



WALTON RELATIONS

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Walton County Genealogy Society

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Genealogy Society News

Microsoft Office 2010 software was donated recently to the Walton County Genealogy Society (WCGS) and it has been installed on the genealogy computer at the Walton County Heritage Museum. The Office 2010 suite includes the newest versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote, giving us greater flexibility when editing and saving documents and records. The computer also has the Microsoft Works suite and Family Tree Maker.

WCGS members will help Santa Rosa Beach celebrate its 100th birthday this weekend. We will have a display at the Santa Rosa Beach Centennial Celebration event at Gulf Place on Scenic Highway 30A on Saturday, September 11, from 10:00 AM until 9:00 PM, and on Sunday, September 12, from noon until 6:00 PM. We will be located with other history-related organizations, including the Walton County Heritage Museum, Panhandle Historic Preservation Alliance, Historic Point Washington, Shaping Florida, Coastal Heritage Preservation Society, Walton County Timeline, Eden Gardens State Park, Florida Chautauqua Assembly, and Gulf Cemetery Association. It will be a great weekend for history, music, and fun! For more information and the festival schedule, see www.srb100.com.

No WCGS Meeting

The Walton County Genealogy Society will not meet this month because we will be attending the Santa Rosa Beach Centennial Celebration on the day we normally have our meeting. Our next meeting will be at the Museum on Saturday, October 9, at 10:00 AM.

Upcoming Reunions

Saturday, October 2 – **Garrett Family**

Saturday, October 9 – **Crowder Cemetery**

October (date unknown) – **Darlington**

See our Reunions web page for more information. If you can offer additional or updated information for that page, please contact Wayne Sconiers.

Walton County Heritage Museum

Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 1:00- 4:00 PM
1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

850-951-2127

www.WaltonCountyHeritage.org

WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net

A WALTON COUNTY MYSTERY

By Joan (Ray) Godwin of Hastings (St. Johns) Florida

This truly is a Walton County mystery – that started in Mississippi.

I started working on our genealogies in the year 2000. I started on my family first, but I wanted my husband's (William C. Godwin) daughter and grandchildren to have their family history, so in 2001 I started looking with what he and his siblings could tell me.

One of the very first brick walls I hit was Joseph Cypher McBroom, my husband's grandfather. Ever since I married into the family in October 1983, I had been told that Joe left Mississippi in the middle of the night with three of his children. His wife and oldest daughter died in a Yellow Fever outbreak, and that part of Mississippi had been put under quarantine. He broke the law by leaving, but he said he had to get the rest of his family out of there. Joe died in April 1938, and my husband WC turned 4 years old in June of that year. WC always told me about sitting on his Uncle Sam's front porch on the swing with his Grandpa and his sister, Ruthie Mae, and Grandpa telling them about the time he rode with the James Gang. He told them about the long coats they wore so the people would not see their guns until they were already inside the bank or whatever they were robbing. WC said it was ten years before he found out who the James Gang was. A movie came out about the James Gang, and he borrowed the money from his Aunt to go see that movie to see his Grandpa Joe. He said he looked and looked but never did see his Grandpa in that movie. He didn't realize they were all actors.

I do know Joe was quite active until his death. WC and Ruthie told me about the time she was told to stay out of the road. Ruthie said she was sure he couldn't catch her and she could outrun him. She said she looked up and here came Grandpa after her. He had broken a limb from the gardenia bush by the front gate at Uncle Sam's. Ruthie took off down the road and jumped the fence at the garden spot, and Grandpa jumped the fence, too. Ruthie was about 6 or 7 years old and he was about 87, and he ran her down and switched her!

Joe was the caretaker at Magnolia Cemetery in DeFuniak Springs. He told about one time some people were slipping into the cemetery at night and sleeping in the tool shed. One moonlit night, Joe got a sheet, went to the cemetery, and waited for someone to come outside from the shed. He slowly rose up from behind a tombstone.

Those people left there in a real hurry and didn't come back.

Continuing with research, I found Joseph McBroom right away in the 1880 Oktibbeha County, Mississippi, census with his first family – his wife Sarah Jane, daughter Sarah, son Samuel Smith, mother Nancy Bird (who states that she was born in Alabama and her parents were both born in Virginia), and sister Miranda Bird. Next door to Joseph and his family was George Bird, and in his household was Martha listed as George's niece. This would be Joseph's half-sister, found living with her parents Ben and Nancy Bird in the 1860 census.

I found in a pension application where Joseph had served in the North Carolina Home Guard during the Civil War. In the document Joseph swore that he joined the Home Guard under the name J.C. McBroom; he was born December 31, 1848, in Artesian, (Oktibbeha County) Mississippi; he joined the North Carolina Home Guard in Richmond, Virginia, as a horse handler with a large group of boys; and, when his age was found out, he was honorably discharged. He was denied pension because of his position in the war and because he was discharged due of his age. (Anyone receiving pension must have been in the regular service.) The panel of six men swore to the truth of the statements that Joe had made in his application. In Joe's Civil War pension application he stated he had joined the North Carolina Home Guard in 1862 in Richmond, Virginia, and that he was released on December 1, 1862, in Richmond.

In Mississippi records, I found that Nancy Douglass (Joseph's Mama) had married Benjamin R. Bird on August 16, 1855, in Noxubee County, Mississippi. I found them with their daughter, Martha A., in the 1860 Choctaw County, Mississippi, census.

Family stories that were passed down said that his first wife and a daughter died of Yellow Fever (cholera) in Mississippi. This would have been sometime between 1883 and 1886 since his son Ed was born about 1881, daughter Eddie V. was born about 1883, and William Cebern (or Seaborn), his first child with his second wife Sytha, was born June 4, 1887, in DeFuniak Springs. His other children with Sytha were Henryetta, born about 1893, and Indiana (my husband's Mama) who was born July 30, 1897.

WC's Mama, Indiana, said when Joe left Mississippi he had two boys and one girl. Some of Joe's descendants told me they heard that he came with two boys. Indiana told her son that her father had told her when he and his children made it to his Mama and sister's house they stayed in a cotton house (out back of the home where his Mama and sister were living) for the entire winter because the Yellow Fever had been so bad in Mississippi he wouldn't go into the house until he was sure that the danger has passed. He said that his Mama and sister would bring food and set it outside the cotton house and leave before he would come out to get it.

I looked and looked for Joe in the 1850, 1860, and 1870 census records, but I just couldn't find him anywhere. After a couple of years I decided to try a different route and I typed in "Samuel Smith McBroom," thinking maybe I would find something going back from one of Joe's sons. I found lots on Samuel Smith all right and nearly fell out of my chair until I saw that this was a different person. I found that this Samuel Smith had served in the North Carolina Home Guard in Richmond, Virginia, as a furrier. I was jumping and hopping around. I was just sure I had made the connection. I got the name of a descendant in North Carolina (Samuel was from Orange County, North Carolina) and called her. She said she had no idea who Joseph was and that it couldn't be their Samuel Smith because he was only married once. Back down to Earth I came with a THUD!! Joseph had to know Samuel Smith in the North Carolina Home Guard because he and some other boys were listed as horse handlers, Samuel was a furrier, and they were all in Richmond, Virginia.

I went several more years until, sometime early in 2009, I thought I would search Nancy Douglass since that is the name she put down when she married B.R. Bird. I searched using the Soundex this time. Among the other records was the 1850 Oktetbbiah County, Mississippi, census record. There was a Martha Duglas listed as head of household with Alfred, Nancy, Asa, Robert, Samuel, and one year old Josephus Duglas! Martha was listed as being from Virginia and all of the children except Josephus were listed as born in Alabama; Josephus was born in Mississippi. I looked in the 1860 census for Josephus Douglas, using the Soundex again, and there he was in Noxubee County, Mississippi, (the same county in which Nancy had married B.R. Bird). Joseph Cypher McBroom started out life as Josephus Douglas!! He was in the house with Martha and Robert in 1860, and they were listed as Douglass. Martha was listed as being born in Virginia again. I was so thrilled – until I went searching some more and realized I had found a brick wall on the other side of that brick wall!

I still haven't found Joe in the 1870 census. I did find a Martha Douglas listed in Lawrence County, Alabama, in the 1840 census listed as head of household, and in the same county I found a Samuel Douglas in the 1830 census. Samuel was not listed in the 1840 census. I'm not sure about the connection yet, but I do think this is the same Martha who was head of household in the 1850 Oktetbbiah County, Mississippi, census.

Here is information I received in an email from James Wade McBroom of Renton, Washington:

. . . Let's look at some of my McBrooms in Mississippi, and where they have lived in relation to where Nancy (Douglass Bird) lived: Thomas McBroom had a large family. In 1830, he and his son Henry lived in Henderson County, Tennessee, and son Darling Thomas lived just north of them in Carroll County. In mid-1830 they owned land in Lowndes County, MS. Thomas' land was next to the Oktibbeha County line and his son Mark H. McBroom (could be Henry), lived north and east of him. At this time, if Darling was living with his father, there would have been around six McBroom men that would have been aged from twenty to forty by the year 1850, and at least four if Darling's family was not living with them at the time. However, by 1837, these families lived in Tippah County, but we will never know whether or not one or more of these McBrooms stayed behind in Lowndes County.

Continuing on with this picture, these McBrooms lived fairly close to where Martha's family lived, so there would have been a fairly good chance that one of these McBrooms was Nancy's husband, and father of Joseph, even though he was reported on the censuses as a Douglas/Douglass for whatever reasons. Also, consider that Benjamin and Nancy lived in Choctaw County, the part of which I want to say, was the SW-corner which later became Carroll County, since Vaiden shows up as the post office for Benjamin and Nancy, I think.

Also, Carroll County was home to the Dorcus McBroom family. It was a fairly large one, and they were related to the Thomas, Henry (Mark?), and Darling that I mentioned above. Plus, they often visited one another! These McBrooms had lived in Carroll County since the mid-1830s, but somewhat over half of them left for Louisiana by 1849..... Joseph could well be blood kin to Samuel McBroom (the father of Samuel Smith

McBroom who served in the North Carolina Home Guard). And, to my knowledge, Samuel McBroom did get out of NC into South Tennessee at least one time, which had to do with the Turrentine family and a will, but I forget the date. Let's not forget all of the McBrooms in Alabama at this time in Winston County, and practically every northern county in Alabama.

Joseph McBroom's children:

With Sarah Sutton McBroom - Samuel Smith McBroom, born July 15, 1877, in MS (married Oney Emmitt in 1900 in Walton Co, FL); Sarah E., born about 1879 in MS and supposedly died as a child; Joseph Edward McBroom, born about 1881 in MS (married Laura McFarland); and possibly Eddie V., born about 1883 (married Walter Waldo).

With Sytha Lawrence McBroom - William Ceborn (Seaborn) McBroom, born June 4, 1887, in DeFuniak Springs, FL (married Minnie Richards); Henryetta McBroom, born about 1893 in DeFuniak Springs, FL (married Henry Brannen); and Indiana McBroom, born July 30, 1897 (married William L. Godwin).

Here is a timeline I have compiled for the information I have on Joseph Cypher McBroom:

- 1848 According to Joseph's application for Civil War pension (and family) he was born Dec. 31, 1848.
- 1850 In Oktebbiah Co., MS, census, listed as Josephus Douglas.
- 1855 Joseph's mother Nancy marries Benjamin R. Bird under the name "Nancy Douglass," Aug. 16, 1855, in Noxubee Co., MS.
- 1860 BR Bird, wife Nancy, and daughter Martha are in the 1860 Choctaw Co., MS, census.
- 1860 Joseph (listed as Josephus Douglass) is living with Martha in the 1860 Noxubee Co., MS, census.
- 1862 Joseph joined and was discharged from the North Carolina Home Guard in Richmond, VA, on Dec. 1, 1862, for being too young.

- 1870 I cannot find Joseph in the 1870 census. Where was he from Dec. 1862 (when he was released from the NC Home Guard in Virginia) to about 1876 (when he starts having children with his first wife Sarah in MS)?
- 1877 Joseph's last name is now McBroom and on July 15, 1877, his first child with Sarah Sutton McBroom was born and was named Samuel Smith McBroom.
- 1880 Joseph McBroom is in Oketibeha Co., MS, with his wife Sarah and children— 3 year old Samuel S. and 1 year old Sarah E.— his mother, Nancy Bird, and (half) sister, Miranda Bird. Nancy's daughter Martha is living next door with her Uncle George Bird.
- 1883-6 Sometime in that period he left Mississippi with his remaining children and found Sytha. They had their first child William in June 1887. Will's death certificate states he was born in DeFuniak Springs, FL.
- 1900 Joseph is in Walton Co., FL, 1900 census with his new wife Sytha and their children. His sister Miranda is in Covington Co., AL, with her husband, Allen Appling, and their children.
- 1900 Crenshaw Co, AL – Nancy is in the household with her daughter Martha Killpatrick. (I've not been able to find Martha's husband's name)
- 1910 Joseph is listed in the Walton Co., FL, census
- 1910 Nancy is living in Covington Co., AL, in the house with her daughter Miranda Appling and her husband and family.
- 1920 Joseph is listed in Walton Co., FL, census in the house with his son William
- 1930 Joseph is listed in Walton Co., FL, census in the house with his son Ed

So, if any of you McBrooms out there have anything to help clear up this family story full of mystery, please contact the Walton County Genealogy Society. We will pass it along.

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 at WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net or call 850-897-4505.