

## THE BIRMINGHAM GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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THE PIONEER TRAILS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2020

### **THERE WILL BE NO MEETING FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH**

#### **Appointed a Guardian Does Not Mean Dead Parent(s)**

Most of the time when a child has a guardian appointed it means at least one of their parents is deceased and that the minor child had an interest in that parent's estate that needed to be protected. If the father died, the surviving widow may not have been appointed the guardian. But dead parents were not the only reason a guardian may have been appointed for a child. If another relative died and wanted to leave the child property, they may have indicated who they wanted appointed that child's guardian upon the relative's death. Sometimes that guardian was not the child's parent. The most frequent situation of a child with living parents being appointed a guardian is when a grandparent was not overly fond or trusting of their son-in-law. The grandparent, instead of giving their daughter an inheritance, gives it to the daughter's children instead and appointing someone else a guardian.

#### **When You Are Stuck: Some Thoughts**

Write up every piece of information you know about your "lost" ancestor. Every piece.

Include a source citation for every piece of information you know about your ancestor—if it came from an interview of a relative, so state. If it was on a piece of paper or a digital image of that paper, cite it. Make certain you have transcribed the information completely and accurately from that source.

If you don't have a source for a piece of information—indicate that. That doesn't mean the information is wrong, just that you don't have a source for it.

Are there any relatives of the "lost person" who have not been fully researched? And if you think they are fully researched, have you really confirmed that?

Are there any words or terms that you have encountered while searching that person that you are not completely certain you understand?

Have you shared your write up of your "lost person" with a researcher, genealogy group, message board, etc. who might be able to give some insight?

There are other things one can do as well, including learning about the time period and location of the "lost person," their religious affiliation, occupation, educational level, etc.

#### **Research & Genealogical Tips**

© Michael John Neill, "Genealogy Tip of the Day,"

<http://genealogytipoftheday.com/>, TIPDATE

**The past is not dead. It isn't even past. --William Faulkner**

*Scott A. Martin, BGS Newsletter Editor*

### **MYSTERIOUS AND UNEXPLAINED ALL AROUND US: THE HOPEWELL INDIAN RUINS**

By Robert S. Davis

One of the least explored but most accessible archaeological wonders in the world exists in much of the Eastern United States including the Chattanooga area. The Hopewell cult, culture, religion, presence, tradition, or enigma takes its name for the largest Indian mounds east of the Mississippi, now in the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park near in Chillicothe, Ohio. Serious science has exposed much about these mounds in the shapes of snakes, birds, and other forms only fully appreciated from the air!

This combination of Native America engineering, ideology, and religion grew and spread from before 100 BCE/BC to 500 ACE/AC across North America from Canada to Crystal River, Florida. Hundreds, maybe thousands, of earth and stone constructions including walls, cairns, and mounds are Hopewellian or could be. Kentucky and West Virginia have the most famous of such sites found throughout the South.

Undoubtedly, many of these constructions remain unknown or saw destruction. These structures amazed many early visitors including Charles C. Jones, Francis Robert Goulding, and George White.

Some rock formations thought to be manmade and ancient, however, are likely natural or built by pioneers in the last 200 years. The wall at dug Gap in Whitefield County, near Chattanooga almost became important during the Civil War. According to Dr. Jack Wynn, however, that wall consists of a natural outcropping enhanced as a fortification by Confederate engineers piling up rocks.

The Chattanooga area has many of these marvels. Philip E. Smith surveyed them in *Aboriginal Stone Constructions in the Southern Piedmont* (1956). Lookout Mountain has three likely ancient circular walls that in 1863 Confederate soldiers preempted as fortifications. These ruins are today in the Chattanooga-Chickamauga National Military Park. The Kensington Site, in Georgia but just south of Chattanooga, has such an aboriginal wall, as does Rocky Face in nearby Whitfield County, Georgia. For a survey of other such sites, see Robert Wauchope, *Archaeological Survey of North Georgia* (1966).

Some of the walls enclose large areas such as in Old Fort State Historical Park in Manchester, Tennessee (northwest of Chattanooga). Writers identify it as the largest of such works, although it is smaller than the Chatahospee site in Chambers County, Alabama with a bird shaped mound and a spiral vortex mound. A similar formation is the Kenimer Site at Brasstown Bald in Union County, Georgia.

Only the Old Fort site in Tennessee, of all of the sites in the South, has received serious modern research. Dr. Charles H. Faulkner did extensive work there in the 1960s, which he described in *The Old Stone Fort: Exploring an Archaeological Mystery* (1971). He pioneered the use of radio carbon dating to show that the walls there as constructed in stages from at least as early as 30 to as late as 450 ACE/AD.

Other sites such as Fort Mountain State Park near Chatsworth, Georgia have walls that resemble a snake while Fort Mountain near Blairsville, Georgia has a circle likely representing a snake facing its tail (an ouroboros), a coiled snake, or a vortex (a symbol also found carved in stone at nearby Track Rock Gap) and on Mole Hill near Marble Hill in Pickens County, Georgia. Indian mounds shaped like buzzards at Rock Eagle in Eatonton, Georgia exist near the Devil's Half Acre Walls.

## Pioneer Trails Newsletter

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Presumed burials in rock piles called cairns such as Trahlyta's Grave near Dahlonega also exist. Philip E. Smith saw several of these rock piles near the wall on Sand Mountain in Catoosa County, Georgia, near Chattanooga. On Rich Mountain, in Pickens County, Georgia, more than ninety cairns in groups of three with each group shaped like the letter "L" cover a mountainside. Reportedly, walls exist on nearby Oakey Mountain and Henderson Mountain, although the latter likely has modern origins as rocks piled up to create a field and the former a natural site.

Where lack of serious modern scientific study has not happened, myth has grown. Whimsical tales of Madoc, a Welsh priest in a balloon; Mayans in Georgia; and Spanish settlements have appeared in print. In 1884, stories of gold and silver in Fort Mountain in Murray County, Georgia appeared in newspapers. (Fort Mountain, Union County, also has gold mines.) After 1897, local people dug pits in the stone snake shaped wall at today's Fort Mountain State Park in hopes of finding treasure. They found nothing as the Hopewell builders notoriously left such sites clean.

So many of these sites have disappeared or suffered damage to the point that officials have closed at least two such sites to the public. An earthquake destroyed much of the once waist high great wall atop Stone Mountain, now a state park near Atlanta, Georgia.

Modern people have damaged other sites. Almost all of the two walls at Welsh Cave near DeSoto Falls State Park near Fort Payne, Alabama disappeared for use as building stones. Margaret Perryman discovered that the wall on Grassy Knob/Mount Oglethorpe became material to build a foundation for a monument to General James Oglethorpe in 1930. (The monument is now in Jasper, Georgia.) Philip E. Smith discovered that the destruction of walls on Ladd Mountain near Cartersville and Brown's Mount near Macon, both in Georgia, occurred after 1935.

Tennessee and the South also have many undated petroglyphs (stone carvings) and "sculptured monoliths" (ancient statues) of animals that might have connection to the Hopewells, see "Mysteries of the Mountains: Explorer Margaret Perryman and Traces of a Lost Culture," *The North Georgia Journal* 7 (2) (1990): 46-49. Margaret Perryman searched for such ancient art in the 1940s to 1960s. She failed to find the rock carvings in Pickens County shown to her in photographs but she did find the ruins of the wall on nearby Mt. Oglethorpe. Perryman discovered that vandals damaged, hid, and even stole many of these stone and rock engravings that they mistakenly believed to be treasure maps.

The Hopewell builders of the Woodland Period (1000 BC/BCE to 1000 AD/AC/ACE) traded extensively across America, manufactured decorative art, and buried copper plates with their dead. No one knows why this culture ceased to exist. California also has many ancient Mystery Walls, origins unknown.



# Pioneer Trails Newsletter

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## SUBSTITUTES FOR GEORGIA CENSUS RECORDS, 1781-1820

by Robert Scott Davis, director

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*All sources listed below with an asterisk (\*) are available at Wallace State College.*

The largest single period of Georgia's population growth, in percentages, came in the years 1783 to 1810, when thousands of families seeking new lands and new beginnings settled in the vast, largely unpopulated, young state. This migration, chiefly from Virginia and North Carolina, was on such a scale as to have national consequences. However, while this movement initiated the final settlement of what would be today's state boundaries of Georgia, these same families also continued moving, settling Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, and beyond. A typical family of the period might have moved to Wilkes County (Georgia) from Virginia in the 1780s, moved on to the lands opened by the 1805 Georgia land lottery by 1808, be living in northern Florida by 1818, and residing in Alabama prior to 1830.

Such movements were so rapid that only accidental discovery or place of birth given in post-1840 federal census records may be the only means by which a genealogist discovers that a particular family ever lived in Georgia or that a missing ancestor/generation rests today somewhere on the waters of Georgia's Oconee River. The loss of the federal census records for Georgia for 1790-1810 and the many problems with the 1820 census of Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee do not make tracking an early Georgia ancestor easier.

Fortunately, Georgia's reputation for having a wealth of records serves it well for this complex period, although those records are often unique to Georgia and confusing to the uninitiated. Given below are the general and state-wide sources:

Barefield, Marilyn Davis Hahn. *Old Cahaba Land Office Records & Military Warrants 1817-1858*. Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1986.\* This Alabama federal land office was actually in Milledgeville, GA from 1817 to 1818. The land office records often indicate the county in Georgia in which the applicant lived. Ms. Barefield has published similar volumes on the other Alabama land offices.\* Also see Philip W. McMullin, *Grassroots of America* (Salt Lake City, UT: Gendex Corp., 1972), an index to the land claims volumes of the *American State Papers*.\*

Davidson, Grace G. *Early Records of Georgia Wilkes County*. (2 vols. Macon, GA: Burke, 1932).\* In 1790 more than forty percent of Georgia's population lived in Wilkes County, making Wilkes' almost complete, surviving records, exceptionally valuable for locating information on a person within Georgia during the late 1700s. Also see Robert S. Davis, Jr., *The Wilkes County Papers* (Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1980);\* Frank Parker Hudson, *A 1790 Census For Wilkes County, Georgia Prepared From Tax Returns* (Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Company, 1987);

## Pioneer Trails Newsletter

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idem., *Wilkes County, Georgia Tax Records, 1785-1805* (Atlanta: The Author, 1996); and the R. J. Taylor, Jr. Foundation (below).\*

Idem., *Historical Collections of the Georgia Chapters Daughters of the American Revolution*. (4 vols., Various printers, 1929- ). \* Volume two contains abstracts of the early records of Richmond County and volume three is the records of Elbert County. For Burke County see William H. Dumont's articles in *Georgia Genealogical Gems* (Washington, DC: National Genealogical Society, 1981). Many other books on records of this period have been published on individual counties such as the works on Chatham County and Savannah by the Genealogical Committee of the Georgia Historical Society.

Davis, Robert S. *The Georgia Black Book* (2 vols., Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1986-1988).\* Among the records included in these volumes are proclamations by Georgia governors for fleeing felons, early prison records, and 1790s federal tax defaulters (published in 1812). Also see idem., *A Researcher's Library of Georgia* (2 vols., Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1986-1988).

Geiger, Linda Woodward and Frankel, Meyer. *Index to Georgia's Federal Naturalization Records to 1950 (Excluding Military Petitions)* (Atlanta: Georgia Genealogical Society, 1996).\* Also see Kenneth Scott, *British Aliens in the United States During the War of 1812* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1979)\*.

*Index to Headright and Bounty Grants of Georgia, 1755-1906*. (Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1969).\* The Georgia headright grants serve as a census substitute for 1784-1790s. Loose records relating to these grants and plats that name neighbors and chain carriers who may be relatives are in the Georgia Department Archives. We have a special index to the indexes of the plats on CD Rom disk; a published index to the loose headright and bounty land grant files is Robert S. Davis, *The Early Settlers of Georgia*\* (1999), and microfilm of the early plats. Also see Nathan and Kaydee Mathews, *Abstracts of Georgia Land Plat Books A & B 1779-1785* (Fayetteville, GA: The Authors, 1995).\*

Kratovil, Judy. *An Index to War of 1812 Service Records for Volunteer Soldiers of Georgia*. (Atlanta: The Author, 1986).\* At least one fifth of Georgia's white adult males are named in this book, making it a census substitute and people finder for 1812-1815. Genealogically valuable bounty and pension records for many of these soldiers can be found in the Military Service Records of the National Archives. Also see the unpublished military records typescripts at the Georgia Department of Archives and History known as "Georgia Military Affairs" and "Georgia Indian Depredations Claims"; Murtie June Clark, *American Militia in the Frontier Wars, 1790-1796* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1990);\* Virgil White, *Index to Volunteer Soldiers 1784-1811* (Waynesboro, TN: National Historical Publishing Company, 1987);\* idem., *Index to Volunteer Soldiers in Indian Wars and Disturbances* (same publisher, 1994); \*and National Archives micropublication M233, Enlistments in the U.S. Army, 1798-1914. The later has records of soldiers for 1798-1815 that give county and state of birth.\*

Potter, Dorothy Williams. *Passports of Southeastern Pioneers 1770-1823*. (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1982).\* This book is the best set of abstracts of the permits issued by Georgia governors to allow families to pass through Indian lands to the south and west.

## Pioneer Trails Newsletter

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Names of persons found in some petitions in the Cuyler Collection appear in John D. Stemmons, *Georgia Petitions, 1778-1782* and *Georgia Petitions, 1785-1794*, both published in Sandy, Vermont in 2004.

R. J. Taylor Jr. Foundation. *An Index to Early Georgia Tax Digests*. (5 vols. Spartanburg, SC: Reprint Company, 1987)\*. These volumes index certain selected Georgia tax digests for 1789-1817. Many other early Georgia tax digests have survived. Also see Ruth Blair, *Some Early Tax Digests of Georgia* (1926; reprint edition with index, Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1971); and Martha W. Acker, *Franklin County Tax Digests* (4 vols., Birmingham, AL: The Author, 1980-1987)\*. Ms. Acker has also published a number of other books on Franklin County.\* The Georgia Archives has an almost complete set of tax digests for 1872 to present. Most of these volumes are indexed and available online at least past 1890, along with some early federal records, in [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com).

Wood, Virginia Steele. *1805 Land Lottery of Georgia*. (Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1964)\*. The 1805 land lottery was participated in by almost every head of a household in Georgia and serves as a substitute for Georgia's lost 1800 and 1820 federal censuses. Persons registered in this lottery with two chances (BB, PB, or PB) were married or had children. Lists of the winners of Georgia's later land lotteries of 1807, 1820, 1821, 1827, 1832, and 1833 have been published as a series of books by the Southern Historical Press.\* These land lottery books are being redone in new and more complete editions. The 1805 lottery books by Paul Graham is already available.\*

NEWSPAPER SOURCES: Georgia is exceptionally blessed in access to its early newspapers. An unpublished, typescript, every name index to the Savannah newspapers is available at the Georgia Department of Archives and History, the Georgia Historical Society Library, and the University of Georgia Libraries.\* For the *Augusta [Georgia] Chronicle* see Alice O. Walker, *Personal Name Index to the Augusta Chronicle* (4 vols., Augusta: Augusta-Richmond County Public Library, 1987-1996)\*. (We also have this newspaper on microfilm.) For Milledgeville, an early Georgia capital, there is Fred R. and Emilie K. Hartz, *Genealogical Abstracts From the Georgia Journal (Milledgeville) Newspaper* (Vidalia: The Authors, 1990)\*. Tad Evans and Elizabeth Kilbourne have abstracted many early Georgia newspapers.\* Marriage and death notices from several newspapers are included in Mary B. Warren, *Marriages and Deaths from Extant Georgia Newspapers* (2 vols., Danielsville, GA: Heritage Papers, 1968-1972)\*.


MISCELLANEOUS: A number of unpublished sources for early Georgia research are at the Georgia Department of Archives and History. The File II Names and File II Counties is a collection of files of loose original records. The original government records to 1800 have been microfilmed as File II Names Pre-1800. The Georgia Archives also has a series of unpublished but indexed typescripts of pre-1800 government journals. An index to these files is published in a book *Georgians Past*\*. The Telamon Cuyler Collection in the Hargrett Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, University of Georgia Libraries, has thousands of letters, petitions, military rolls, etc. from early Georgia. The index to 1785 for these papers has been published in volume one of *A Researcher's Library of Georgia*\*.

Records of migrations to Georgia are regularly published in such journals as *Georgia Genealogical Magazine*, *Georgia Genealogical Society Quarterly*, *Southside Virginian*, *Virginia Genealogist*, and *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal*. The latter two journals include abstracts of British merchants claims in the British Public Record Office that often indicate migration to Georgia.

got genealogy.com's  
**GOLDEN RULES OF GENEALOGY** 

**"SPELLING DUSN'T COWNT"**

**1** Back in the day folks couldn't spell and many could barely write, so how a name sounds is more important than how it's spelled. Use wild card or Soundex searches to help find variant spellings of names.



**ASSUME NOTHING**

**2** Check all your facts, don't assume that any particular document is right or wrong, and always try to find other independent sources to corroborate your facts as much as possible. Verify, verify, verify. For instance, don't assume that:


- your ancestors were married
- census information is accurate
- vital (or other) records were correct
- your ancestor's life events were recorded
- ancestors had the same name as their enslaver

**USE DISCRETION**

**3** **Never lie** in your genealogy reports, but use discretion when reporting family information, especially when it involves living relatives.


**ALWAYS DOCUMENT YOUR SOURCES, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY CONTRADICT ONE ANOTHER**

**4** Over time, you will compile more data and those once seemingly contradictory pieces of evidence may prove to be just the pieces of the puzzle you need to prove or disprove your theory. Be consistent as you cite your sources. There are standard citation formats, but even if you just make up your own format for listing your sources, be consistent with it. You want your descendants to be able to retrace your steps, so you always cite your sources.




**MOST DATES ARE APPROXIMATE**

**5** It's okay to state that someone was born "abt. 1845," or died "May 1915" if you don't have an exact date or where various documents have different dates. Which date is "correct?" They all are.




**IF UNSURE, SAY SO**

**6** Future researchers will thank you for being honest if you simply say that you cannot prove a specific fact, yet you "suspect" such and such is true. Don't fudge the facts. Ever.



**YOU CANNOT DO IT ALL ONLINE**

**7** Yes, we love doing research online and there's nothing better than using the computer to find new sources, view digital images of original documents and even connect with relatives. For genealogists, the internet will never replace the wonderful work of libraries, county courthouses, archives, and historical societies. Do as much as you can online, then turn off your computer and hit the bricks!




**JUST BECAUSE IT'S ONLINE DOESN'T MEAN IT'S TRUE**

**8** The internet is a wonderful thing but it's filled with oodles of bad information. Don't make the mistake of believing anything you find online at face value. Verify against other sources, even if you paid for the information you found online. Consult the original source whenever possible.

**PASS ALONG YOUR RESEARCH**


**9** No matter how many decades you spend researching your family, your research will never be done. Plan on passing along your research to the next generation's



researchers. Leave excellent notes, cite all your sources, explain your shorthand ... in essence, leave your research the way you'd have liked to have found it.

**DON'T DIE WITH YOUR STORIES STILL IN YOU**

**10** Giving credit to Dr. Wayne Dyer for his "Don't die with your music still in you," we want to remind you to tell the stories as completely and as accurately as possible. Genealogy isn't about just doing research. Genealogy is about telling the stories and ensuring that your ancestor's legacies live on for generations to come. Without the stories, the research won't do anyone much good. The legacy of your ancestors rests in your capable hands. Doing the research is fine, but always remember that you have been chosen to **tell their stories**.



**DNA IS NOT A TRUMP CARD**

**11** DNA is just one of **many** possible sources of information you can use to verify or deny a relationship. Human error occurs when the results are transcribed, thereby providing false information. DNA results should **always** be used in concert with other sources.

**ANYTHING YOU POST ONLINE WILL BE "BORROWED"**

**12** You need to accept the fact that any family information you post online will be "borrowed" or outright stolen, and you will probably not get credit for all your hard work. This is the nature of the beast... the internet. Get over it.

**SPREAD THE WORD**  
 You have our permission to use/publish these Golden Rules as much as you like. Just give us credit for them, okay!

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