

THE WESTFIELD QUAKER MEETING AND EARLY WESTFIELD HISTORY

The Westfield area along the Surry-Stokes county line is closely allied with the history of the early years of the Westfield Monthly Meeting of the Friends Church. The Quaker church itself is located in Surry County, but it is within not more than half a mile from the Stokes County line, and much of the early development of the church and its congregation is truly part of Stokes County history.

The Westfield Quaker congregation developed as an off-spring of the New Garden Monthly Meeting of Friends at present-day Guilford College, for members of the New Garden congregation began about 1770 moving westward into the present Stokes and Surry counties in quest of new and fertile lands, and as more and more people migrated into the Westfield section they found it inconvenient to go all the way back to New Garden for church services.

The result was that the New Garden Quakers organized Preparative Meeting known as the Tom's Creek meeting, and services were held under that name for fifteen years. People moving from New Garden into the Tom's Creek group travelled through a gap in the Sauratown Mountains that soon took the name of Quaker Gap, and it is by that name that it is still known in modern times. The new settlement in the Westfield area was also known as the "West Mission Field Of New Garden Meeting," thus developed the name of Westfield.

The name of Westfield Monthly Meeting of Friends came into use at a committee meeting held on November 13, 1786, and the committee report in William Wade Hinshaw's great book regarding Quaker history and genealogy stated that the regular church services should be held on next to the last Sunday (designated under the Quaker form of Seventh Day) in each month. Actually, the very first church service of worship for the Westfield congregation was held on December 23, 1786.

According to Hinshaw's book, the two men responsible for that first Westfield meeting were David Ballard and Thomas Jessup, and study of the Stokes County map for the early years show that both names have been known in Stokes to the present day. Of course at that time in the year 1786 the entire area which now includes Surry, Stokes, Forsyth and Yadkin Counties was still known as Surry County.

However, the N. C. Legislature cut Stokes County away from Surry in 1789, with the new Stokes County included at the time the entire modern area of both Stokes and Forsythe counties. Much later in 1849 the Forsyth County section was severed from the Stokes County area.

It is interesting that quite a few families in the Westfield Quaker Church in its early days lived in Stokes County. They held land along the waters of Big Creek, Pinchit Creek, Meadow Branch and also near the upper waters of Dan River.

Among those early settlers in upper Stokes County were the families such names as Ballard, Beal, Davis, Grigg, Jackson, Jessup, McKinney, Reece and Simmons and others that have continued to play a part in the development of Stokes County, particularly the upper section of the county. Brief sketches of these and other families that came into the Stokes population at later dates have been prepared and are submitted on other pages along with this early account of upper Stokes County. The family sketches, not complete family histories, include brief bits on the Christians, Cookes, Hills, Jacksons, Jessups, Flippins, Owens, Pells and Tilleyes.

(SEE TWO SHEETS OF FAMILY DATA ACCOMPANYING THIS STORY)

FAMILY BACKGROUNDS FOR FAMILIES
FOUND IN WESTFIELD AREA OF
STOKES COUNTY THROUGH THE YEARS

CHRISTIAN FAMILY

The Christian family of Stokes County, which has had quite a few representatives living in the Westfield section of northwestern Stokes for many years, traces back in ancestry to a certain Thomas Christian who received a grant of land in Charles County, Va., prior to 1700. Virginia records show that he had a least four sons, including Thomas Jr., Charles, James and John, and from them descended many families of the name in both Virginia and North Carolina. The Christians of Stokes County descended from a certain Charles B. Christian, who married Matilda V. Page in Amherst County, Va., in 1827. He moved down into Stokes County, and from this couple there descended a family which in modern times ~~included~~ included ~~and the families of~~ the families of Vester Christian, Reid Christian and Numa Christian, each of who lived in the Westfield area of Stokes County. Each of these three brothers ^{have} children ~~and~~ and grand-children living in Stokes County today. They are connected by marriage with prominent families of the area.

COOK OR COOKE FAMILY

The Cook or Cooke family of Stokes County, many having resided in the Westfield area of upper Stokes, descended from a family which migrated into North Carolina by the middle 1700's. Some of them used the name without the final "e" but most of the Cookes near Westfield have used the "e" type spelling. There were several Cooke brothers in the Neatman's Creek section in lower Stokes, and a certain James Cooke from that area moved into the Westfield area by about 1800. One of his sons married two Jessup sisters as first and later second wives, and many of the name in both Stokes and Surry descended from those marriages. The family has intermarried with many of the other families still living in the area. It is interesting to know that in certain middle and lower parts of Stokes County there are also those of the Cook name who descended from a German branch of the family. In ancient times this family used the German spelling of Koch, later changing to the English form for Cook.

FLIPPIN FAMILY

The Flippin family is originally of Norman-French origin, the name having originally been spelled Phlippin, with the "Ph" changing to the English "Fl" when the family came to England with William the Conqueror before the year 1100 A.D. Direct ancestry of the Flippin family of upper Stokes County dates back to a certain Dr. Joseph Flippin, a Revolutionary soldier who later lived and died in Pittsylvania County, Va. He must have been a ~~kind~~ ^{burned} man of kind intentions, for a family legend is that at time of his death he ~~burned~~ ^{burned} all of his account books, saying that he ~~did not~~ "did not ^{want} ~~want~~ his children to hound his friends to pay their accounts after I am gone." At least three of his four sons moved down into Stokes County in the early and middle 1800's, and several prominent physicians have descended from the ^{family.} The Flippins have intermarried with such families as the Adams, Stones, Coxes, Owens, Frans and Sheltons and other familiar names in upper Stokes County.

TILLEY FAMILY

The Tilley family moved to England with William the Conqueror from the ancient village of Tilly in France, and later there was village of Tilley named for the family in England. A Tilley couple came to Massachusetts on the Mayflower, but they had no son and no descendants of the Tilley name. The Tilleys of Stokes County descend from a certain Lazarus Tilley, who came to Virginia before 1700 and settled in Spotsylvania County, Va. One of his sons named Henry Tilley came to North Carolina and settled in Surry County in a section that became Stokes County ~~and~~ when it was cut off from Surry in 1789. Present day Tilleys descended from him through a lineage that included Edmund Tilley, Joel Tilley, Aaron B. Tilley, Joel Tilley and then in modern times from William Tilley, Reid Tilley and others. The Tilleys have intermarried with such families as Smith, Hunter, Jessup, Cooke and others.

JESSUP FAMILY

The Jessup family name is said to have derived from an original ancestor named Joseph, changing in the ancient spelling of medieval England from Josep to Jesop and later showing such variation as Jessop, Jesup and Jessup. The earliest possible ancestor for the Jessup family of both Surry and Stokes Counties was a certain Timothy Jessup, who married his cousin named Mary Jessup at the Rawcliffe Monthly Meeting of Friends in Yorkshire, England in 1676. He died there in 1697. Later generations came to America.

Thomas Jessup, son of Timothy and Mary Jessup, born 1685 and died in 1744, migrated to Perquimons County, N. C., in 1722. Among other children he had Thomas Jessup, Jr., (1715-1783), later moved to Guilford County, N. C., where he died. His son named Joseph Jessup, whose wife was Priscilla Jackson, ~~born 1728 and died 1796~~ was the first Jessup to come to the Westfield area and settled on Big Creek near the Surry-Stokes line. He had land in both Surry and Stokes. Joseph and Priscilla had 12 children, and several of them have many descendants in Stokes County today.

They had sons named Jacob Jessup, Joseph Jessup Jr., Elijah Jessup and Eli Jessup, their families intermarried with such familiar families as the Cooks, Jacksons, Pells, Joyces, Dearming Christians, Flippins, Bingmans, Lawsons and others and Georges and Simmons. practically all of these names being found in modern Stokes County.

JACKSON FAMILY

The Jackson family of the Westfield area of Surry and Stokes County is surely of English origin, but evidence indicates that the first family ancestor in North Carolina was a certain William Jackson, who died in northeastern North Carolina by ~~1700~~ prior to 1700. He had a son named William Jackson and a grandson named Aaron Jackson. That Aaron Jackson and his wife had, among other children, a son named Samuel Jackson (1740-1807) and a daughter named Priscilla Jackson (listed above as Priscilla Jessup), and both of them moved to the Westfield area and have many descendants on both Stokes, Surry and other counties.

Samuel Jackson's sons named William (married Mary Jessup) and ~~Joseph~~ Joseph (married Sarah Jessup) and Amer Jackson (married first to Violet Forkner and second to Betsy Watson. William and Joseph both had homes in Surry near Westfield, but they have had many descendants living in Stokes. Amer Jackson, (listed just above) settled in Stokes just below Westfield. It is especially interesting that Amer Jackson had a grand-daughter who married a certain Zachariah Smith and became the mother of Mrs. R. J. Renolds, Sr. The Jacksons, like the Jessups, have through the years intermarried with many families living in Stokes County, among them the Hills, Tilley's, Pells, Cooks, Lawsons, Martins and others.

HILL FAMILIES

There were definitely two different families of Hills in Stokes County, although both came from Virginia and may have been in some manner related in much earlier times.

One branch of Hills came into the Aaron's Corner and northwest section of Stokes from Henry and Patrick Counties in Virginia. Among their ancestors had been a certain Phillip Hill in Patrick and Mantering Hill in Henry. Others of this group included Elder Jimmie Hill, said to have been a very fine preacher. Among his children were Mathaniel Hill (married Tamson Terrell) and ~~two~~ daughters named Milly, Eliza, Louisa, Nancy, Lizzie, Sophia, Lucinda, Serrepta. These daughters married Dave Smith, Tuck Collins, John Francis, John Nunn, Levi Jessup, John Flippin, Buck Flippin, Josh Smith and Tazewell Sheppard. Through these marriages, this branch of Hills have many descendants in upper Stokes County in the Westfield area.

The other (utterly separate) branch of the Hill family was descended from a certain William Hill, born 1715 in Caroline County, Va., and died in Surry County in 1786. However, this William Hill actually lived in lower Stokes County. Stokes was cut away from Surry in 1789, and this William Hill served in the North Carolina Colonial Assembly, helped form the first N. C. govt. and actually cast a vote in favor of American Independence. He had quite a number

of children, among them eight sons and two daughters. Among them was both ~~son~~ a son and a daughter who married into the famous Halbert family, a very old family in Virginia. The son ~~was~~ who married the Halbert was Robert Hill, and he had a number of children and grand-children settling into the Westfield area of Stokes County. They have many descendants still living in upper Stokes County, and through the Halbert descent all are directly descended from the famous Pocahuntas, the Indian girl who married John Rolfe. It will be remembered that she was first known at Jamestown but later died in England. This family of Hills intermarried with the Matthews, ^{Jess} Jacksons, Jessups, Cooks and many others well known in Stokes.

PELL FAMILY

The Pell family is another line that has for many years centered in the Westfield area of ~~the~~ both Stokes and Surry County, and it has a most interesting background. It is said to date back for well over 200 years and six or seven generations to a certain Richard Pell, who as a 9-year old boy, accidentally killed a baby pig while playing "town ball" with his childhood playmates. As a result he was punished for killing the pig by being sent to Virginia as a "bound boy" until he was 21 years of age. That little boy had a son named Henry Pell, born in 1765 and died in the Stokes area of the Westfield community in 1861. Henry Pell was twice married and had 22 children, 19 living when he himself died at age 96 years. There are hundreds of eminent descendants, among them being ~~the~~ chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court and large numbers of truly outstanding professional and business men and women. Truly a group of descendants from a 9-year-old boy who was shipped to the New World as a "pig murderer."

OWENS FAMILY

More than a quarter century of research indicates that the Owens family of upper Stokes County, many still located in the Westfield area of Stokes County, indicates that the family three successive Thomas Owens who were in Virginia between 1622 and the very early 1700's. They were lineal ancestors for a John Owens, who lived and died in Amelia and Prince Edward Counties in Virginia. From him descended ~~two~~ two successive Jesse Owens, the second Jesse ~~lived~~ lived in Halifax County, Va. That Jesse Owens had two sons and a daughter who migrated from Halifax County, Va., to Stokes County. ~~The two~~ The two brothers were John Owens, and both of them have hundreds of present-day descendants. Many of them are in upper Stokes County in the general Westfield area, and still others live in Surry and other counties.

NOTE: THESE SKETCHES ARE IN NO WAY SUBMITTED AS ~~KNOWLEDGE~~ COMPLETE FAMILY HISTORIES UNDER THESE NAMES. THE DATA IS PRESENTED ONLY AS BITS OF BACKGROUND THAT MAY HELP SOME FAMILY RESEARCHERS IN WORKING ON THE STOKES COUNTY HISTORY; IT IS SUGGESTED THAT MRS. DELLIE PELL OWENS, WHO LIVES AT WESTFIELD (ADDRESS ~~XXXX~~ R.F.D. PILOT MOUNTAIN) MIGHT SUBMIT MORE COMPLETE ACCOUNTS FOR ANY OR ALL OF THESE FAMILIES.

SIGNED (October 5, 1979)

Luther N. Byrd
LUTHER N. BYRD
Box 576
Elon College, N. C. 27244