

The Meek Families of Pulaski Co., KY

In 1797 Kentucky began issuing land grants south of the Green river which had previously only been available to Virginia veterans. Kentucky allowed any person over the age of 21 years with a family to enter land here in 100 and 200-acre lots. These people had to live on the land for one year before taking possession of it¹. If conditions of the grant were followed men named Meek began settling in southern Kentucky on or before August 1797. The first Meek grants were issued to Basil Meek and William Meek on August 7, 1798 for land in Pulaski Co., KY. Jeremiah Meek received 200 acres in Cumberland County on Aug 25, 1798.

The period 1798 to 1800 saw the arrival of Nathaniel Meek as well as men named Thomas Meek and James Meek. About this time Jacob Meek and Jeremiah Meek move from Cumberland County to Pulaski County².

Some of these men were related and some were probably not related. Y-DNA proves that Nathaniel, Basil and Jacob shared a common Meek ancestor³. It is the hypothesis of this writer that Jeremiah was also related. William and Samuel were not related to them⁴.

Partial list of deed and tax records

Aug 7, 1797	Basil and William live in Pulaski Co. as early as this date
Aug 7, 1798	Certificate #32 issued to Basil Meek for 200 acres. Pulaski Co.
Aug 7, 1798	Certificate #55 issued to William Meek for 200 acres. Wayne Co. Transfers land June 24, 1800 & later it goes to Samuel Meek
Aug 25 1798	Certificate #772 Issued to Jeremiah Meek for 200 acres. Cumberland Co. Transfers land January 14, 1799
??? ?, 1799	Cumberland Co. tax list Jacob Meek, Jeremiah Meek & Jacob Jr. ⁵
Jan 14, 1799	Jeremiah Meek transfers Certificate #772
Aug 1, 1799	Thomas Meek paid taxes In Pulaski Co. (also 1800)
Aug ?, 1799	James Meek (1 year only)
Aug 26 1799	Certificate #687 assigned to Jacob Meek for 200 acres. Cumberland Co.
Sep ??, 1799	Nathaniel (Wolf Creek) and Basil (Kings Creek) are paying taxes in Pulaski Co.
Oct 26, 1799	Jacob Meek receives Certificate #687 in Cumberland County to Jacob Meek
Aug 14 1800	Certificate #374 assigned to Nathaniel Meek . Pulaski Co. Witnessed by Jacob and Mary Meek.
May 21, 1802	Jacob, Jeremiah (Goose Creek) & Jeremiah Jr. (Kings Creek) paying taxes in Pulaski Co.
May 21, 1802	Nathan Sr. paid tax on 100 ac originally granted to Jeremiah Meek
Oct 22, 1804	Certificate #706 issued to Jeremiah Meek Jr. for 400 acres.
May 27, 1805	Certificate #796 issued to Jeremiah Meek for 300 acres. Pulaski Co. Alligator fork of Wolf Creek
Aug 27, 1808	Jeremiah Jr. transfers certificate #706. Jacob Meek attorney in fact.
??? ??, 1810	Pulaski County Jeremiah Meeks 1-0-1-0-0-2-1
??? ??, 1816	Nathaniel Meek, Basil Meek and their sons leave the area William Meek and his son Samuel remain

¹ The Kentucky Land Grants v.1, Willard Rouse Jillson, also Pulaski Co., KY tax records

² People were buying, selling and exchanging land continuously. It is difficult to determine when someone physically moved from one place to another. The official transfer of property often occurred well after the event.

³ Meek DNA Project, Group B

⁴ Y-DNA test for descendant of Samuel indicated a match to Group C

⁵ Cumberland County records are limited and incomplete

Discussion

Nathaniel Meek came from Washington Co., PA but the earliest record of Basil Meek born 1763 is in Clark Co., KY just before his arrival in Pulaski County. The children of both are well documented. Contrary to many reports Nathaniel's date of birth, place of birth or the name of his wife is unknown. No one claiming to know this information has provided any documentation to support the facts. By 1816 Nathaniel, Basil and their sons had moved to Henry Co., KY on their way to Jennings Co., IN⁶. Nathaniel eventually returns to Pulaski County and dies in 1827.

Y-DNA from two descendants of different sons of Basil Meek and two tests from one son of Nathaniel Meek prove that they shared a common Meek ancestor. Who that ancestor was or when he lived is not revealed by Y-DNA. They were also related to several other ancestors by Y-DNA and are part of Group B in The Meek DNA Project.

The relationship between Nathaniel and Basil born 1763 is unknown contrary to many genealogies that claim they were brothers. According to the Meek DNA Project both men were related to other men from Washington Co., PA including Samuel Meek born 1732, Isaac Meek born 1742 and Elisha Meek born 1765. They were also related to Jacob Meek below according to the Meek DNA Project.

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An extensive study by this author indicates the names Jacob Meek and Jeremiah Meek were fairly uncommon before 1800⁷. In addition they were predominately used in Meek DNA Groups A and B as well as the Guy Meek family in Maryland. Yet many of them were concentrated in a narrow band from Henry Co., KY, Pulaski Co., KY to Blount Co., TN.

It is believed that Jacob Meek Sr. and Jeremiah Meek in the 1799 Cumberland Co., KY tax records moved to Pulaski Co., KY and are the same men as Jeremiah Meek Sr. and Jacob Meek in the tax and deed records of Pulaski County. Jeremiah sells his land in Cumberland County on 14 Jan 1799. Jacob and Jeremiah are taxed in Pulaski County from 1802 onward. The paternity of Jacob Jr. and Jeremiah Jr. is unclear. Jacob Meek of Cumberland County has been identified as the person who died in 1824 Henry Co., KY⁸. His son Jacob was born between 1780 and 1790. His son Jeremiah was born about 1788. It is not believed that Jacob Jr. in Cumberland County and Jeremiah Jr. in Pulaski County were sons of Jacob Meek who died in Henry Co., TN but that cannot be totally ruled out.

Jacob Meek buys land in Overton Co., TN in 1805. At that time Overton County bordered Pulaski County. In 1808 he sells that land and buys land in Bledsoe Co., TN. About 1822 Jacob moved to Henry Co., TN and died about 1824. His date of birth is estimated to be about 1760. Jacob Meek's son Henry went to Gibson Co., TN. Jacob Meek's sons Jeremiah T. Meek and John E. Meek moved to Carroll Co., AR about 1832. Jeremiah's children are well documented but many genealogies confuse him with Jeremiah Meek who married Betsy Blevins who also lived in Carroll County at the same time with a presumed brother Jacob Meek. The latter two are believed to have come from Blount Co., TN and are known to history as Shotgun Jerry Meek and Blue Jacob Meek. According to the Meek DNA Project Jeremiah T. Meek was related to Shotgun Jerry Meek and presumably Blue Jacob Meek.

⁶ Nathaniel Meek Sr. and other research by Gary Childs

⁷ Men Named Jacob and Jeremiah Meek, 24 Dec 2012, by Christopher A. Meek

⁸ The Meek Family of Tennessee and Arkansas, 19 Feb 2013, by Christopher A. Meek

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Y-DNA from multiple descendants of different sons of Jacob Meek proves that Jacob Meek was related to Nathaniel Meek and Basil Meek. However, it also indicates that Jacob was not as closely related to Nathaniel and Basil as they were to each other or as closely as they were related to Shotgun Jerry Meek.

Even if Jacob Meek of Cumberland Co., KY was not the same person as Jacob Meek in Pulaski Co., KY he was related to Nathaniel and Basil. All three men were related to other men from Washington Co., PA including Samuel Meek born 1732, Isaac Meek born 1742 and Elisha Meek born 1765. There were unidentified men named Jacob and Jeremiah Meek in the 1783 tax list of Washington Co., PA.

The fate of Jeremiah Sr., Jeremiah Jr. and Jacob Jr. is unknown. Assuming that neither of the younger men were sons of Jacob Meek there is absolutely no history for these three men beyond the tax and deed records already mentioned. While it is possible that Jeremiah Meek Sr. was much older and may have died in Pulaski County one might expect to find some record of the two younger men somewhere in the United States after the Pulaski County records mentioned. However no such records have been found.

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William Meek received his land grant on the same day as Basil Meek⁹. Several Group B ancestors had sons named William. Very little is known about William Meek. He was born before 1775 based on the 1820 census and probably as early as 1765. He had a son named Samuel based on deed records. Samuel was born about 1789 based on census records. One census record says he was born in Tennessee. Their land was in modern day Wayne Co., KY. William last appeared in tax records of Pulaski County in 1823 and presumably died about that time. Samuel continues in the records of Wayne Co., KY until 1860. A complete list of Samuel's children has not been established. However, some of his children later lived in Madison Co., KY.

The Meek DNA Project may have Y-DNA from a descendant of William and Samuel. However, the genealogy is marginal and it is disputed. Multiple tests are required for a positive connection. The one test that is available indicates that William and Samuel were NOT related to Nathaniel, Basil and Jacob. However this remains an open question.

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Thomas Meek is unidentified. He appeared in the 1799 and 1800 tax list of Pulaski Co., KY. The name Thomas does not appear in the early generations of Group B Meek families. He may be the person who later appears in the records of White Co., TN.

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James Meek appeared in the 1800 tax list of Pulaski Co., KY. He was the husband of Penelope Eleanor Nash and was associated with Alexander Beatty. (Alexander Beatty is the person Jacob Meek sold his land in Cumberland County to.) They came from Sullivan Co., TN. James died in the War of 1812. Eleanor and her son John Meek resided in modern day Clinton Co., KY.

⁹ Gary Childs has plotted the location for some of the land grants. He believes that William's land was located in modern day Wayne Co., KY. The creation of new counties and subsequent changes in boundary lines causes the appearance of William moving between Pulaski, Russell and Wayne Counties. However, Samuel may have lived on the same land granted to William in 1798.

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Summary

A number of men named Meek settled in Pulaski Co., KY around 1800. The only ones that remained after 1815 were William Meek and his son Samuel who lived in modern day Wayne Co., KY. Some of the early Meek settlers belonged to a large extended family known as Meek Group B. Others such as Thomas Meek, James Meek and perhaps William Meek were likely not related to the Group B men.

A considerable amount of information is known about Nathaniel, Basil, Jacob and their descendants. They are tied together by Y-DNA. Practically nothing is known about Jeremiah with little hope of finding more. He may have been the Jeremiah Meek living near Nathaniel in the 1783 tax list of Washington Co., PA. He may have had sons named Jacob and Jeremiah. He may have been a member of the Group B Meek extended family. But none of that can be proven.

Nathaniel and his sons interact with Jacob and Jeremiah. Jacob witnesses Nathaniel's land transaction on Aug 14, 1800. Nathaniel is taxed for land originally granted to Jeremiah on May 21, 1802. Jacob was named as Attorney-in-fact for Jeremiah Jr. in an 1808 deed. There were unidentified men named Jacob Meek and Jeremiah Meek excluded from other families listed in the 1783 tax list of Washington Co., PA. Y-DNA proves that Jacob (of Cumberland Co., KY) was related to Nathaniel and Basil. It is difficult to believe that Jeremiah of Cumberland and Pulaski Counties was not related to Nathaniel and other men in Group B.

There is also very little information on Thomas Meek and James Meek. William Meek's son Samuel stayed in the area. Some descendants of James Meek and William Meek are known. If a living male descendant named Meek is found Y-DNA may show if they were related to the other men named Meek in Pulaski County.

Following is a list of additional articles about men named Meek in the vicinity of Pulaski Co., KY.

The Meek family of Clinton Co., KY –
http://meekgenealogy.com/Group_Y/Clinton_County_KY.html

The Meek/Meeks Family of Wayne Co., KY -
http://meekgenealogy.com/Group_Y/Wayne_County_KY.html

The Meek/Meeks Family of Casey Co., KY -
http://meekgenealogy.com/Group_Y/Casey_County_KY.html

The Meek/Meeks Family of White Co., TN -
http://meekgenealogy.com/Group_Y/White_County_TN.html

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