jackson, born 21 June 1906, married Mable Darnell. He died 10 June 1970; (2) Edna born 17 November

.907 died at birth; (3) Clifton Thomas born 6 December 1909 married Sadie Thompson; (4) John Clayton born 15 November 1911 married May Elizabeth Cornelius; (5) Elbert Carl, born 19 December 1913 married Louise Smith; (6) Corilla Norean, born 15 January 1915, married first to Minor Sherril and second to Sherman Roden; (7) Raymond Paul born 11 April 1917 married Edna Martin. Paul died 15 May 1972, buried in Decatur, Ala; (8) Martin Dewitt, Jr., born 21 Feb., 1919, killed in Germany 17 July 1945; (9) Cecil Mark, born 20 September 1923 married Eva Campbell.

The children in this family loved music. They spent their time after evening meals making music. Martin Dewitt was a singing teacher.

John Clayton Coffey, son of Dewitt and Mary was born 15 November 1911, in Lawrence County, Ala. He began school in a one-room cabin. He remembers this one room well because there were so many wasps the children were afraid that they would get stung.

During the depression, John Clayton worked as a farm laborer for fifty cents a day and sometimes would only receive one gallon of molasses for a day's labor. In 1932 he began dating Mary Elizabeth Cornelius, born 18 April 1917 the daughter of John Rowland Cornelius and Susie Elizabeth Corum of Decatur, Ala. On 10 February 1934, John and Mary were married.

By this time John had a job and Mary was also working. This seemed to be a happy beginning, but Mary became ill with typhoid fever and almost died. She recovered, and John took a course in ship building and worked for Ingills Ship Yard where he worked during World War II. After the war he started his business of home building in which he was successful.

In 1962 John Clayton's health began to fail, and he was advised to leave the climate of Alabama. He moved to Dallas, Texas where he now lives and has as his hobby, the building of grandfather clocks.

John and Mary had two sons: (1) Clayton Douglas, born 12 Nov. 1939, died with cancer May 27, 1978 and is buried in Decatur, Alabama. He married 29 April 1960, Marjorie Waters. (2) David Anthony, born 1 Dec. 1946, married Nobuko (Judy) Kobayashi, born 16 April 1940 in Manchuria (Japan) China.

Sources: Family Bible, Family Memories, Personal Knowledge, Census.

### BENJIMAN COFFEY

Benjiman Coffey was born in 1747 in Spotsylvania County, Va., He was a resident of Wilkes County, N.C. for nearly 30 years. Benjiman's parents were Jane Graves and John Coffey. John died in Albemarle County, Va. before March 1775, after his death Jane lived near her children in Wilkes County. Benjiman's grandparents were Ann Powell and Edward Coffey of Essex County, Va. Edward died in 1716 and Ann died in 1726.

Benjiman first served the Revolutionary cause for five months from Burke County, N.C. in 1776. He volunteered and was sent to the frontier, scouting and helping to build Crider's Fort because of "mischief being done by the Cherokee Indians." He married Polly Hayes and moved over to Wilkes County where in 1780 he volunteered again. Benjiman was at the Battle of King's

Mountain as were several of his kinfolk. He did not actually do any fighting in this battle. As a result of losing his horse the evening before, he had to join the foot soldiers, the fighting was all over by the time the foot soldiers got there. He was sent to guard the prisoners on the march to Moravian Town, whereby he developed "Pains in his ankles." He was furloughed home for the duration of the war.

Benjiman Coffey with his family moved to Hawkins County, Tennessee and bought two hundred acres of land on the north side of Clinch Mountain on Big War Creek on March 24, 1809.

In September 1833, when Benjiman gave his declaration for a pension, he was 86 years old and so old and infirm for the last four of five years that he had not been able to attend the Baptist Church where he was a member. He died January 4, 1834 in Hawkins County, Tennessee.

While still living in Wilkes County, Benjiman and Polly's son, John Coffey (Oct. 15, 1776-Mar. 15, 1845) married March 1, 1804 to Elizabeth Rucker (Jan. 6, 1787-Mar. 22, 1855); she was the daughter of Sarah Roberts and Colby Rucker. Elizabeth and John were living in Grainger County in 1810, he served in the War of 1812 from Tennessee. The list of their children is not complete: Ausburn (Jan. 14, 1805-Dec. 31, 1876, married Matilda Dalton); Benjiman (Feb. 8, 1808-May 8, 1867 married Nancy Hays); Elizabeth (married George Hays); Nancy unmarried: John Jackson (Jan. 12, 1812-Oct. 15, 1877 married Alicia Nash); Margaret (married Issaac Bullen); William born Oct. 31, 1828 (married Ellen Nash); Catherine born Aug. 10, 1834; Sarah Lucinda (married William Coffey, a first double cousin) and Jesse.

Elizabeth and John's oldest son, Ausbon (family spelling), was a blacksmith. After the Civil War, when his brothers, Benjiman and John, and some of their children moved to Rockcastle County, Ky., Ausbon and Matilda loaded their wagon, tied the old cow and hound dog to it and moved also. The trip took about a week, two weeks later the old hound dog was waiting at the door to the blacksmith shop in Thorn Hill. Ausbon and Matilda did not stay in Wildie, they returned to Tennessee. Ausbon is buried in the Rucker Family Cemetery northeast of Thornhill on the road to Coffey's Chapel Cemetery.

Benjiman didn't live long after moving to Kentucky, he and Nancy (Hayes) are buried in Maret Cemetery near Wildie. Through their son Ransome, there are seven generations of Coffeys buried in Maret Cemetery.

Nancy and Benjiman had nine sons; John, William, Richardson (married Serene Coffey); Ransome (married Delphia Cox and Mary Jane Coffey Wolfe); Calvin, Colton (married Martha Campbell) Perry, Marvel (married Abigail Jordan); Ausbon (married Nancy Ann Phillips Barnett on Feb. 20, 1869); and one daughter Elizabeth (married Caswell Coffey). At least six of their sons served the Confederate States of America; Richardson, Calvin, Calton, Marvel, Perry and Ausbon. Ausbon was only seventeen when he joined after becoming angry over federal troops destroying their best beet crop. Calvin, Perry and Richardson died before the end of the war. Their cousins, William W. and Simeon also died as results of wounds received in battle. After his twin Calvin, died, Calton was wounded and deserted. Marvel was there when Calton was told to walk slowly and get his leg wound seen about. Marvel said that was the last time the family heard of Calton until he was living in

Oklahoma nearly forty years later, via Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas. Ransome and his cousins that were living in Kentucky when the war began fought on the union side.

Ausbon's wife, Nancy, (part Cherokee Indian, passed as Black Dutch) was born in Laurel County, Kentucky. She moved to Missouri with her first husband, who died there. She walked back to Wildie with her small son, Andrew J. Barnett. Nancy and Ausbon's oldest son, Thomas Calvin (Tom) (Dec. 8, 1877-Feb. 14, 1962) on April 18, 1901 married Mary McGuire. Mary was a cousin to the Mary McGuire that was Andrew Barnett's first wife; Joan Shouse was Andrew's second wife.

In September 1903, Lou Mina and Rance with their six surviving children moved to Red Fork, Indian Territory. Tom helped them to cross the mountain by horse back to board a train in Wildie. Mary and Tom also moved to Oklahoma in 1904 and lived for 20 years, where most of their ten children were born. Gracy, Arch, Luther, Athel, Lawrence, and Rose Mae lived to be adults. Their return trip to Kentucky began Oct. 1923 by wagon took six months. They worked and camped out along the way, arriving in Wildie in April 1924.

Lou Mina and Rance had twelve children; McCellan; Wallace Ausbon; Celia T. (married S. R. Cross); Nancy Ann; Mary Elizabeth (married A. J. Selfo; Martha Susan (married J. S. Smith); Flora Mae (married H. K. Sorrells); Teddy B. married A. L. Rose Capehart); Julius Walter (married Lou Ellen Simcox of Kiowa, Oklahoma).

Sources; Census, courthouse, military and family records, cemetery markers and Bible records. -Bennie Lou Coffey Loftin

#### CHESLEY AND JANE CLEVELAND COFFEY

The existence of Chesley Coffey and Jane Cleveland Coffey has never been proved by public records, Bible records, or any other standard means of genealogical proof. The only other scrap of evidence that hints at their existence was a note left by Eliza Coffey Porter during the 1890's. She wrote of her father, Nathan's family.

"Nathan Coffey was the son of Joel Coffey and Martha Step Coffey, was a grandson of Chesley and Jane Cleveland Coffey, natives of Virginia. But the grandparents removed to North Carolina in an early day and settled in the Yadkin River where the parents of our subject was born, raised and married.

Mrs. Porter's knowledge of her family's background was good, as evidenced by the fact that the names of the children of Joel and Martha Coffey, listed in his will of April 1789, were identified to those named in her recollection of the children of Joel Coffey and Martha Step.

Joel Coffey was part of a Coffey family that moved from Wilkes County, N.C. to what is now Russell County, Ky., during the 1790's. Family members usually lived in close proximity and frequently used Joel, Nathan, Salathiel, Cleveland and Nebuzarden as given names.

Joel Coffey, was, according to D.A.R. records, born in 1730 and married to

Martha Sealey. According to Mrs. Porter's notes, Martha Sealey was actually Martha Step. She was expecting a baby in 1789, as mentioned in the will of Joel Coffey, and was therefore probably born no earlier than 1744. Joel Coffey was probably born much later than 1730. He died in Wilkes County, N.C. in July 1789, Cleveland (born 1765-8 died 1814), married Martha Jane Witherspoon, daughter of John Witherspoon and Martha Pettigrew. James (1774-1826), Joel, Nathaniel (1788-1834), Nebuzarden (1789-1867), Katherine, Jane, Celia.

It seems quite likely that Joel Coffey was a brother to: Salthiel (died 1784, Wilkes Co., N.C.), Chesley Jr., (1755-1818), Nebuzarden (ca. 1757-1797) and Nathan (ca. 1760-1823).

Information on Salathiel Coffey can be found in the story on Eli and Mary Coffey.

Chesley Coffey was born Nov. 19, 1755. They moved to Adair Co., Ky. between 1800 and 1802. In about 1812, they moved to Maury, Co., Tenn., where Chesley died on Sept. 18, 1818. Their children were: Nathan, (born 1780), Polly, Isaac (murdered 1799) Gracie (ca. 1782-1859), John, Joel, Felicia (1787-1865), Jake, and Landon (born 1794).

Nebuzarden Coffey was born in 1757 or earlier. In 1780 or earlier, he was married to Elizabeth Hayes. In 1794, he moved to Madison Co., Ky., where he died before March 1797. His Children were; Joel, Sarah, Polly, Fielding, Salathiel, Amanias (1785-1828), Hayes (1793-1860), Betsey, Ruth, and probably Lewis and James.

Information on Nathan Coffey can be found in the story of Nathan and Mary Saunders Coffey.

Sources: Eliza's Porter's notes, wills of Joel and Nebuzarden Coffey, letter written by Isaac J. Ross. -Timothy E. Peterman

#### ELI AND MARY COFFEY

Eli Coffey was born in what is now Wilkes County, N.C. on May 8, 1775. He married Mary (Polly) Coffey a first cousin according to tradition, on March 22, 1801, in what was then Green Co., Ky. and what is now Russell Co., Ky. Eli Coffey was probably a son of Salathiel and Elizabeth Coffey. Salathiel Coffey died before July 28, 1784 in Wilkes County, N.C. His widow Elizabeth was administrator of his estate. Eli Coffey and Newton Coffey (1773-1858) were brothers. Their sister was probably Elizabeth (Graney) Coffey who married Rutherford Coffey on March 17, 1801 in what was the Green Co., Ky. Another brother might have been the Salathiel who married Polly Blair On Oct. 25, 1808 in Adair Co., Ky. and who was supposedly born in 1781 in Wilkes Co., N.C. Salathiel Coffey (died 1784) was probably a son of Chesley and Jane (Cleveland) Coffey.

Mary "Polly" Coffey was born on Dec. 7, 1785 in Wilkes Co., N.C. A typed copy of the entries made in her husband's family bible listed her birth year as 1780. However, considering that her youngest son was born in 1830, the 1785 date is more likely. Mary was the daughter of Nathan and Mary (Saunders) Coffey and probably the granddaughter of Chesley and Jane

(Cleveland) Coffey.

The parents of both Eli and Mary Coffey left Wilkes Co., N.C. during the 1790's and settled in that part of Green Co., Ky. that became Adair Co., Ky. in 1802 and Russell Co. in 1826.

Eli and Mary Coffey had 12 children: Mariah, Willis, Elizabeth, Nancy, Salathiel, Sirena, Nathaniel, Stanton, William, Newton, Mary Ann and Reuben.

Mariah Coffey was born on Jan. 17, 1802. She married a second cousin, Elijah Coffey, on May 18, 1826. She died in Russell Co., Ky. in Oct. 1855.

Willis Coffey was born on May 2, 1804. He married Violetta Haynes on Mar. 23, 1828. He died in Dekalb Co., Mo. in 1893.

Elizabeth Coffey was born on Aug. 14, 1807. She married Jacob Wofford on Dec. 19, 1826. She died in Collin Co., Texas on Jan. 21, 1891.

Nancy Coffey was born on Oct. 14, 1809. She married a cousin, Fielding Coffey on Jan. 17, 1842.

Salathiel Coffey was born on Apr. 20, 1812. He married Nancy Dunbar on Aug. 20, 1835. He married Mrs. Mary Ann (McFarland) Ballew, a widow in 1854. He died in Collin Co., Tex. on May 29, 1892.

Sirena Coffey was born on Aug. 9, 1814. She married Darias Campbell on Sept. 21, 1834. She died on Nov. 23, 1868.

Rev. Nathaniel Coffey was born on Jan. 3, 1817. He married Mary H. Carter on Jan. 17, 1842. He died in Illinois.

Stanton Coffey was born on Dec. 5, 1819. He married Mary C. Saufley on June 27, 1842.

William Coffey was born on July 10, 1821. He married Martha Johnson on Sept. 4, 1845.

Rev. Newton Eli Coffey was born on May 2, 1823. He married Martha Louise Vermillion on Apr. 13, 1843. He died in Christian Co., Illinois on Jan. 14, 1890.

Mary Ann Coffey was born on July 4, 1827. She married Joseph E. Hays on March 25, 1854. She died on May 24, 1869.

Reuben Coffey was born on Feb. 12, 1830. He was a bachelor.

Sources: County Court minutes of Wilkes Co., N.C. and the Eli Coffey Family Bible.  
-Timothy E. Peterman

**NATHAN AND MARY (SAUNDERS) COFFEY**

Daughters of the American Revolution records report that Nathan Coffey was born in 1760, that Mary Saunders was born in 1770, and that the two were married in 1785. However, considering that one of their sons was born between 1770 and 1780, it seems likely that they were born several years

earlier. Mary was supposedly the daughter of William Saunders. Although D.A.R. records show Nathan as a son of Joel Coffey and Martha Sealey, he was probably a son of Chesley and Jane Cleveland Coffey. ?

Nathan Coffey was either born in what is now Wilkes Co., N.C. or else he moved there with his parents from Virginia, while he was still a youngster. He was a private in the North Carolina militia during the Revolutionary War. During the 1790's, Nathan Coffey and a number of his relatives settled in Green, later Adair Co., Ky. Shortly after 1820, he moved to moved to Jackson Co. Ala., where he died in 1823. Mary (Saunders) Coffey supposedly died in 1838 in Kentucky.

Nathan and Mary (Saunders) Coffey had 9 children: Rutherford, Elizabeth, Mary, Absolem, Joel, Grace, William, Nancy, and Catherine.

Rutherford Coffey was born between 1770 and 1880. He married Elizabeth (Graney) Coffey on Mar. 17, 1801. He settled in Jackson Co., Ala.

Elizabeth Coffey was born on May 12, 1781. She married her first cousin, James Coffey. She died in 1837.

Mary "Polly" Coffey was born on Dec. 7, 1785. Information on her family could be found in the story on Eli and Mary Coffey.

Absolem Coffey was supposedly born in 1788. He married first to Mary Lusk and second to Nancy Chadwick. He probably settled in Jackson Co., Ala.

Joel Coffey was supposedly born on Aug. 3, 1790. He married Mary Knox in 1817. He died in 1850.

Grace Coffey was supposedly born in 1793. She married a Marlow.

William Saunders Coffey was supposedly born in 1795. He married Elizabeth Schuyler.

Nancy Coffey was supposedly born in 1797. She married Richard Lockett.

Catherine Coffey was supposedly born in 1799. She married John Baxter.

Sources: DAR records, census records, and the James Coffey Family Bible.

-Timothy E. Peterman