

Authorities, continued

National Archives Revolution War Section
Washington, D. C.

North Carolina Dept. of Archives and History

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Washington, D. C.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF A FEW OF THE DESCENDANTS OF

THOMAS SMITH AND HIS WIFE, POLLY MEDEARIS SMITH

Compiled by: Robert T. Till
Arlington, Texas

Thomas Smith was born in Virginia, according to the census records. His tombstone inscription shows the dates of his birth and death to have been, respectively, 7 July 1784 and 1 Apr. 1866. In 1851 he moved from Bedford County, Tenn. to Dallas County, Texas, and settled near the present Honey Spring community, where he died and was buried in the family burying ground. This plot is now on the campus of the Linfield Elementary School, in Dallas, where Douglas M. Willis, a descendant of Washington Davis Medearis is principal. He has caused the area to be fenced, and set things to rights, as much as possible. Thomas Smith's mother was Elizabeth Critz, but his father's given name has as yet not been discovered. He married Polly, second daughter, and fourth and youngest child of John Medearis, Capt., QMGD, Army of North Carolina, in the war of the Revolution, and his wife, Sarah, daughter of Robert Hicks, of Granville County, N. C., and widow of Thomas Bell, some of whose history is recounted elsewhere in these pages. Polly died in Dallas County in 1876, and was presumably buried in the family plot also, but the site of her grave has been lost. The date of their marriage is at present not known.

At the present time we can give but a very incomplete account of their descendants. We can only, at the moment, give exact dates for our own line, with a few exceptions.

Thomas and Polly Smith had at least: Davidson M.; Jerusha, married Henry Durrett; Elizabeth C., married William Kennard; Thomas Jr.; Lucinda Murray, married (1) John Wesley MacDoniel and (2) Eldridge Gill; Ann C., married David King; and Mary M., married Nathaniel O. McAdams.

From the 1870 census of Dallas County, Texas, we have that Davidson M. Smith was born in Tennessee, in 1812, and his wife, Ellen M. _____ in 1821. Beside the fact that he acted as his mother's agent in collecting the arrears in Capt. John Medearis' pension, we know nothing further of him.

In the 1860 census of Dallas County, we have in the Kennard household: William, born 1799, in Pennsylvania; Elizabeth C. (perhaps his second wife?), born 1815, in Tennessee; J. F., born 1827 in Tennessee; E. A., born 1837, in Tennessee; Kennedy, born 1845, in Tennessee; Wayne, born 1847 in Tennessee; Howard, born 1853, in Texas; and Mattie E., born 1857, in Texas.

Thomas Smith, Jr., according to the 1860 census of Dallas County, was born in 1818, and his wife Martha _____, in 1824. They had at least: Thomas D., born in Tennessee 1841; Lucinda A., born in Tennessee, 1850; and William R. born in Texas, 1858. Also in the household was Thomas Sheppard, born in Tennessee in 1846, of whom we know nothing other than that he was a relative.

Lucinda Murray Smith, our own great grandmother, was born 24 November 1822 in Bedford County, Tenn. We do not know the date of marriage, but her first husband, our great grandfather, was John Wesley MacDoniel, an Early Christian minister. To them were born two children: John Smith MacDoniel and Mary Elizabeth Medearis MacDoniel (who afterward dropped the "Medearis"). After 1851, when the Smith clan moved to Texas, but before the 1860 census, she married Eldridge Gill, who was born 25 November 1822, and who died before her. She died 20 February 1906, at the home of Mary Elizabeth, in the Lisbon community, now in the city of Dallas, and is buried in the old Lisbon Cemetery.

✓ John Smith MacDoniel was born in Tennessee, in 1842, and came to Dallas with the family in or soon after 1851. He was married twice. We do not have the name of the first wife, but know that at least two children were born to this marriage: William and Maggie. He afterward married his cousin, Mary Elizabeth Luna. To them also were born two children: Bessie and Lola. When the War Between the States broke out, he was among the first in the Dallas area to volunteer, and was in the thick of the fight, in the Eastern Theater.

Will MacDoniel married Lena _____, and had two children: one of whom was killed in childhood by a vicious cow, and Lula, who married John McNiel, and now lives in Cockerell Hill, a suburb of Dallas. They have no issue.

Maggie MacDoniel, like her father, was married twice: first to a Mr. Hammond, by whom she had at least two children, Eldridge and Ophelia, and second to a Mr. Goodnight, a Union veteran, by whom she had at least: John, Hugh and L. G.

Of these children the first three, Eldy, Ophie and John are dead. All married and most of the surviving children, grandchildren and great grandchildren are living in and around Dallas.

Mary Elizabeth MacDoniel, our grandmother, was born in Tennessee, 23 January 1844, and came to Texas with the family ca. 1851. On 22 November 1860, when she was "nearly seventeen" she was married to William Thomas Gill, youngest brother of her mother's second husband, who was born in Tennessee 3 March 1839, tenth and next to the youngest child of Thomas Gill and his wife, Sarah Williams. They had four children: Annie Lou Gill, born 26 December 1861 and died 5 December 1875; Mattie Frances Gill, born 6 Oct. 1864 and died at Arlington, Texas 5 January 1949 (a career schoolteacher, she never married); John William Gill, of whom later; and Joe Gill, born 24 May 1876 and died 26 June 1877. William Thomas Gill served in the Confederate Army, but having already established a home, he did not go immediately. His service was all in the Western Theater. He died at his home at Lisbon, Dallas County, Texas, 1 September 1890. Mary Elizabeth died at Dallas, 15 February 1924, at the home of her son.

John William Gill, Sr., son of William Thomas and Mary Elizabeth Gill, was born in the Lisbon community, Dallas County, Texas, 17 May 1870. He attended the local public school and Ad-Ran Christian College at Thorp's Spring, Texas, which became Ad-Ran Christian University while he was there, and later, after some wanderings, Texas Christian University, now located at Fort Worth, Texas. He did not finish, however, being called away in his senior year by his father's death. He afterward read law, passed the bar examination and practiced for some years. In 1898 he was elected to the State Legislature from Dallas Co. On the evening of 4 January 1899, at Longview, Texas, he married Ada Antoinette Brown, daughter of Robert Garland Brown of that town, by his first wife, Marie Antoinette Flewellen. They went immediately to Austin for the convening of the Twenty-sixth legislature. When, as he said, he thought that he had been there long enough to get his name in the newspaper, he introduced a resolution in the House for the purpose of annexing the City of Oak Cliff to the City of Dallas. As soon as it became known, a delegation of the old citizens who had things pretty much as they wanted them, came down to "hang him". On about the next train, there came a group of the others to back him up. The upshot was that both groups were sent home to hold a referendum on the issue which was held and carried by the pro-annexationists, and the bill was put through. While in the Legislature he also introduced the bill establishing the College of Industrial Arts, at Denton, and helped Professor Grubbs to write the bill authorizing Grubbs Vocational College, which was later known as North Texas Agricultural College, and is now Arlington State College. In the 1920's and '30's he was a County Commissioner in Dallas County, and during his tenure, after liquidating a huge overdraft, opened, graded, graveled, and paved more roads and streets than

any of his predecessors, and left a tidy balance when he went out of office. Also during his administration the Trinity River was straightened and levees raised; a system of viaducts connecting residential Oak Cliff and industrial West Dallas with the downtown area built; and the Dallas County Hall of Records erected. His name appears on all of these structures. In 1938, during the Thanksgiving holiday, he moved from Dallas to Arlington, in Tarrant County, where he died, 24 January 1953, and his wife, 25 March the following year. Will and Ada Gill had in all five children: Mary Antoinette, born 2 May 1900 and died 23 March 1902; Ada Garland, born 27 October 1902, died 11 May 1909; Della Frances, born 8 April 1907, single, now living at 1600 West Abram Street, Arlington, Texas; John William, Jr., of whom later; and Robert Thomas, the author of this article, born 30 November 1916, single and living at the Arlington address; all of whom were born at 601 North Ewing, in the original townsite of Oak Cliff, Dallas, Texas.

John William Gill, Jr., was born 20 January 1909. He attended the Dallas public schools and Southern Methodist University, at Dallas, and was licenced to preach in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, being assigned to his first pastorate at the 1933 Session of the North Texas Annual Conference. The next year, on "Conference Sunday", 28 October 1934, he married Mary Fleming Butler, born at Clarendon, Texas 9 July, 1909, and died 11 September 1955, at Granger, Texas, daughter of Arcadius Butler and his wife, Exa Fleming, and they had three children: Mary Garland Gill, of whom presently; John William Gill, III, born 12 January 1942, at Chico, Texas; and Frances Irene Gill, born 4 January 1946, at Moody, Texas. The two younger ones are still at home with their father, at Gordon, Texas, where he is currently pastor of the local Methodist Church.

Mary Garland Gill was born at Forestburg, Texas, 25 Sept. 1935, and attended the public schools in the towns where her father's work lay, and Arlington College. In the afternoon of 3 September, 1954, she was married to Will David Mason, of Georgetown, Texas, at the Methodist Church at Ben Brook, Texas, her father reading the service. For "something old", she wore a brooch that had belonged to her great-great-great grandmother, Polly Medearis Smith. They are now living in Fort Worth, Texas, and have one child, Mary Lou Mason, born there 3 January, 1957.

Of Thomas and Polly Smith's children we still have three to tell of.

✓ Ann C. Smith, married in Bedford County, Tennessee, 1850
David King, born in that county, the son of Needham King and his wife, Rebecca Hicks, both natives of North Carolina, where they were married. He attended the schools in Bedford County and
✓ studied medicine at Fairfield, Tennessee, attended lectures at Cincinnati, O. and afterward graduated from that institution. He

returned to Fairfield and practiced medicine some two years, and in 1851 removed to Dallas County, Texas, settling in what is now a part of the city of Dallas. In 1870 he retired from the practice of medicine and moved into Dallas, and lived for some years near the present site of the First Methodist Church on Harwood Street near Ross Avenue. The last days of both Dr. King and his wife were spent with their oldest child, Mollie Crump, in Lubbock County, Texas. Their other children were William, born 1857 who is listed in the 1870 census, but died soon after; Mattie F.; and Jeff Davis, born 1861 and spent most of his mature life in the West. Of him we have no further knowledge. Mary R. (Mollie) King, born in Dallas County, Texas in October 1853, and in the middle 1870's married William Dorsey Crump, a native of Kentucky, and a verteran of Morgan's Raiders, born 21 August 1844. To them were born six children: Dave, born in January 1878, and died at Lubbock, Texas, in the fall of 1953; Bob, of whom later; Mamie, born in October 1881, a career school-teacher, who "retired" some years ago, and since been doing a wonderful work teaching retarded children in her home; then two boys who died in infancy; and Katie Bell, born 22 August, 1892, also a career schoolteacher, she retired at the end of the 1956-57 term as ^{the new boy} visiting teacher in the Lubbock Public Schools. Dave Crump had for a good many years been a citrus fruit grower in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, but on the failure of his health a few years before his death, he had sold his interests in the Valley and joined his sisters at 708 B. Avenue R, in Lubbock, where "the girls" still reside.

Bob Crump, the only one of Will and Mollie Crump's children to marry, was born 27 October 1879. Around the 1890's the family moved to Lubbock County, and he grew up with the country, becoming a classic example of that new Rara avis, the genuine old time cow-boy. During the Christmas holidays, 1930, he married Novella Richmond of Blanket, Texas, who at the time was teaching in the Lubbock schools. She taught out the session and resigned from the school system. In September their first child, Mary Lou, was born. She went through the public schools in Shallowater and Lubbock, and graduated from the Texas Technological College at Lubbock. Although her work takes her over most of northwestern Texas, she still makes her parents' home at Shallowater, in Lubbock County, perminant headquarters.

Novella, the other child of Bob and "Richie" Crump, was born in January, 1933. She also is a graduate of the Tech. On the afternoon of 25 March 1956 she was married to James Hart, Jr., D.V.M., a Tech. graduate also, and they make their home at Lubbock.

Mattie King was born in 1858, and married E. C. Turley, of Mississippi, a large planter in the Cold Water area. She spent most of her adult life at Cold Water and at Memphis, Tennessee. ✓ They had two children: Hubert King Turley, a prominent physician and surgeon of Memphis, who died about 1950, of a heart attack,

in the operating room, just as he was about to begin an operation. His son, Hubert, Jr., is following in his father's footsteps. The other child, Annie May Turley, married Bob Effenger, a stock broker in New York City, and they have a son, Bob Jr.

Of Jerusha Smith and Henry Durrett we can say very little. They had at least four children: Tom, Rice, Mary and Virginia. They went to Parker County, Texas, in an early day. It must have been quite early since Rice said that Comanche Peak was no bigger than his fist when they first went there.

Mary married a Mr. Hawkins, who died quite early. She died in the early 1920's.

Virge married James M. Thorp, a nephew of William Thomas and Eldridge Gill, and had one child, Will T. She died in the early 1920's and Jim in the 1930's, at Weatherford, Texas.

Will T. Thorp married Lillian Hammons, of Weatherford, and J. M., Joe Tom and Rachel Virginia.

Mary M. Smith, according to the census, was born 1827, in Tennessee. She married Nathaniel O. McAdams, born 1821, in Tennessee, and had at least Mary M., born 1852; and Thomas A., born 1854. N. O. McAdams was an early county commissioner in Dallas County, and his name appears on the corner stone of the Old Court House.

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BLAKEMORE

We can also say a few words of the Blakemore connection.

Margaret B. Medearis, third child of Washington Davis Medearis and his wife, Betsy Woodward, was born 10 February 1816, according to the Bible record. She married Henry Blakemore and they had three children: Sarah Elizabeth, Susan Katherine and Mary Davis.

Sarah Elizabeth Blakemore married Cannon Luna and had several children, among whom were Mary Elizabeth who married, as his second wife, John Smith MacDoniel, her cousin; Maggie Cannon, who married William Hardin Thorp, two of whose children, Minnie and Hugh, both single, live at 2518 Bomar Street in Dallas. Some of the descendants of Bruce Luna, long time Dallas postmaster, and perhaps some of the other Lunas also live in and around Dallas. Another daughter, Susan C. Luna married Charles A. Gill, an early day civic leader and builder in Dallas. Several of their descendants, including their only surviving child, Ella, now Mrs. W. J. Lockett, at 722 N. Edgefield, still live in Dallas.

Susan Catherine Blakemore married her cousin, George Washington Medearis, but they had no children.

Mary Davis Blakemore married a Mr. Crunk. Of them we have no further knowledge.

PIONEER GRAVES ON LINFIELD SCHOOL GROUNDS

On the grounds of Linfield Elementary School 3820 E. Illinois Street in Dallas is what remains of a cemetery plot of a pioneer Dallas family. At least four persons are buried there. Three markers exist, while one marker is missing from the remaining base. It is believed that other members of the same family were buried in this plot, but that the markers have been destroyed.

Research has revealed the following facts about the persons buried there:

Thomas Smith, Sr. was born in Virginia in 1784 and moved to the Tennessee frontier while a young man. He married Mary (Polly) Medearis, daughter of Captain John Medearis, soldier of the American Revolution who migrated from Wake County, N. C. to settle on a 3840 acre grant of land in Liberty Valley, Bedford County (now Marshall County) Tennessee. The Smiths raised a large family of children in Bedford County, Tennessee. In 1851 at 67, an age when most men of today are considering "taking it easy", Thomas Smith joined the westward movement to Texas and pioneered the frontier once more. There is some evidence that his wife did not come with him at first but joined him a few years later. Several of their children also migrated to Texas and settled with their parents in the vicinity where this School now stands. Thomas Smith was a well to do man for his day, owning in 1860 real estate and personal property valued at \$23,930 on the federal census for that year. He died in 1860 at the age of 81. His wife died 10 years later in 1876 at the age of 88. She was probably buried at the side of her husband, but no marker exists for her.

William Kinnard was the son-in-law of Thomas Smith. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1798 of Scotch ancestry. After moving to Tennessee, he met and married Elizabeth C. Smith. They were the parents of three children, two of which died young. William Kinnard and his family came to Texas in 1851. He worked as a saddle maker in Dallas County for five years until 1856 when he purchased 200 acres of "wild" land near his father-in-law's property in this area. He cleared this land and farmed until his death in 1867 at the age of 69. His wife, Elizabeth, was several years his junior and in 1890 was still living on the same farm with her only surviving child, William M. Kinnard. The date of

her death is not known.

Howard W. Kinnard, the third known person buried here, was the son of William and Elizabeth C. Kinnard and the grandson of Thomas and Mary Smith. He died in 1868 at the age of 14. The unmarked grave is thought to be the other Kinnard child who died at an early age.

In addition to Elizabeth, Thomas and Mary Smith's children were:

Mary, wife of N. O. McAdams Sheriff of Dallas County in 1860's.

Sarah, wife of Thomas H. Allison

Martha Jerusha (Patsy), wife of Mr. Durrett.

Ann, wife of Dr. David King, pioneer physician of Dallas County.

Lucinda, whose first husband John Wesley McDoniel died in Tennessee, and who married Eldridge Gill after coming to Texas.

Three boys, Thomas Jr., Davidson M., and John M.

In 1877 the Smith land was divided among the heirs. This land consisting of approximately 855 acres, was an elongated rectangle reaching from the bend of the Trinity River near where White Rock Creek joins the River, to the vicinity of the present Veterans Hospital in Lisbon. Thomas Smith, Jr., received the land where Linfield School a part of the Wilmer-Hutchins Schools, now stands.

The Linfield School children, mindful of the debt we owe to these and all the other pioneers of Texas who helped to build the great state that we live in today, repaired and reset these grave markers in May 1955 and fenced the graves in the fall of 1957.

The writer was interested to find out, in the course of this research, that Mary Medearis Smith was a sister of his great-great-great-grandfather Washington Davis Medearis.

Douglas M. Willis
Principal, Linfield School

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Dear Mr. Norwood:

Yes, Mrs. Ponder is right. This picture is five generations of Grandpa Yowell, Aunt Lizzie, coz. Mattie Hindrich, Effie May (Mrs. Joe Moss) and her son Joe, Jr.

When my father died, and Grandma (Mary) died a year before, it was thought best for my mother to come to Lewisburg to take care of Grandpa (William Russell) so we children felt very near to him, having lived with him for several years.

My older sister says she remembers seeing at Grandma's, two of Uncle David Yancey's sons. She was a very small child then. This could have been Mrs. Ponder's father.

This is such fun to find all you new coz's. I have had several requests for the book, and I am sure they will sell. We want one State Library and County Library, besides several for the family. Dont hesitate to write us any questions.

Yours very interested cousin,

Angie May
(Mrs. C. C. Wallace)

Mrs. Cecil C. Wallace
"Bridgeclift"
Lewisburg, Tenn.

Saturday Night

My Dear Cousin Olivia:

While this information is fresh on my mind, I want to tell it to you. When I read your letter saying you wished you could find where Great Grandma Elizabeth was buried. I called a cousin, Miss Bessie Loyd, who has been to the plantation called "Loyds" near Alexander, La. She said her father, Capt. Wilson Loyd, was educated in Alexander and lived with Uncle Jim and Aunt Sallie Loyd.

Some years ago she was in New Orleans and took a boat ride up the Red River and got off at a small place named Cheneyville, La. She says Cheneyville was her Uncle Jim's and Aunt Sallie's address. She visited a friend of her father's (Wilson Loyd) and this friend drove her (Bessie) to the Loyd plantation. Of course we know that Great Grandmother Elizabeth was visiting down there when she died, and we are sure she was buried there.

With every good wish for you and yours,

Devotedly,
Angie May

(This is a Copy of Pension Record)

SUMMARY SHEET
MEDEARIS, John
S 2.823

Parents: John Medearis and his wife, Rachel (Davis) Medearis.

Birth: On February 22, 1744, in Essex County, Virginia,
"between Rappahannock and Dragon".

Service: On September 19, 1828, when veteran applied for pension, he stated that he was an officer "in the Continental Line of the Army of the Revolution" and continued until the close of the war. It was established that he entered service in 1776, was Captain in the North Carolina Troops until November 1, 1778, was appointed then Assistant Deputy Quartermaster to Nicholas Long, Deputy Quartermaster General of the State of North Carolina, served later as Captain in the 5th North Carolina Regiment and continued in service until August 1, 1783.

Pensions: He received pension from February 12, 1829, rate \$480 per annum, act of May 15, 1826, on account of his service as an officer in the Revolutionary War. Pension Certificate No. 33240 was issued May 3, 1854, rate \$600 per annum, act of June 7, 1832, to Davidson M. Smith, Admr. for the benefit of Polly Smith, only surviving child of this officer.

Bounty Land: Warrent No. 1466 for 300 acres of land was issued May 16, 1797 on account of service of Capt. John Medearis in the Revolutionary War.

Family: This officer married on December 20, 1780, Sarah Bell, the widow of Thos. Bell; her maiden name, age and date of her death are not shown. Data concerning children of Capt. John Medearis:

Washington Davis Medearis, first son, born September 20, 1783; married on June 18, 1809, Eliz. S. Woodward, daughter of Thos. Woodward of Amelia County, Va. Elizabeth was born on February 5, 1793.

Benjamin Medearis

B. W. H. Medearis

Polly (Medearis) Smith, only surviving child in March 1853.

Data concerning the children of Washington Davis Medearis and his wife, Elizabeth S. Medearis:
Rachel Davis, first child born March 10, 1811.

Sarah H. Born December 24, 1813.
Margaret B. born February 10, 1816.
Polly, born May 23, 1818.
Christian L. born September 1, 1820.
Geo. Washington, born Mar. 5, 1823.
William Green, born Aug. 10, 1825
John Thomas, born Apr. 5, 1828
Elizabeth S. born June 2, 1830
Martha Frances, born Oct. 16, 1832.
Shown also: Wiley W. born Mar. 28,
1836

Marriages recorded:

Rachel Davis Medearis married on May
14, 1829 David Yancey, son of Thomas
and Sarah Yancey of Oglethorpe County,
Ga.

Sarah H. Medearis married on Aug. 6,
1835, James D. Loyds.

Margaret B. Medearis married on Aug.
6, 1835 to Henry S. Blackman.

Mary Medearis married on Jan. 26, 1839,
to _____ Yowell

On March 3, 1854, Elizabeth S. Yowell, aged 61 years,
stated in Marshall County, Tenn. that she was
acquainted with Captain John Medearis and with his
wife, Sarah, before her death; also that one of
the Bibles belonging to him had been in her possess-
ion ever since his death. (She cut from that Bible
on March 3, 1854, the family record on which the
family data given herein appear: it was filed as
evidence that Polly Smith was then the only sur-
viving child of Capt. John Medearis.) Elizabeth S.
Yowell stated also that she had been acquainted
with Polly since 1809 and that she (Polly) had
inherited the property of this officer as his heir
and daughter.

In 1857, Samuel Arnold of Shelbyville, Tenn. ✓
stated that his wife, Elizabeth, was the daughter
of Benjamin Medearis and the granddaughter of Capt.
John Medearis of North Carolina.

Residence: It was stated that he resided near Raleigh, North
Carolina, during his military service. When he
applied for the pension in 1828, he resided near
Shelbyville, Bedford County, Tenn. ✓

Death: This Officer died March 31, 1834, near Shelbyville, ✓
Tenn. He was not survived by a widow.

For the Purpos of Obtaining the Benefit of an Act intitl'd
 an act for the Relief of certain Surviving officers and Soldiers
 of the Army of the Revolution Approb'd on the 15th Day of
 May 1828 I John Medears Capt of the Continental Line
 in the County of Bedford & State of Tennessee Do Hereby
 Declare that I Was and officer in the Continental Line of
 the Army of the Revolution & Served as such to the End of
 the War to the Time When the Arrangement of the Army
 Provided by the Resolves of Congress of the 3rd & 21 of October
 -er 1780 Was carried into Effect & Was Reduced under that
 Arrangement at Which Period I Was a Capt in the 5th
 Regiment of the North Carolina Line & I also Declare
 that I afterwards Rec^d. a Certificat Commonly call'd a
 Commutation Certificat for a Sum Equal to the amount
 of five years ~~full~~ full Pay Which Sum was offer'd by the
 Resolves of Congress of the 21 of March 1783 in stead of the
 Half Pay for life to Which I was Intitled under the Resolue
 of the 21 of October 1780

And I further Declare that I Have Rec^d. of the
 United States as Pensioner since the 3rd Day of March
 1828 and Money for any other Time to the Present
 under my hand & Seal this 19th of September
 1828
 John M. Medears Seal
 Tho^o Coffey J^r

State of Tennessee } This Day Came John Medears Before me
 Bedford County } Thomas Coffey an Acting Justice of the
 Peace for Said County and State ofore said & Made Oath
 that he by Whome the foregoing Declaration Was subscribed
 is generally reputed & Believed to have Been an officer in the
 Army of the Revolution in Honor as here in stated With my Hand
 & Seal this 19th of September 1828
 Tho^o Coffey J^r

REVOLUTIONARY GRANT TO JOHN MEDEARIS

The State of Tennessee, by virtue of a warrant from the State of North Carolina, granted to John Medearis 1020 acres of land at the mouth of North Chickamauga Creek (1). The warrant was issued by John Armstrong in the Entry of Claims, for the State of North Carolina Western Lands. No sum of money is mentioned for this tract. John Medearis, and his son John Medearis, Jr. served in the 3rd North Carolina Regiment. The North Carolina warrant is dated June 25, 1784, and it is one of the grants allowed by the Act of 1783, concerning Revolutionary soldiers' claims. John Medearis, however, waited a long time to claim his grant, as it is dated by the State of Tennessee, May 3, 1823. It was signed by William Carroll, Governor of Tennessee.

--History of Hamilton County and Chattanooga
Tennessee (two volumes), by Zella Armstrong,
Vol. II, pp 91-92--

On page 182 of the same work his name is among a long list of Revolutionary soldiers "who lived or died in Hamilton County."

A recapitulation of pp91-92, to which is added: "It is probable that it was John, Jr. who took up Hamilton County land."

--Ibid. p. 193--

It occurs to me that it is rather remarkable, if the foregoing is correct, and the only Medearis land title in Hamilton County, that our John should have been transferring title on 1020 acres at the mouth of Chickamauga Creek to the heirs of Robert Goodloe in 1807. It appears that we still have much to learn about the doings of our ancestor.

--R.T.G.--

(1) By a curious typographical error the location of this grant is given in the Hamilton County Register as at the mouth of South Chickamauga Creek. Later references to the grant in transfers, etc., locate it properly at the mouth of North Chickamauga.

Middlesex County Wills F, 1772-1787

In the name of God amen I Charles Maderis being sick of Body but of Sound sense and disposing memory for which thanks be given to almighty god Calling to mind the uncertenty of life and the certenty of Death do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following: first I Commend my soul to almighty God that Gave it and my body to the Earth to be buried in a christian like and Decent manner at the discrestion of my Executor hereafter named and as touching such worldly Estate as it has Pleased God to bless me with I Give and Dispose in manner and form following Item I lend to my kind and loving wife mary madaris all my Estate both Real and Personal During her life then I give my Land to my Son John Madaris it being the land whereon I now live to him and his heirs forever--- Item I give all the Rest of my Estate after the Payment of my Just Debts to be equally Divided among the Rest of my Children to them and their heirs forever-----

I do hereby Constitute and appoint my friend James Machan hole and sole Executor of this my last Will and testament In witness were of I have hereunto Set my hand and fixt my Seal this Twelft day of April in the year our lord 1774.
Signed sealed published and Declard
by the sd Charles madaris as his last
Will and testament in the Presents of Carles Madris (Seal)

Henry Street
John Owen
Mary Owen

At a court held for Middlesex County at the Courthouse
in Urbanna on Monday the 24th day of October 1774

This last Will and Testament of Charles Madris deceased was presented in Court by James Machan the Executor therein named who made oath thereto according to law and the same was proved by the oaths of the witnesses thereto and ordered to be recorded, and on the motion of the said Executor Certificate is granted him for obtaining a Probat in due form, giving Security whereupon he with John Sadler his Security entered into and acknowledged their Bond in the Penalty of Two hundred pounds with condition according to law Executor Certificate is granted him for obtaining a Probat in due form

Test Will Churchill

Truly recorded Test Will Churchill Ck.

Note:

This Will and the accompanying appraisement were copied from a photostat of the original record borrowed from Floyd Medearis of Hammond Indiana. The Will is recorded at Saluda, Virginia. This is possibly the Charles whose birth in 1702 is recorded in the Christ Church Parish Register of Middlesex Co. His connection, if any, to Capt. John Medearis is unknown. Urbanna is only a few miles from where Capt John was born in Essex Co. The original spelling and punctuation is preserved in this copy.

(1957) Douglas M. Willis

Medearis's
A ppraisement

In Obedience to an Order of Middlesex County Court dated the 24th day of October 1774 We the Subscribers being Sworn before Senris Mountague Gent one of his Majesties Justices have met and appraised the Estate of Charles Medearis and as followeth.

To 2 cows & Yearlings.....	@50..	15-0-0
1 Cow 35/ 1 young stear and young heiffer 35/.		3"10"0
5 Sheap @ 6/.....		1"10"0
3 Sows @ 7/.....		1"1 "0
1 Chest of Drawers.....		"12"0
1 Bedd an firniture & Underbed.....		3" 0"0
1 Ditto.....		2" .0"0
4 old Chairs 4/ 1 Spinning Wheal 2/6.....		6"6
A Parcel of Tubbs & Casks 10/ 1 rawhide 2/6..		12"6
3 Iron Potts & hooks 17/1 frying Pan 1/6.....		18"6
1 Table Tubb & 2 Sifters 2/6 1 Iron Pestle 2/6		5"0
2 Earthen Pans 1/6 3 Pewter Dishes 9/.....		10"6
2 Axes 4/ 1 Small Chest 3/ 1 Table 2/.....		9"0
1 Iron Wedge 2/6. 2 small Piggins 1/.....		3"6
2 Pewter Basons 5/6 Pewter plaits 7/6.....		12"6
1 doz Pewter Spoons 2/6 Small looking Glass 1/		3"6
A Parcel old Books 2/ pr. old Cards 4/.....		6"0
1 old Flow hoe 1 9 bottles 3/.....		4"0
1 pr. Stillards 3/ 1 old Bop Iron & Heaters 9d		3"9
		L 21"8"3

James Lee
John Lee
John Jackson

At a court held for Middlesex County at the Court house in Urbanna on Monday 27th day of February 1775
This appraisement of the Estate of Charles Medearis deceased was this day returned and ordered to be Recorded

Test Will Churchill
Truly recorded Test Will Churchill. Ck.

Copy of letter sent to Douglas Willis in reply
to his letter of February 17

212 Madison St.,
Clarksville, Tenn.
Feb. 20, 1958.

Dear Cousin:-

Your letter arrived in the morning's mail, and also one from Sue Helen and Bob Medearis (Medearis Equipment Co., Nashville,) Bob knows very, very little about his ancestor's because his mother died when he was six years old, and he lived hither and yon until he was ten, then given permanent residence with someone in Florida where he remained until he was married to Sue Helen. He knows his father's name was Benjamin Washington Medearis, who married after Bob's mother's death, and he mentions some half-brothers (probably living in Memphis and St. Louis) but none of them know anything of their parents kin. Bob's sister, Pearl, is ten years older, and is Mrs. R. E. Pettigrew, Parson, Tenn. I am writing Mrs. Pettigrew to night.

Benjamin Washington's M- father was Joel Bug Medearis. Some one wrote Bob that Benjamin W.H.M- was Joel Bug's father, but they have no date to prove it. They do not know the names of Joel's wives; they seem to think that Joel's first wife divorced him and married his brother - only one child by that union. And who and when "grandpa" married for second wife, they know nothing.

Bob and Sue Helen have three children: oldest daughter, Mary Medearis Granstaff, teaches at Donelson High School. (Donelson is near to Nashville.) A son is Educational Director at First Church, King'sport, Tenn., and their youngest daughter is taking her Master's at Peabody College in Nashville.

I do not ever remember the name "Joel" being mentioned by my relatives. Neither do I know anything about Dennis Grady's brothers or sisters - Dennis Grady married twice; first to Elizabeth Martin (?) and they had two or more children the Bartons think, and his second marriage was to Sarah (Sallie) Banks, and their only child was my father, Thos. Benjamin Medearis. I have been trying to "figure out" this problem: IF Joel was a son of B.W.H., and it is definitely affirmed that Dennis Grady was a son of B.W.H., could it be possible that Joel's first wife that divorced him, was Dennis Grady's second wife???? Not having any dates of births nor marriages, it is impossible for me to derive at any definite conclusion. The only dates I have is that my father was born Jan 30, 1855 - Dennis Grady died April 13, 1857 - and Sallie died 1890. I feel reasonably sure that they were living at McMinnville, Tenn. But

how and with whom Grandmother spent those 33 years of widowhood I have not the slightest idea, and can think of no one who can tell me. My father married Flora Eleanor Butler in Jan. 1884. She was a daughter of Adam and Hannah Butler (from Scotland and England) who owned an estate in either Coffee County or Warren County during the war years 1861-1864, for I have heard my grandmother tell of her horrible experiences with soldiers over-raiding their property, taking carriage horses or anything else that caught their fancy. This of course is an entirely different family of Butlers from the Mary H. Butler you mentioned. When Grandfather Butler died, Grandmother took their two girls and moved to Nashville to live. ✓

My parents moved to a south Georgia town, Albany, in possibly 1890, because my brother was born in Albany in July, 1891. and I was four years old. He (my father "Ben") was the Grand Recorder of the Ancient Order of United Workmen; was bookkeeper for Erlich's Shoe Store, and taught classes in shorthand and bookkeeping on the side. We moved back to Nashville about 1901 and he continued in office work for some years. Eventually he became connected with the Tennessee Central Railroad and was station agent Edgeton, Ky and later "rolled" to Martha, Tenn. As you mentioned this Martha Station in your letter I wonder if you have located someone that knows they are related to this Ben Medearis?

I have not yet received replies to the letters sent the "Southern Standard" newspaper at McMinnville, nor the Medearis' at Mt. Juliet, Tenn. nor those at Centerville. ✓

I had a letter yesterday from Mary Jerusha Barton Davidson, Jonesboro, Ark. She reports their family Bible has not been located, and she enclosed an exact copy of the letter from Washington Davis Medearis to Benjamin W. H. M- in 1813. (My father gave this letter to Bartons to show history students) She explained that the handwriting was very good, but some of the letter was worn and faded and they could not make out two or three of the words, and commas seemed to be missing. I am still puzzled over Washington Davis' phraseology, "Your father and mother", and yet in speaking of a certain order for money he says, "My father could not transmit your money, etc," and again, "My father has leased out your place" . . . It seems queer to me; but since you have seen Capt. John M's will, that declares that Washington Davis and B.W.H. are his sons and are brothers, I do not see where another "father" could be worked in. Any egotism any of us might have had over our fine ancestors, got a prick in our balloon to learn of Wash. Davis' wonderful whiskey industry, Ugh?

From this letter we could conclude that Charity and John and his wife were all living with the Wash Medearis family - at least they were very near by. Rachel Davis, their only child at that time, was only two years old. All of us will recognize the

"T Smith" in the letter as Thos. Smith who married Polly, The stars of your very interesting story - my, this is a small world when paths cross so often and in such peculiar circumstances!

You have a great string of "greats" between you and Capt. John; you must be very young, for I can claim him as great, great-grandfather. (Unless somebody digs up another generation or two to insert between us) But that seems improbable as your statistics and my scant knowledge "balance".

Capt. John -

B.W.H.

Dennis Grady

Thos. Ben

Myself. And the reason I am so "close" is that

I am 71 years!

In the March issue of a little magazine called, "The Family Circle", (10¢) sold at chain Grocery Stores, there is an interesting article, "Ancestor Chasing - the great Ancestor Boom." The family "tree" is quite cute. You would enjoy the article since you have been pulling all the strings in the search for kinsfolk.

Will forward you any other data I may receive concerning the Medearis genealogy.

Does any one know what became of Harvey and James Wm Medearis who came to U. S. with their brother John Thomas Medearis in the early 1700s?

Best wishes and Good luck,

Mary Medearis Cloud

1817 Hayes St., Apt. #10
Nashville 4, Tennessee
January 15, 1945

Dear Cousin Olivia:

When I got home from work last Saturday afternoon, found the postmaster had left quite a lot of mail for me, and among the letters was yours.

It was, of course, quite a surprise to receive a letter from a cousin "Way down in the heart of Texas." I remember quite well, however, having met some cousins from Texas at Cousin Jim Yowell's house very soon after his death, and if I remember correctly, they were Yanceys.

As I am a terribly busy person, have not yet had the time to look through some old papers I have, or did have, which give the date of the birth of Aunt Rachel Medearis who was a sister of my grandfather, John Thomas Medearis. While I have a few minutes, will type hurriedly a few things I know about the family, but will send your letter on to Aunt Lily (Medearis) Foster who is now in Lexington, Ky., at the home of Mrs. Edward Saxon (Emma Medearis, who lost her husband last February). Aunt Lily and Aunt Ethel (Mrs. J. O. Cummins) are spending the winter with Emma, who will continue to live in Lexington where she teaches school, until she sells her home there.

Aunt Lily is the widow of the late Dr. J. L. Foster and usually lives in Thomasville, Ga., with her daughter, Mrs. J. L. Turner. Aunt Lily, I believe, can probably tell you more about the family than any other of my mother's sisters. And my mother, by the way, was grandpa's second daughter and her name was Anna Belle, and any of the older members of the family can tell you she was a very beautiful woman - in character, as well as in face and form. Most of the Medearis women were beautiful and talented. My mother was a talented musician. Aunt Alice, the next younger than my mother, and who passed away just last March, was a wonderful seamstress, having made most of the wedding dresses and graduation dresses for the younger sisters. She is the only one of the 11 sisters who never married. Grandma had only one son, Wm. Robert Medearis.

Some five or six years ago, a party of us went to visit the McAdams farm which is between Lewisburg and Petersburg, Tenn. Out in the middle of the big cornfield on this farm is the old Medearis burying ground, as this farm was the property of Capt. John T. Medearis some time during, or after, revolutionary days. Capt. Medearis was granted several hundred acres of land, around Chattanooga I believe it was, for brave and loyal service rendered during the Revolutionary War. And we are very proud of the fact that his name, along with a number of others, appears on a monument which now stands by the side of Nashville's new Court House. His grave, and I'm pretty sure that of Aunt Rachel also, is in this old burying ground on the McAdams farm.

On several occasions different ones of the family have considered erecting a monument to Capt. Medearis and having the little lot fenced in again, but as no one ever really got busy and sent out letters to all the kin asking for contributions to finance the thing, nothing has ever been done - so far as I know, and it MAY be that Mr. McAdams has now had that graveyard ploughed under. I hope he hasn't, but the little plot has been so terribly neglected for all these years, no one could blame him if he has.

I forgot to state above, that Capt. Medearis, to OUR great sorrow, never did accept all that land from the government.

Little did he dream, it seems, what a huge family ours was to become, and how very, very much some of us, who own on land at all, would love to have even one small acre of it. Uncle Was Medearis' widow, Aunt Lucy, who lives in Fayetteville, Tenn., has a copy of the grant issued by the government to Capt. Medearis.

If the next page will hold them, and I have time, will list the names of all the Medearises as I recall them right now.

Capt. John T. Medearis (Am not sure I have his first and 2nd name correct) I do not know the names of his children, nor how many he had, but Aunt Lily may be able to give you that information, and the missing generations between his and that of my grandfather.

John Thomas Medearis first married Frances Dean. Their children were as follows:

Mary, who married Fon Feeney
Lou, Married Mr. Neeld 1st time;
Washington Davis, married Lucy Allen
Harvey D., married Bettie Dean, a cousin
Fanny, married Hugh Smith, but died soon after
Birth of her son,

Soon after Aunt Fanny was born, Grandpa moved to Texas, where they lived for a while, then when they started back to Tennessee, his wife died, and it was a little before, or during the Civil War, that he married my grandmother, Harriet Jane Noblitt. To that union the following children were born:

Nannie, who died at age 18
Anna Belle (my mother) who married Willis Holmar
Alice Wylie who never married
William Robert, who married Nana Burton
Sally Lenore, who married Simon Vertrees
Ethel May " " Dr. J. O. Cummins
Lily, married first Harry Winnett. After his
death she married Dr. J. L. Foster
Emma, married Prof. Edward Saxon
Nellie " Albert Romain Tallman
Hattie Lee married first Wm. Bradford. After his
death, L. P. Morgan

In my own family there are four sisters and one brother -- NONE of us married. Lost our father when I, the eldest, was barely 18. Was hurried off to business college, got a good position with a mighty fine man and have been too busy ever since to think much about getting married-not realizing what a bad (?) example I was setting for rest of the family.

Am afraid I have rambled along without giving you exactly the information you most wanted, but this letter should give you