

ROWANROOTS-L Archives

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Subject: Capt. Samuel WOODS

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Captain Samuel WOODS (1740-1825) who married Margaret HOLMES is known to have lived in Rowan County, NC. But his parents have not yet been identified. My opinion is that Oliver and Martha WOODS of Rowan Co, NC were the parents of Capt. Samuel WOODS. I offer the following as evidence to support this opinion. As a sort of peer review, I ask any who are interested to review this information and join in a discussion.

Oliver WOODS died in Rowan Co, NC c. 1760. He left a will (Abstracts of Rowan County Wills) dated 1760 which mentioned wife Martha, eldest son William, and two other children, not named, apparently not of age. Matthew and Samuel WOODS signed as witnesses. This Oliver WOODS did not receive a Granville Grant and did not register any deeds with Rowan Co, NC. He either lived on undeeded land, or more likely, registered his land in Anson County, where many records have been lost. He probably lived in or near the Third Creek Settlement in what is now Iredell County, or along Back Creek (now called McCrary Creek), also in present day Iredell County.

Olivers eldest child, William was named in the will. This William WOODS was a Revolutionary War soldier who wrote a will dated 1832. The will mentions wife Ruth, her daughter Olivia, and son Olivers son William. Ruth WOODS filed a Revolutionary War Pension #W6565 while living in Iredell County. From this pension application we know that William WOODS was living in Rowan County, NC where he did his Revolutionary War service. He married Ruth DOTSON 1783 in Shenandoah Co, VA. He died in Iredell County, NC 1832. >From the wording of the will, and from other wills that mention children and grandchildren of Oliver WOODS, William must have had an earlier marriage, name unknown. Land records of Iredell and Rowan County show a William WOODS, probably the same, living on Back Creek in Iredell County.

Virgil Whites Genealogical Abstracts of Revolutionary War Pension Files (Vol III, p. 3924) gives the following:

WOODS, William NC Line, Ruth, W5656. Sol m. Ruth DOTSON 23 Dec 1783 in Shennandoah Co, VA & sol d. 20 July 1832, wid appl 24 May 1844 in Iredell Co, NC aged 84 & she was still living there on 26 May 1851 at which time she stated sol had lived in Rowan Co, NC during the Revolutionary War.

Will of William WOODS, dated 14 July 1832 (from Abstracts of Unrecorded Wills 1788-1915 & Will Book II 1845-1868 of Iredell Co, NC)
Wife Ruth WOODS to have estate and then to Olivia WOODS, her daughter. Mary WOODS, wife of Oliver WOODS to have pine cubbert. William WOODS, son of

OLIVER WOODS, to have suit. wit: MIAS A. DAVIDSON, THOMAS CRAWFORD [I infer from the wording that Ruth was his second wife, and that Oliver WOODS was his son by an earlier marriage]

Oliver WOODS second child was Martha WOODS who married Thomas MORRISON in Rowan County on 6 Dec 1769. The marriage bond mentions Martha WOODS, mother of Martha. William WOODS was bondsman. The MORRISONS were among the original settlers along Third Creek, now Iredell County. A William MORRISON had a grant of land just south of Back Creek, which he sold in 1754.

The third child of Oliver WOODS was Captain Samuel WOODS. Rationale:

Tracing land deeds in Rowan County for the years 1763-1778 is difficult. Lord Granville, who owned the land and had been selling it through his agents, died in 1763. His land office closed and it became impossible to obtain title except by purchasing from a current owner. This situation continued until 1778 when the State of North Carolina seized all crown land including Lord Granvilles. Residents who had been living on undeeded land were permitted to register their claim. However, by this time, many had already moved on to lands further west, including Burke County. There are, however, several clues that indicate that Capt. Samuel WOODS lived on Back Creek, near his brother William.

The Rowan County 1772 Tax List lists a Samuel WOODS living in a district that is now Iredell County. All of the other Samuel WOODS lived to the southeast in the Irish Settlement [See discussion of the other WOODS families below].

Rowan Co Deed Book 9, pg 613. Vacant Land Entry #5, 4 Feb 1778. Griffith RUTHERFORD 400A on E side of Catawba River & on both sides of Back Creek including Samuel WOODS improvement & an improvement of his own adj Hugh MONTGOMERY [This is one of the first of the vacant land entries. We can infer that Capt. Samuel WOODS sold or gave his land and house to Griffith RUTHERFORD who was then able to register it at the county courthouse. By this time, Samuel WOODS had gone to Burke County. He had apparently been living on undeeded land].

Rowan Co Deed Book 10, pg 554. Vacant Land Entry #339, 9 Feb 1778. Robert Gray 640A on N. side of Back Crk adj Robert HARVEYS, his own, & Patrick GRACEYS line, including William WOODS improvement on Broad Branch [This indicates that William WOODS was living on Back Creek, but by 1778 had either abandoned or sold his homestead. He marries Ruth DOTSON in 1783 in Shennandoah Co, VA and then returns to Iredell Co and buys land on Back Creek see below]

Rowan Co Deed Book 9, pg 526, 2 Dec 1783 (McCubbins File). Griffith RUTHERFORD to Wm. WOODS for 100 pds, 200A on E Bank of Catawba next John McCoun, John Baird & Griffith Rutherford [This land is on Back Creek]

Iredell Co Deed Book K, p.58, 8 June 1820 (McCubbins File, marked Back Creek). Elizabeth and Sophia McCorkle of Rowan to Wm Woods of Iredell 354A in Iredell on Back Crk for \$680. Wit: Samuel McCulloh & James Woods.

A custom of the Scots-Irish families was to name their first two male children and first two female children for their grandfathers and grandmothers, respectively. The third male and female child was named for the parents. Some followed this custom more strictly than others, and there were many exceptions. By itself, it is not reliable evidence for determining parentage, but when taken into account with other evidence, it can be compelling. We know that William WOODS named a son Oliver and a daughter Olivia. The name Oliver appears in the descendants of both William WOODS and Capt. Samuel WOODS, but not in any descendants of the other Rowan

County WOODS families. Capt. Samuel Woods and his wife Margaret Holmes (daughter of John Holmes and Jane Wilson) named their first three sons and first three daughters: Oliver, John, Samuel, Martha, Jane, and Margaret. This is a perfect fit with the Scots-Irish naming tradition. If they followed this tradition, then Samuel Woods was likely the son of Oliver Woods and his wife Martha.

1st son Oliver b. 1769 - Oliver Woods (paternal grandfather)
1st dau Martha b. 1770 - Martha ? (paternal grandmother)
2d dau Jane b. 1771 - Jane Wilson (maternal grandmother)
3d dau Margaret b. 1772 - Margaret Holmes (mother)
2d son John b. 1774 - John Holmes (maternal grandfather)
3d son Samuel b. 1776 - Samuel Woods (father)

Other WOODS families:

We know that there were several Samuel WOODS who were contemporaries of Capt. Samuel WOODS, and also lived in Rowan County. One of these was the Samuel WOODS who married Elizabeth PATTON and was the son of Samuel WOODS and his wife Ann. This Samuel WOODS lived in Rowan and Burke Counties, NC; and later migrated to Madison Co, GA. Some of his descendants migrated to Benton Co, AR where they intermarried with descendants of Capt. Samuel WOODS and Margaret HOLMES. This has caused considerable confusion among the descendants of the Benton Co, AR WOODS families. Another contemporary Samuel WOODS was the son of Matthew WOODS and married Margaret. He died in Rowan Co, c. 1778.

There appears to be at least five connected WOODS families in Colonial Rowan County. Three were probably brothers, possibly just cousins. They were: Matthew, Oliver, and Samuel who married Sarah. The fourth family was Robert, nephew of these three. He died c. 1766 apparently unmarried. The fifth family was Samuel WOODS and his wife Ann who was the father of Samuel of Madison Co, GA (gf of West Samuel WOODS of Benton Co, AR). All of these families probably had a common origin in Ireland and all had spent some time in the Irish settlements of Pennsylvania including Lancaster and Chester Counties. The Samuel WOODS who married Ann may be the oldest son of Andrew and Sarah WOODS of Lancaster Co, PA. This possibility is based on his settlement on Coldwater Creek adjacent to two of the daughters and sons-in-law of Andrew WOODS. Although Samuel was not named in Andrews 1756 will, he might have already received his legacy.

*See also Accounts from
& Review of Rowan
Benton County VA*

Ramseys Carolina Cradle mentions the WOODS family and associates them with the COCHRANS, LITTLEs, and PATTONs. He cites the will of Andrew WOODS of Hanover Township, Lancaster County who died in 1756 and had two daughters who moved to Rowan County. These daughters were Sarah who married Samuel COCHRAN and lived on Coldwater Creek and Margaret who married Robert PATTON. This Robert PATTON was the brother of William PATTON, several of whose sons and daughters settled along Coldwater Creek. Elizabeth PATTON, one of the daughters married John BRANDON.

Matthew WOODS, sometime between 1752 and 1757, acquired Charles Burnetts tract on the headwaters of Grants Creek and then sold it in 1757 to Robert WOODS, whose will (1766) mentioned Uncle Samuel and Aunt Sarah WOODS. This Matthew WOODS and his wife Mary had a son Samuel WOODS, d. 1778 who married Margaret, and a son David who married Elizabeth BRANDON.

Robert Woods, a carpenter, wrote a will dated 8 Sept 1763, probated 1766 mentions mother, not named, Uncle Samuel Woods and Aunt Sarah Woods. [This Samuel Woods was probably the brother of Matthew WOODS and Oliver WOODS.] Uncle Archibald WASSON [Archibald WASSONs wife was named Elizabeth WOODS] Cousins Jan McCulloh, James McCulloh, Elizabeth, Ruth, Margaret, Sarah, and Mary Woods. Brother Benjamin. Sister Jane. Wit: Griffith Rutherford and Sarah Woods. Owned land on Grants Creek (this creek is near Sills Creek.)

Mary Lowrance, 1750-1841; m. 20 Oct 1768 in Rowan Co, NC Benjamin WOODS, son of Robert WOODS [I can find no reference to this Robert WOODS in Rowan County. He probably did not ever live in Rowan]. They had a son, Robert WOODS II. From the European Continent to American Colonist & Citizen, 275 Year History of the Lowrance Family in America, Gayfor Rader Lowrance, 1986, Kansas City, Lowell Press., p. 422.

Will of Robert WOODS, Rowan Co, NC Will Book D, pg 222, dated 9 Jun 1784, probated 1803.

I give to my good friend Robert Woods, William Woods son [and] Oliver Woods

grandson 448 acres on Dutch Buffalo Creek. I give to his brother Oliver Woods 300 acres on Warrior Creek in SC. Friend James Woods, Jr. and William Woods, son of James Woods, Sr. [This Robert WOODS lived on Dutch Buffalo Creek which is the next to Coldwater Creek. His relationship to the other WOODS families is unknown. The term friends was often used for cousins.

Rowan Co Deed Book 13, pg 561, 1 Jan 1794 (McCubbins File). Robert Woods, weaver, to Thomas Dotson a release of his plantation of 300A on Dutch Buffalo Crk for 20 years. [William Woods married Ruth Dotson]

Bennett Dickson

This thread:

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