

William Meek of Marshal Co., TN

By Christopher A. Meek

This article is about Meek families living in Marshall Co., TN in the first half of the 19th century, specifically William Meek. Certain aspects of the book Home in the Wilderness, 2003 by Effie Meek Maiden (1878-1954) published by her descendants contain some of the earliest information about William Meek. The book is an historical novel about the life of James Allen Meek (1816-1877). This article specifically addresses the genealogical significance of the information contained in the book about James' father, William Meek, his grandfather and other ancestors. This article does not address the vast majority of the information in the book which is about James Meek and his descendants. Additionally more recent research will be provided about William Meek as well as other men named Meek living in Marshall County.

The conclusions in this article have been limited by missing or incomplete information. Some of the documents referred to have not been viewed by this author. However numerous abstracts are available many provided by other people. It is expected that additional information found in the future will alter the conclusion in small or large ways.

Prior to this point all of the known information about James' father, William Meek, came from Home in the Wilderness by Effie Meek Maiden. Paul Meek laid out most of the information, from the book, about William Meek, father of James Allen Meek, in his paper The Meeks – The Early Years, 3/19/1997. Paul also provided abstracts of some documentation.

“Background: Aunt Effie Meek Maiden's manuscript states that WILLIAM MEEK I, her ancestor, emigrated from Northern Ireland before the American Revolution to Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, along with Adam and Moses Meek. She also says that Adam and Moses purchased 1000 acres in Tennessee after the Revolution - Adam settling in Jefferson County in East Tennessee and Moses settling in Marshall County in Middle Tennessee. William I is said to have sent his son William II, in the company of his half-uncle FRANK, from northern Illinois in 1808, when he was 16, to take over a mill and farm on Duck River near Chapel Hill, Tennessee. The mill was evidently near the 1000 acres acquired by an older Adam (ADAM I) of Mecklenburg County. This Adam Meek's son JAMES MEEK was already in residence on the property. WILLIAM II ran the mill and made occasional trips via the Mississippi to sell whiskey and other products in New Orleans, returning by the Natchez Trace. He failed to return from such a trip in 1834 and his widow Mary and son James continued to run the mill and farm until 1848, when James and his family moved west to Weakley County. Effie's father Felix was born there in 1850 and fathered her, Aunt Charley (Brooks), Thomas Harris, James Russell and William Paul, my father.”

William's father was named William Meek and he came from Ireland to Mecklenburg Co., NC with Adam Meek and Moses Meek. From context it is known that Adam was Adam Meek born 1746 who removed to Jefferson Co., TN. Moses was Moses Meek born 1755.

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There is no evidence that a person named William Meek lived in Mecklenburg at the same time as did Adam and Moses. There is nothing in the histories of these men to indicate that they came to America with a relative named William Meek.

The book says that Moses moved to Marshall Co., TN.

The history of Moses says that he moved to Dickson Co., TN to be near his daughter Rachel. His will was recorded in Knox County in 1807. Since the land he intended to purchase was not purchased until after he died it is not clear that he ever made it to Dickson Co., TN. However, his family did.

The book says that William's father sent William from Northern Illinois to Marshall Co., TN on horseback to manage a mill on the Duck River in 1808 when he was 16.

The migration route of Mecklenburg Co., TN to Northern Illinois to Middle Tennessee is a very unusual migration route and the trip to Middle Tennessee would have been extremely hazardous in 1808. The most likely mode of travel would have been river raft or boat. Paul mentions a William Meek in the 1807 census of the Indiana Territory which included Illinois. However, that person was likely the son of Jacob Meek born 1755 Maryland who moved his family to Indiana from Kentucky about that time.

The book says that the mill is near the 1000 land grant of Adam Meek. It seemingly identifies this person as Adam Meek who came from Ireland. This person is known as Adam Meek born in 1746 and married to Martha Wallace and who lived in Jefferson Co., TN.

In Paul's notes he identifies the Adam of the Duck River land grant as Adam I who he later identifies as the Adam Meek born 1729 who came from Maryland and married Elizabeth Miller. He identifies Adam II as Adam born 1746 who came from Ireland and married Martha Wallace. Paul happens to be correct about who the Duck River land grant belonged to. According to DNA testing the two men were related but there is no evidence that they associated with each other or the family of Adam born 1746 was anywhere near Marshall County.

The book describes a family get together prior to James move to Weakley County. Related Meek family members included Alexander, Rufus, Moses, Joseph, Thomas, and James the son of Adam Meek.

This collection of names is difficult to explain and apparently included people such as Alexander Meek and his son Rufus whom it is known through DNA testing were not related to either Adam Meek or James Allen Meek. The list seems to be based in part on the misidentification of the owner of the Duck River land grant. Both Adam Meek born 1729 and Adam Meek born 1746 had a son named James. James son of Adam born 1729 who owned the land grant was almost certainly deceased by 1848 when the family get together took place.

Research on William Meek

Effie Meek Maiden wrote that William Meek came to Marshall Co., TN in 1808 at the age of 16. This would mean that William was born about 1791 or 1792. Unfortunately the date of 1808 is based on an unverifiable contention that it was William who carved the date on Meek Rock even though William was not the only person named Meek to live in the immediate area. Coincidentally or not 1808 was the year that James Meek received a power of attorney from Adam Meek to fight claims made against the land grant.

A person named William Meek appears in the 1812 tax list and both the 1820 and 1830 censuses of Bedford Co., TN which at the time included Marshall County. It appears that the first known land transaction by William Meek was in 1818. It is not known what research Effie Meek Maiden did concerning the date of William's arrival in Marshall County or if she relied solely on the family legend that he came in 1808. Paul placed William Meek in Marshall County in 1812 through the tax list.

There were other men named Meek in the area that could have been the father of William. One was James Meek son of Adam Meek born 1729. Adam Meek was the owner of the land grant south of the Duck River but his son James lived there. The other person old enough to be James' father was an unidentified man named John Meek born before 1775 in the 1820 census who may not have been in Marshall County proper.

For the purposes of this article it will be assumed that Effie Meek Maiden knew the name of James' father and that it was William Meek. William and Mary Meek had James, Mary Jane and Sarah Matilda. It is known that by 1840 James and Mary Meek, David and Sarah Robinson and the Widow Mary Meek all live in separate homes in Marshall County while Eli and Mary Hopkins live in nearby Bedford County. The name William Meek is not found in the 1840 census of Bedford or Marshall Counties or anywhere in Tennessee. That is not surprising since Home in the Wilderness says that William failed to return home from a trip in 1834.

The issue then is do the records support the family of James Meek as described in Home in the Wilderness. There was clearly a person named William Meek in Marshall County about 1812 when the tax list was prepared. By 1818 a person named William Meek purchased land on Spring Creek north of the Duck River. It is not possible at this time to determine if the two records concerned the same man. But it appears that there was at least one man named William Meek in the area about 1816 when James Allen Meek was born.

There was only one person named William Meek in the 1820 census age 26 to 44. That means he was born between 1776 and 1794. He had two males living with him. One was age 16 to 25 and the other was under 10 years of age. The younger male matches James' date of birth of 1816. Also living with him are a probable wife age 26 to 44 and three females under 10 years of age. The 1820 census contain people of the correct sex and age to that described in the book but is inconsistent with one additional male

and one female child. It is not possible to know the situation in this family with the limited information provided in the early census records but there could be reasonable explanations for the inconsistencies.

The situation becomes more complicated in the 1830 census. There is a man named William Meek but his date of birth is now reported to be between 1781 and 1790. That slight discrepancy could be ignored but there are now several more people living with William. The male age 16 to 26 in the 1820 census is gone as might be expected. There is a male age 10 to 14 that is assumed to be James Allen Meek. However, there is now a female age 20 to 29 as well as three female children who could be the same three female children in the 1820 census. In addition there were 2 male children under the age of 5. This is a much greater inconsistency to explain. Paul Meek also noted this discrepancy.

If one did not know about Home in the Wilderness they might conclude from the census records that William had at least two sons and three daughters and possibly more. The age difference between the male in the 1820 census born between 1795 and 1804 and probable son James born in 1816 suggests that William might have had a first wife, Mary had children from a previous marriage or that the older male was not William's son. The 20 to 29 year old female in the 1830 census could have been a newly married daughter in 1820 who returns home a widow with two young sons by 1830. Or she could be the widow of the older male in the 1820 census.

No matter how one tries to explain it this William Meek had at least one more daughter than the family in Home in the Wilderness. One might suggest that the father of James was not captured in the two censuses. But he was reportedly the owner of a mill and would have been an easy target for any census taker.

It is also likely that William was older than reported in the book. He was an adult in 1812 when he was listed in the tax list. The 1830 census lists him as being born between 1781 and 1790. The presence of a possible older son suggests that he was born closer to 1781 than to 1790.

If one believes that James Allen Meek was born in Marshall Co., TN in 1816 and that his father was named William then it is a reasonable conclusion that the two census records are about his family. The age of the oldest female in the two censuses is consistent with the age of Mary Meek in the 1840 census. The 1840 census is consistent with Mary's known age from the Hopkin's family bible (9 May 1789). If James' family was the same family in the 1830 census it might explain the unknown male age 10 to 15 with Mary in the 1840 census. There are no other possibilities in the census for James' family and there is nothing in the data to exclude them from being about William Meek, the father of James Allen Meek.

In 1830 William sells 180 acres south of the Duck River which was part of the Adam Meek land grant owned by James Meek. Also in 1830 William purchases several pieces of land north of the Duck River. By 1832 he appears to be in financial difficulty and puts

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his land in trust to secure his debts. In 1833 he sells or forfeits all his land. This includes land south of the Duck River.

There are no deed records showing that James Meek sold any of his land south of the Duck River. Yet in the 1830's William is selling land previously owned by James Meek.

Also living on the Adam Meek land grant was James Franklin Meek. His name is first mentioned in deed records in 1830. On 30 Nov 1839 James Franklin Meek and Margery Meek sell "same tract of land devised to us in and by the last Will and Testament of James Meek". It is unclear what if any relationship he had to James son of Adam. It is also unclear how he was related to Margery. There was a James F. Meeks listed in the 1850 and later censuses. However, his date of birth would have been about 1821. This raises the question of whether an 8 to 10 year old would have been listed as a property owner in the 1830 deed record.

It is believed that James Meek son of Adam died about 1829. Unfortunately all probate records from this time period were destroyed. The only known son of James Meek was Adam who was mentioned in the will of Adam Meek. It is reasonable to believe that James had other sons.

DNA

Recently the Meek/Meeks DNA project has obtained samples from several people who descend from early Marshall County residents, including a descendant of James Allen Meek and presumably his father William Meek. Also included is a probable descendant of James Franklin Meek who inherited land from James Meek son of Adam Meek born 1729. This person has a documented genealogy back to James F. Meeks born 1821. Whether or not James Franklin Meek was the same person as James F. Meeks born about 1821 is a matter of debate. In all probability they were related and may have been father and son.

The results of the DNA tests indicate that William Meek and James F. Meeks were related or more correctly they shared a common ancestor. They are part of a larger group of descendants of early ancestors including some of the men who lived in Mecklenburg, NC. Unfortunately the DNA does not tell us how they are related or when the common ancestor lived.

The group of related ancestors involved appears to be divided into two sub-groups based the DNA profiles. However, the markers indicating this division do not provide a strong demarcation. The descendants of William Meek and James F. Meeks fall into different subgroups. If true it would suggest that William Meek and James F. Meeks were not closely related. While it appears that both men had a connection to James Meek son of Adam the DNA is inconclusive regarding how closely they were related. At this time DNA does not preclude the possibility that both men descend from James son of Adam. With additional participants the interpretation may change and solidify.

Summary

Effie Meek Maiden was born in 1878. Her grandfather, James Allen Meek, died before she was born and her grandmother died when she was 19 in 1897. James married Mary Henley in 1836. His wife Mary may or may not have known William but Effie may have heard second hand accounts from her grandmother about James' father. Or she may have heard third hand accounts from her father, Felix. Regardless, much later in life Effie put the family stories into book format and it is now a source for other people concerning the ancestors of James Allen Meek.

There is no reason to doubt that Effie Meek Maiden knew that the father of James Allen Meek was named William Meek. The name William Meek does appear in Bedford Co., TN deed and census records between 1812 and 1833 although there is no specific proof that he was the father of James Allen Meek. Without Effie's book it may never have been known who the father of James Allen Meek was. Given the facts in the records about William Meek one might suspect the information in Home and the Wilderness concerning James' immediate family is not complete. In addition there is a possibility that James had more siblings than are described in the book. However the record does support those siblings mentioned in the book.

Since no evidence exists to tie James to any particular father one cannot say with 100% certainty that the William Meek in the records was his father. However, if one believes that James Allen Meek was born in Marshall County in 1816 and that his father was named William it is a reasonable conclusion that would require significant proof to exclude as a possibility.

The book devotes very little time to James' father or grandfather. The small amount of information that it does provide is usually through the mechanism of James engaged in conversation with another person, such as his wife. The reader is left with the impression that it is an eye witness account which it is not. Even if Mary had related some of her conversations with James to family members it is not practical to assume that these conversations were passed on to others without some modification. Everyone is aware of the game where a message is passed from one person to the next only to find that the last person retells something quite different from the original message. And that game does not have the added difficulty of fading memories.

However, the author goes beyond naming the father of James Allen Meek and presents an equally important fact that William's father came to Mecklenburg with relatives named Adam and Moses Meek. She apparently did not know about Adam Meek born about 1729 who married Elizabeth Miller and who was the person who actually owned the land grant on the Duck River.

The fact that James Allen Meek lived on the large Adam Meek land grant must have influenced Effie greatly in her search for information about her ancestors. It is known that she did research at the Tennessee State Library and she surely read about Adam Meek of Jefferson Co., TN. It is a classical mistake of amateur genealogist to grab the

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first person they find with the right name without understanding that there were other men with the same name. There are always more records than might not be immediately available which can change one's perspective on the facts.

The evidence about William Meek in Marshall Co., TN extends over a 20 year period of time and there is little to suggest that there was more than one man named William Meek living in the area. A fairly complete set of deed records indicate that he owned property on the Adam Meek land grant in addition to land north of the Duck River. There are no deed records transferring the property on the land grant south of the Duck River from James Meek son of Adam Meek to William. This suggests that William was closely related to James and Adam. Unfortunately the probate records were destroyed. Regardless there was ample evidence available to cause one to question the family stories as the author understood them.

Even though the author knew very little about William Meek it appears that she was correct about him being the father of James Allen Meek. There is no evidence that Home and the Wilderness is based on a thorough genealogical study and its usefulness as a source for any other ancestors of James Allen Meek is questionable. Attempts to validate the information about James' ancestors in the book after the fact fail to take into consideration the totality of information available on the various Meek families during and immediately after the Revolutionary War.

Paul Meek's notes are a good collection of abstracts of official and unofficial documents. However, he misidentifies the people in many of the notes and was clearly hampered by some bad genealogies that many people are familiar with. He laments that in the questionable genealogy of Adam Meek born 1640 Adam did not have a son named Adam. He then proceeds to suppose that Adam really did have a son named Adam who married Jean Mitchell and lived in Cecil Co., MD. He then speculated that this Adam was the father of Adam born about 1729 even though Adam Meek of Cecil County had a son named Adam who was born in 1760.

While the notes may give an overall impression of some support for Effie's story it is his commentary and incorrect conclusions that are the supportive information, not the facts presented. He contradicts Effie on the information about William's relationship to Adam and Moses Meek and he knew that the census records were inconsistent but did not offer an opinion on that. In the end the notes do little to support the idea that William's father was named William, that William was related to Adam and Moses Meek or that a migration from Mecklenburg to Illinois to Middle Tennessee occurred.

The different Meek families that lived in the Mecklenburg Co., NC/York Co., SC area have confused many amateur genealogist. People often assume that two families with the same surname living near each other are related, and sometimes they are. However, proximity does not prove a relationship and there were more unrelated Meek(s) families in the United States around 1800 than most people realize. Names like William Meek are found throughout the post Revolutionary United States. Undue weight given to naming patterns within families has also thrown many genealogists off track.

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The DNA project has proven that the following Revolutionary era ancestors in America were related. It does not tell us how they were related. According to DNA William Meek and James F. Meeks born about 1821 were also related to all of them. An inconclusive indication is that William was more closely related to the first group. James F. Meeks was more clearly related to the second group.

Adam Meek b: <1726 m: Jane Mitchell, res: Cecil Co., MD
Joseph Meek b: 1744 res: Washington Co., VA
James Meek b: 1777 in Ireland, res: in Ontario

Adam Meek b: 1729 m: Elizabeth Miller, res: Mecklenburg
Robert Meek b: 1732 res: SW PA/Ohio
Adam Meek b: 1746 Ireland, m: Martha Wallace res: Jefferson Co., TN
Moses Meek b: 1755 res: Mecklenburg
John Meek b: 1744 Ireland, res: Laurens District, SC

An 1839 deed record states that James Franklin Meek inherited land from James Meek (son of Adam) before 1830. He was almost certainly related to James son of Adam. James F. Meeks (with the "s") was born about 1821 and first appeared in the records in 1843 when he married Polly Ann Hardin. Whether or not he was the same person as James Franklin Meek in the earlier deed records is less important than the fact that DNA proves he was related to James Meek and his father Adam Meek born about 1729.

William Meek sold land previously owned by James Meek son of Adam without it having been deeded to him. DNA shows that he was also related to James Meek son of Adam Meek. William appears in the Marshall County records about the same time as James does. He lives on the 1000 acre land grant owed by James and he ends up selling several parcels of that land without it having been deeded to him. Even if the DNA is inconclusive as to how closely they were related William was related to and closely associated with James son of Adam Meek born 1729.

Despite being a valid history of James Allen Meek and his children Home in the Wilderness appears to have limitations as a genealogical source beyond the name of James' father. The author relied on family lore and did a limited amount of research. Recent research by several people has provided a much broader picture of William Meek's life. In addition to the research DNA shows that he was part of a large extended family of at least eight immigrants none of who was named William. While the DNA evidence suggests that he was not a direct descendant of Adam Meek born 1729 it does not preclude it either.

William Meek of Marshal Co., TN

Adam Meek b: <1726 of Cecil Co., MD
(Sons to York Co., SC.)

Andrew b: @1747 returned to Maryland

Moses b: 1754 went to Union Co., SC

James b: @1758 died in York County – **DNA Group E, SG 1**

Adam b: @1760 died in York County

Adam b: @1729 married Elizabeth Miller

Son: James b: @1758 Marshall Co., TN

Son: Samuel b: @1767 died in Mecklenburg

Son: Robert b: @ 1765 died in Paulding County, GA – **DNA Group E, SG 2**

Adam b: @1746 married Martha Wallace

Son: James b: @1785

Son: Alexander Wallace b: 1788

Son: Adam b: @1798 – **DNA Group E, SG 2**

Son: David b: @1792

Moses born @1755 came from Ireland

Son: Josiah b: @1780 lived in Dickson Co., TN – **DNA Group E, SG 2**

Son: Moses b: @1782 lived in Davidson Co., TN

Moses in Mecklenburg before 1754 died around 1793

No identifiable descendants

James Meek in Mecklenburg before 1765-in 1790 census

No identifiable descendants

William Meek in Cecil Co., MD

Son: James Meek

Son: William Meek

James Meek in Virginia brother of William above

No identifiable descendants

James Meek b: @1740 Ireland s/o John Alexander Meek

Son: John Meek b: @1765

Son: James Meek b: @1774 res: Caldwell Co., KY

Son: Thomas Meek

John Meek b: @1745 Ireland s/o John Alexander Meek

Son: William b: 1777

Son: Samuel Meek b: 1786 Res: Laurens Dist, SC/Alabama – **DNA Group E, SG 2**

Son: John A. Meek b: 1790

Son: James Meek b: 1794

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Supporting data

William Meek has not been found in the 1810 census.

1812 *Early Tennessee Tax Lists* shows **William Meek** and James Meek in Bedford County.

Bedford Co., TN (includes Marshall County)

1820			1830		
100110-30010-0-1-0			2010001000000-0012101000000		
William age	26 to 44	1776 to 1794	William age	40 to 49	1781 to 1790
Male	16 to 25	1795 to 1804			
James	under 10	1809 to 1820	James	10 to 14	1816 to 1820
			Male	0 to 5	1826 to 1830
			Male	0 to 5	1826 to 1830
Mary age	26 to 44	1776 to 1794	Mary	40 to 49	1781 to 1790
			Female	20 to 29	1801 to 1810
Female	under 10	1809 to 1820	Female	15 to 19	1811 to 1815
Mary	under 10	1809 to 1820	Mary	15 to 19	1811 to 1815
Sarah	under 10	1809 to 1820	Sarah	10 to 14	1816 to 1820

1840 Marshall Co., TN

James Meek 10001-10001 (next to David Robison)

David Robison 00001-0010

Mary Meek 00100000-00000001 (No one named William Meek)

1840 Bedford Co., TN

Eli Hopkins 20001-00001 (No one named William Meek)

1820 Bedford Census

P. 15, John Meek 1000100-00010

P. 12, John Meek M: 2 <10, 1 10-16, 1 16-26 1 >45 Fe: 1 <10, 1 16-26

Hopkins Bible

Eli H. Hopkins born Oct. 3, 1811, died July 31 1849 married December 17, 1835 Mary Meek, born Dec. 4, 1817 died March 28, 1893

Births:

Eli H. Hopkins was born October the 3rd, 1811

Mary J. Meek was born December the 4th, 1817 Ed. note: daughter of William Meek

William Houston Hopkins was born the 14th of May 1838

Alexander D. Hopkins was born the 24th of June 1840

Margaret Jane Hopkins was born the 7th of May 1842

Mary Matilda Hopkins was born the 16th of Dec. 1844

Martha Virginia Hopkins was born the 17 of Oct. 1846

Eli James Hopkins was born the 21 of Feb. 1849

Truman Hopkins was born the 26 of December 1882

Hugh Woods departed this life the 4th day of June 1842

Mary Meek was born May the 9th, 1789 and departed this life the 20th of Nov. 1867, age 78 years, 6 mos., 11 days. Ed. note: wife of William Meek

Eli J. Hopkins and Sarah Angeline Carlton were married

Jan. 5, 1881 by J.W. Cook.

Adam Meek Land Grant South of the Duck River

Adam Meek – James Meek – William Meek

Adam Meek born 1729 resided in Mecklenburg, NC. On 17 Dec 1793 he received a land grant in what would become Marshall Co., TN. The grant was registered in Williamson Co., TN on 24 Mar 1795. *(North Carolina owned her Western Lands beyond the Great Smoky Mountains. She ceded her rights to her Western Lands in 1790, and in the same year, the United States Congress created the Territory of the US South of the River Ohio, or as it was more commonly know, the Southwest Territory. In 1796, those lands became the State of Tennessee.)* On 14 Jul 1808 Adam Meek gave his power of Attorney to his James Meek and two sons-in-law Joseph Wallace and John Wilson. The purpose of the power of attorney was clearly stated “...follow such legal laws for the recovery, recording, and obtaining a certain tract or parcel of land upon Duck River in the State of Tennessee”.

North Carolina deed bk 14:209; 17 Dec 1793 State Grant #287 valued at 10 pounds per 100 acres to Adam Meek, 1000 acres in middle Dist of TN on South side of Duck River opposite mouth of Wilson Creek wit Richard Dobbs Spaight, Gov. "From Iredell Co Deed Abstracts Lois Schneider"

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book M, pages 61-62; P7137618-19

Adam Meek's Grant for 1000 acres

State of North Carolina number 287

Purchase grant 10 pounds for every hundred acres a tract containing 1000 acres lying and being in our middle district lying on the South side of duck River. Beginning at a stake thence West 400 poles to a stake thence North 500 poles to a stake on the riverbank thence with the meanders of the middle of the river to the beginning is by the plaid here unto and asked both appear.

John Wilson and Ebenezer Alexander, chain carriers middle district October 11, 1792 Warrant number 1806

I have surveyed for Adam Meek 1000 acres of land lying on the South side of duck River beginning at a stake on the riverbank opposite the mouth of Wilson's Creek, running South 300 poles to a stake thence West 400 poles to a stake thence North 500 poles to a stake on the riverbank thence with the meanders of said River to the beginning

Surveyed by David Wilson, District Surveyor

Mecklenburg County

This grant is registered in my office in book number 12 page 50 this 24th of March 1795

William Alexander <signed>

State of Tennessee, Williamson County }

Registrars office 25th of May 1807 (*Ed: Bedford County established 3 Dec 1807*)

The within the grant and certificate of survey is duly registered in book number 1, page 592

James Hicks, deputy registrar

recorded in the secretary's office, J. Speight

25 May 1807 then received the state tax

N.P. Hardeman <signed>

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book M, pages 63 -- 64; P7137620-21

Adam Meek power of attorney to Joseph Wallace, James Meek, John Wilson

Know all men by these presents that I Adam Meek of the County of Mecklenburg and State of North Carolina have made ordained constituted and appointed and by these presents do make ordain constitute and appoint my trusty friends Joseph Wallace (husband of Mary Meek), James Meek, and John Wilson of the State of Tennessee my true and lawful attorneys in my name and to my ? and I do give and by these presents grant to my said attorney's my sole power and authority to take power and follow such legal laws for the recovery, recording, and obtaining a certain tract or parcel of land upon Duck River in the State of Tennessee and to act as I myself might or could do where I personally present ? Allowing and confirming whatsoever my said attorney should lawfully do or cause to be done in the law about the execution of the

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premises by virtue of these presents. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 14th day of July 18, 1808
Adam Meek <signed>
? Cowan, J.P., Guy Maxwell, J.P., witnesses
Certification from Mecklenburg County, North Carolina dated 18 July 1808

Apparently neither Adam nor his family lived on the land south of the Duck River until 1808. As with most frontier territories inevitable title conflicts occurred due to over lapping land grants and unscrupulous land speculators. Adam's son James takes up residency on the land. The inscription on Meek Rock in the Duck River (Meek 1808) seems a testament to the fact that Adam Meek's family is reclaiming their land. The 1810 census is not available but on 25 April 1815 James is recorded selling a slave. Back in Mecklenburg Adam Meek writes his will on 10 Sep 1817 and leaves the Duck River grant to his son James. At this point James seems to be in control of the land covered by the grant.

Will book E: p. 29 Adam Meek, SR. 10 Sep 1817

Being unwell, I will to my son James Meek my plantation of 1,000 A on the south side of Duck R. in the State of Tennessee, ...
Exrs: Trusty friend Matthew Wallace and son Robert Meek. Wit: R. W. Smith, Matt. Wallace and Jane Corum.

Bedford County, Tennessee Deeds, Book Q, page 132

Deed, James Meek from Adam Meek , 1823

This deed is in the volume 1 index as well as the volume and the index for book Q. however it cannot be found in Book Q itself. I searched all the way back to 112 and forward to 172 and the deed does not appear to be in book Q.

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book R pages 570-71; P7140385-86

Grantor and Grantee: James Meek, 532 acres and 126 poles

Adam Meek's plat and certificates ___ ___ts 100 poles ___ ___

[Map of plat 532 acres 126 poles]

State of Tennessee, Second District

By virtue of Grant No 287 for 1000 acres dated the 19th of December 1794 issued by the State of North Carolina to Adam Meek and registered in Bedford County, State of Tennessee the 19th of **June 1820** in Book M, Page 61 transmitted by the request of James Meek. I have surveyed & procession according to the law 532 acres & 126 poles all that was in the bounds of the aforesaid grant, situated in Bedford County on the South side of Duck River above the Turkey Ford (or Fishing Ford?), Beginning at a hickory & Sycamore on the bank of the river opposite the mouth of Wilson's Creek running, thence South 5 degrees East with an old marked line 315 poles to an old marked corner on an Elm near a pen oak marked "PT", thence South 80 poles 8 degrees West with an old marked line, 432 poles west to an old marked corner on a white marked "WN," , thence North 2 West with an old marked line 178 poles to an old marked corner on two lines near an Elm marked "M" on the river bank, thence up the meander of the river South 27 East 96 poles, thence East 36 poles, thence North 61 East 20 poles, thence North 68 East 86 poles, thence East 110 poles, thence North 52 East 86 poles, thence North 14 poles, thence North 68 poles to William Harsley's Line the same corner 38 poles thence North 25 East 27 poles, thence North 40 East 23 poles, thence North 55 East 26 poles, thence South 67 East 22 poles, thence South 47 East 16 poles, thence South 23 East 42 poles, thence South 50 poles to the beginning, which is freely represented by the annexed plat surveyed the **21st of November 1823**, John Thompson, District Surveyor, John Riggs & Thomas F Thompson, chain carriers

Recorded in the registry August 7, Pat. 1824
Edward Wade

At this point it is unclear what happened to James Meek. His name does not appear in the records after 1824. Whatever will that may have existed was destroyed with other records. By 1830 William Meek is in control of the land. He sells 290 acres south of the Duck River in two tracts in 1830 and 1831. There are

William Meek of Marshal Co., TN

no deed records indicating that he purchased any of that land. A reasonable hypothesis is that he was a son or other close relative of James.

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book BB, Pages 110

From Lewis Phillips and his wife Peggy and William B. Phillips and his wife Polly and William Meeks to Richard Warner, 180 acres

Lewis Phillips and his wife Peggy and William B. Phillips and his wife Polly and William Meeks conveyed to Richard Warner, all of Bedford County, TN, land in Bedford County on the south side of the Duck River. Borders James F. Meeks, 180 acres, witnesses: William Burditt and D. D. Arnold. Registered 11 Nov 1830

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book BB, Pages 180-181; P7183865-66

Deed, William Meek to Samuel Vest, 110 acres

12 January 1831 between William Meek of the County of Bedford state of Tennessee of the one part and Samuel Vest of the County of Rutherford and state aforesaid of the other part \$800 on Spring [Creek] beginning at an old Northwest corner of a survey thence East 95 poles to a Cedar thence South 100 poles to a Cedar than West 53 poles to a stake thence South 120 poles to a Cedar than West 4044 poles to a Cedar on the bank of Spring Creek thence with the meanders of the Creek North and West 14 poles North 21° West etc. to the beginning containing 110 acres including 2 acres on the west bank of said Creek at the most convenient place for a mill yard

Witnesses are almost illegible look like A. W. Warrington and Bird B. Crowther
Registered 18 February 1831

At the same time William is obtaining land or clear title to land north of the Duck River.

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book BB, Page 217; P718390

Deed, Ruben Reynolds to **William Meek**, 200 acres

This indenture made this 13th day of May in the year of our lord 1830 between Reuben W. Reynolds of the County of Williamson and state of Tennessee of the one part and William Meek of the County of Bedford and state aforesaid of the other part. Witnessesith that the said Ruben W. Reynolds for..... \$800 for a tract of land in Bedford County**it being the land whereon the said Meek now lives** beginning at two sycamores **and the head of Robert Walker's spring at the waters edge on the North side of Duck River** running North 20 poles to a stake and white Oak thence East 4 poles to a pin Oak thence North 40 poles to two cedars thence East 70 poles to the center of Wilson's Creek in all 199 3/4 poles to a stake thence South 168 poles to a stake thence West crossing the Creek at 75 poles in all 170 3/4 poles to a sugar tree and ash 6 poles below the mouth of Wilson's Creek the same course continued to the center of Duck River 8 poles thence down the center of the same North six degrees East 20 poles thence North 6 degrees West 48 poles thence North 47 degrees West 18 poles thence north 10 poles to the beginning containing by estimation 200 acres. To have and to hold the aforesaid.....

witness: Martin Adams, William J. May"

Registered February term 1831

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book BB, pages 229-230; P7183914-15

Deed, Robert Walker to **William Meek**, 48 acres 158 poles

13 December 1830 between Robert Walker of the County of Bedford and state of Tennessee of the one part and **William Meek** of the County and state aforesaid of the other part; \$294 a tract of land in Bedford County on the **North side of Duck River** beginning at two sycamores in the center of the spraying at the waters edge running North 41 poles to a stake and forget white Oak that is falling down thence East four poles 20 leaks to a can Oak thence North 39 poles to a stake ash and two cedars N. Adams line thence West 80 poles to a walnut on two dogwoods and greens line thence South 170 poles to a red Oak on Duck River thence up the meanders of said River to the beginning containing 48 acres 158 poles it being the same more or less

Witness: Adam Miller, William J. May

Proven on the oaths of the witnesses 18 February 1831 and registered 18 March 1831

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book BB, Pages 298-99; P7183988-89

Deed, Rufus Walker to William Meek and Thomas Newborn

4 March 1831 between Rufus Walker of the County of Bedford and state of Tennessee of the one part and **William Meek** said Thomas Newborn both of the County and state aforesaid of the other part; one dollar personal property to secure repayment of a debt: one sorrel horse one sorrel mare, 24 head of Hall's one cow and calf , two ?, 15 head of geese, 1000 pounds tobacco or thereabouts, two beds bedsteads and furniture, one cupboard one chest a sugar chest one cattle, one looking glass a quantity of glass and? One set of knives and forks and one set spoons; said Robert Walker is justly indebted to Wheeler of the County and state aforesaid by note for \$75.75

witness: John Laws

proven on the oath of John Laws 10 May 1831 and registered 14 July 1830

By 1832 William appears to have financial problems. He is sell land north and south of the Duck River. On 13 Jul 1833 puts whatever assets he has, including his mill in a trust to secure his debt. Family legend says that William left on a business trip in 1834 and failed to return home.

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book DD, Pages 94-95; P7194932-33

Deed, William Meek to Joshua White, 200 acres

10 October 1831 William Meek of Bedford County Tennessee and Joshua White of the same \$900 for a tract of land in Bedford County on the **North side of Duck River** beginning at two sycamores and ahead of the spring used by Robert Walter at the water's edge running North 40 poles to a stake and further down like to thence East four poles to a? Thence North 40 poles to two cedars thence East 60 poles to the center of Wilson's Creek in all 199 1/4 poles to a white Oak and Cedar thence South 168 poles to a Ironwood and? Thence across said Creek 95 poles in all 177 3/4 poles to a sugar tree and ash on the bank of the river six poles below the mouth of Wilson's Creek up the same eight poles to the waters of Duck River thence down the center of the same... to the beginning containing by estimation 200 acres

Witness: William S. May, John Thompson

Acknowledged 16 May 1833 register 21 May 1833

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book FF, Pages 252-253

Deed, William Meek to Bert B. Lavender, 123 acres

18 October 1831, both of Bedford County Tennessee \$600 for a tract on the west side of Spring Creek beginning at a stake in the center of said Creek about three poles east of a sugar tree and white Oak marked as pointers an old-line running West with said line 82 poles to a walnut the same corner continued 49 poles making in all 131 poles to a white Oak thence South 188 polls to a stake thence East 19 poles to a stake victory and Dogwood, John award comes corner, the same course continued with Wortham's line 97 poles and all 116 poles to the center of said Creek at an old cotton gin thence up the meanders of said Creek... to the beginning containing 123 acres 37 poles it being the same more or less

Witness: John Thompson, James Wilson

Proven on the oath of John Thompson 15 August 1835, registered 1 April 1836

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book FF, Pages 148-149; P6269000-01

Deed, William Meek to Polly Meek, 68 acres

Whereas **William Meek** heretofore on the 12th day of July 1832 executed his certain deed of trust of the state whereby he constituted John laws and Fanning M. Jones as trustees and among other things conveyed to them a certain tract of land lying in Bedford County on the **South side of Duck River** and bounded as follows: beginning at two bunches of lands a box elder in sugar tree at the head of a spring in the riverbank running South 86 poles to a stake in the field of **James F. Meeks** corner thence East passing Samuel F. Rogers corner thence East passing and 22 poles in all 126 poles to a white Oak in the East boundary line of the original tract thence North West said line 86 poles to a Cedar Southeast corner of said Meeks 28 acre tract thence West 126 poles to the beginning containing 68 acres be the same more or less for the purpose is named as in the said deed of trust for more particular information references made to the said deed of record in the registrar's office of Bedford County in book CC page 129 registered 25th of September 1832; whereas said **trustees** did on the pursuant to the directives of said deed sell a tract of land above specified and other property in said deed with said advertisement put up at Chapel Hill and **at the mills of said**

William Meek of Marshal Co., TN

Meeks on Duck River agreeable to said deed of trust and to have trustees afterwards to whit on the 15th day of August 1834 agreeable to send advertisement at the mills of said Meeks on Duck River to offer at public auction at which said **Polly Meeks** did outbid other bidders ended good the sum of \$250 and one half cents which was the highest unless bid made for said tract

Witness: William S. Mayfield, **James Meek**

Acknowledged by the makers to January 1835, register 30 January 1835

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book DD, Pages 345-346; P7195183-84

Deed, William Meek to John H. Wilson, 48 acres 158 poles

16 November 1832 **William Meek** to John H. Wilson both of Bedford County \$275; tract in Bedford County on the **North side of Duck River** beginning at two sycamores in the center of a spring at the water's edge running North 41 poles to a stake and forked white Oak that is fallen down thence East four poles 20 links to a 10 Oak thence North 39 poles to a stake, ash and two cedars and chickens line thence West 46 poles to a walnut and two dogwoods and Green's line thence South 170 poles to a red Oak on the bank of the river thence up the meanders of said River to the beginning containing 48 acres 158 poles be the same more or less

Witness: William Smith, Thomas Taylor

Acknowledged 3 February 1834, registered 25 February 1834

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book DD, Pages 91-92; P7194929-30

11 May 1833; both of Bedford County where is **William Meek** is indebted to William S. Mayfield in the sum of \$105 or thereabouts and is also indebted to Mayfield as security from Milton Kilpatrick in the sum of \$28 and for the additional sum of one dollar conditionally conveys three head of horses several steers, 25 head of cattle, 170 head of hogs and all of the household and kitchen furniture of said Meeks, two stills, 36 tubs, one wagon, one cask ale, farming tools, 600 Cedar raft logs and two unfinished boats

Acknowledged by William Meek 16 may 1833 register 21 1833

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds Book CC page 129 registered 25th of September 1832

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book CC Pages 259-260; P7194583-84-85

Deed, William Meek to John Laws and Fanning A. Jones, 103 acres and 68 acres

13 July 1833 between **William Meeks** of the first part and William J. Mayfield, Robert Church, and John H. Robison of the second part and John Laws and Fanning A. Jones of the third part all of the County of Bedford and state of Tennessee whereas the said William Meek is indebted to William Mayfield in the sum of \$1303.60 view by note as follows \$600 to 27 August 1832 \$307 and one half cents to 17 April 1832 \$85 and \$18 due 26 December 1832 \$300 to 13 July 1833 also said Meeks is indebted to the bank of state of Tennessee in the sum of \$512 due about the 15th day of October next with Robert Church and John H. Robison as his securities for the purpose of securing the payment of said debts to said Mayfield and said bank and for the further sum of one dollar conditionally conveys the following tracks are parcels of land on the **South side of Duck River** bounded as follows. Beginning at a popular on the South side of Duck River in the South boundary line of Jonathan Greens old tract running East 91 poles to two sugar trees on the bank of the river thence up the same South seven poles to a Hickory and Sycamore opposite the mouth of Wilson's Creek and Adam Meeks beginning corner of a 1000 acre tract. Thence South 2° East with an old-line 160 poles to a small white Oak and the land would thence West 126 poles to a black Oak and ash on the water's edge of said River thence up the meanders of the South bank of said River... to the beginning containing 103 acres. Also one other tract of land lying on Duck River in Bedford County beginning at two bunches of Lynns a box elder and sugar tree at the head of the spring in the river bank running South 86 poles to a stake in a field James F. Meeks corner, thence East passing James F. Rogers corner at 22 poles and all 136 1/2 poles to a white Oak in the East boundary line of the original tract thence North with said line 86 poles to a Cedar, the Southeast corner of said William Meeks 78 tract thence with West 136 poles to his beginning containing 68 acres be the same more or less

Witness: William Gilchrist, David James

Signed, William Meek

Proven in open court by the oaths of William Gilchrist and David James 1 August 1833 registered September 25, 1833

William Meek of Marshal Co., TN

William Meek first appears in the records of Bedford County in the 1812 tax list along with James Meek. He first appeared in deed records in 1818 and is listed in the 1820 and 1830 censuses of Bedford Co., TN which included Marshall County. He was probably born between 1790 and 1794. James is reported to have been born about 1758.

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book J, pages 241-242, P7126457-58

Deed, Jonathan Wilson to William Meek, 100 acres

28 November 1818 between Jonathan Wilson and Israel Moore, executors of the last will and testament of Samuel Wilson deceased of Sumner County of the one part and **William Meek** of Bedford County and state aforesaid of the other part; \$250 for 100 acres in the County of Bedford on Spring Creek, a branch of Duck River; beginning on a Cedar on the West line of said tract where James Wilson lives on, Samuel Wilson's corner and runs southwest 53 poles to an ash then South 112 poles to a Cedar, then West 40 poles to Spring Creek thence up the meanders of the Creek to a stake in Samuel Wilson's line, thence West 93 poles to the beginning

Witness: **John Meek**, James Wilson

Signed: Jonathan Wilson, Israel Moore

Proven on the oaths of the witnesses and registered 7 January 1819

Despite genealogies that say that the father of William was named William, there is no evidence to support this. The source for that information is Home in the Wilderness by Effie Meek Maiden. When one sees William selling James' land in the early 1830's without having purchased it one could form a reasonable hypothesis that James was the father of William.

James Franklin Meek also owned land on the Adam Meek grant.

Bedford County Tennessee Deeds, Book BB, Pages 110

Lewis Phillips and his wife Peggy and William B. Phillips and his wife Polly and William Meeks conveyed to Richard Warner, all of Bedford County, TN, land in Bedford County on the south side of the Duck River. **Borders James F. Meeks**, 180 acres, witnesses: William Burditt and D. D. Arnold. Registered 11 Nov 1830

TSLA Roll # A-2188 - Marshall Co. TN Probate Deeds 1836-1840, Page 178

James F. MEEK & Margery MEEK To Thomas O HUNTER...

Know all men by these presents that **James Franklin Meek** and Margery Meek of the Marshall in the state of Tennessee...

...The same being the same tract of land and premise devised to us in and by the last will and testament of James Meek deceased...

To Indenture and bargain and Sale of 130 acres of Land in Marshall

County was this day acknowledged before me by the Said James & Margery

MEEK and by me certified for registration November 26th 1839

M. W. OAKLEY (clk)

James F. Meeks, born about 1821, who married Polly Hardin 13 Jan 1843 in Marshall Co., TN may be the same person in the above deeds. Y-DNA for descendants of William Meek and James F. Meeks born 1821 show they shared a common ancestor. However, it also suggests that they were not closely related. James Franklin Meek and James F. Meeks may be two different men. James F. Meeks appears in the 1850 to 1880 census records of Marshall County.

William Meek of Marshal Co., TN

Other

Will book E: p. 29 Adam Meek, SR. 10 Sep 1817 (probate not recorded with will.)

Being unwell, I will to my son James meek my plantation of 1,000 A on the south side of Duck R. in the State of Tennessee, the negro Jess, and Flavel's Works in two voluems; to my grandson Adam Meek, son of James, the negro Jack; to my sons-in-law Joseph Wallace and John Wilson \$100 each; and to my dau Mary Wallace the two books Owen on Communion and Dickinson's Familiar Letters; to my dau Ann Wilson, the two books the Saints Rest and Brown's Catechism; and to my son Robert Meek the plantation of 400 A where he now lives on McDowell's Ck., negroes Bill and Dinah and the care of the elderly negro woman Guinea, my writing desk and Family Bible, Erskines Work's in 10 volumes, and \$50.

I give to my granddau Elizabeth Meek, dau of Robert, the negro Jean; to James Meek, son of Robert, 140 A on the southeast end of the plantation I now live on adj Robert Smith; to Adam Meek, son of Robert, \$50; to my grand dau Sarah Meek Scott 90 A on the west side of the plantation I live on as surveyed by William Wilson; and to Elizabeth Meek, Jane Meek and William Alexander Lees Meek, children of Samuel Meek, decd, the price of the land the sd Samuel lived on which is now sold for \$1,000 which I divide as follows: \$300 to Elizabeth, \$300 to Jane, \$400 to William.

I give to my niece Agness Hunter 108 A including improvements where I now live agreeable to a plat by George Alexander made 15 apr 1813 as well as her spinning wheel, a chair, her bed and furniture, two cows, two sheep, half of my pewter and tin ware, a walnut chest, the second biggest pot, her mare and colt, the negro Tilly. At my demise Agness is also to have a third of any crop growing on the ground willed to her after the present crop is gathered. I will to my grandson Moses Meek, son of Robert, the negro Abner. All the remainder of my estate is to be sold and the proceeds, after payment of my just debts, are to be divided among the following: James and Robert Meek, Mary Wallace, each of the sons of Robert, Adam and Robert.

Exrs: Trusty friend Matthew Wallace and son Robert Meek. Wit: R. W. Smith, Matt. Wallace and Jane Corum.

Genealogies of Adam Meek born 1746 who married Martha Wallace and Moses Meek born 1755.

The Meeks – The Early Years by Paul Meek 3/19/1987

Mary Meek's land was next Grant No. 134 and to land sold to Richard Warner in 1832. William Meek witnessed the deed. Source unknown.

William Meek of Marshal Co., TN