

THE
WILLIAMS FAMILY

DESCENDANTS OF
NOAH AND MARY "POLLY" WILLIAMS
1725-2000

First Edition

DEDICATED
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
WILLIAMS FAMILY
PAST AND PRESENT

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WILLIAMS

Son of William, "resolution, helmet"

The name Williams comes from William the Conquer of the eleventh century England, as he was the Forefather of all the Williams Clans worldwide.

These clans of Williams hail from the northwestern corner of Wales. The province was inhabited by the numerous and poulous Williamson tribes. The Williamson tribes were well armed and ready to defend themselves. They were a very moderate and enterprising people. The earliest records of the Williams name listed the chief of each tribe with an affix to his one name, "ohn as Williamsohn".

In 1249 while the warring tribes to the south were making raids on the tribes of Brittany, a son Robert was born to the William Williamsohn the head of all the Williams clans.

By 1250 a degree of stability had come to the warring tribes of Brittany. The united tribes made war on the predatory tribes of South Wales. The southern tribes demanded that the well-armed Williams tribes come to their aid. The Williams refused and remained neutral. After the southern tribes were subdued and forced into an alliance with Brittany, the Williams tribes signed an oath allegiance to the Plantagane.

In 1271 Chief William Williamsohn was shot and killed from ambush, by one of the tribes who resented the fact that William had joined the forces of Edward the 1st of Brittany. His son Robert became chief of all the tribes and carried out the plans of his father. Robert fought side by side with Edward in the Battle of Dunbar in 1296, and was knighted for valor by Edward. He was knighted as Sir Robert Williamson, being the first record of the name being spelled that way.

It is doubtful that a Williams in this country could trace his or her descendants back to any one tribe. When they migrated to the Americas many dropped the affix and spelled their name Williamson, or Williams.

The Williams name was recorded on the Mayflower and in the early New World settlement of Plymouth and Jamestown. The Williams signature appears on many early documents such as *Thomas Williams*, on the Mayflower ComPact on November 11, 1620, *Roger Williams*, Letter to the Townsmen of Providence on January 1655, and *William Williams*, Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

The following is a copy of the letter written by Roger Williams in 1655

Letter to the

Townsmen of Providence

January 1655

That ever I should speak or write a title that tends to such an infinite liberty of conscience is a mistake, and which I have ever disclaimed and abhorred. To prevent such mistakes, I shall at present only propose this case:

There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth, or a human combination of society. It hath fallen out sometimes that both papists and Protestants, Jews, and Turks, may be embarked in one ship; upon which I affirm, that all the liberty of conscience, that I ever pleaded for, turns on this two hinges- that none of the papists, Jews, or Turks be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, nor compelled from their particular prayers or worship, if they practice any. I further add, that I never denied, that notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship ought to command the ships course, yea, and also command that justice, peace, and sobriety be kept and practiced, both among the seamen and all the passengers.

If any of the seamen reform their services, or passengers to pay their freight; if any refuse to help, in person or purse, toward the common charges or defense; if any refuse to obey the common laws and orders of the ship, concerning their common peace or preservation; if any shall mutiny or rise up their commanders and officers; if any should preach or write that there ought to be no commanders or officers, because all are equal in Christ, therefore no masters nor officers, no laws nor orders, nor corrections, nor punishments – I say, I never denied, but in such cases, whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel, and punish such transgressor, according to their deserts and merits.

This is seriously and honestly minded, may if it so please the Father of lights, let in some light to such as willingly shut not their eyes.

I remain studious of your common peace and liberty.

Roger Williams

John Williams “Williamson” left Wales around 1642. The story told was that John met a French lady named DeLaney and married her on the ship. After

leaving the ship at Jamestown, he took his wife and settled in North Western Virginia, which is now South Western Pennsylvania. The family stayed in that area for about a hundred years; until the French armed the Indians against the English.

In January 1740 the Indians went on the warpath in such numbers that resistance was impractical. The Williamsons, the Husseys, Garners, Sheilds, Maness, and Williams families packed their wagons with necessities, food, and seeds, pigs and chickens in light crates, and kept their cows and horses haltered at night, ready for a dash to safety. They did not have to wait long, for early one evening, just as dusk fell, an old Indian squaw, who had worked for the family, came to tell them that she had come to kill them easy, as the Braves were only a few miles away.

They thanked her and were soon on the road back toward the coast, which was nearly two hundred miles away. They had traveled only a few miles when they saw the light from the burning village they had left. Soon they came to a trail diverging to the southeast so they took this trail. When they had gone a half mile, some of the men went back and obliterated the trail, so that the Indians would follow the main body of refugees who had gone on down the main trail toward Jamestown. The ruse was successful, because the Indians kept on down the larger trail, overtook the fleeing settlers, and scalped many of them before turning back.

When the Buffalo trail they were on led into the Tuscarora trail, they turned down this trail and followed it until they reached what is now Grassy Creek, in upper Moore County.

They settled on each side of Grassy Creek, along side of the Tuscarora trail. Around 1749 the first house was built by the Williams "Williamson". The old house is still standing today. Just up the hill on the left side of the road, nestled in a wooded area, is the old cemetery. The story told is that the night they got to Grassy Creek, one family's baby died. Maybe that is why they stayed there. In the cemetery there are four graves of Williamson' that lived to be over a hundred years in age. It is said that they were the children (second generation) of John and DeLaney Williams.

Grassy Creek raises in northeast Moore County and flows northeast into Deep River. Grassy Creek appears in local records as early as 1749, and on the 1833 McRae map.

Jeremiah Williams was born in 1775 (?) in Virginia. It is believed that he is the great grandson of John Williamson, one of the five brothers to leave

Wales and come to Virginia. From two marriages he had 25 children. He married Florence Delaney and they had the following children:

1. Isaac Williams
2. Jerry Williams
3. Elizabeth Williams was born on August 1, 1796 and died November 20, 1885. She married Thomas Greene Williams. He was born December 25, 1794 and died February 16, 1887.
4. John Williams was born March 20, 1801 and died May 24, 1879. He married Lydia Melton. She was born September 27, 1799 in Moore County and died August 3, 1881. John and his son Noah worked for Daniel McCrimmon for six years. For each year they worked, Daniel gave them a hundred acres of land. John and Lydia had the following children:
 1. Peggy Williams – she married West Brown
 2. Patty Williams – she married Enoch Richardson. Enoch's son was Noah Richardson, Noah's son was Spinks Richardson, and Spinks' son was Alton Richardson.
 3. Noah Williams was born February 10, 1826 and died November 4, 1904. He married Mary "Polly" Davis. She was born July 3, 1833 and died June 11, 1896. Mary "Polly" Davis' parents were George Davis born in 1802 and Elizabeth Davis born in 1801. They are buried near the old home place in Robbins, North Carolina. George Davis' father is believed to be Hardy Davis. Elizabeth Davis' parents (Mary's grandparents) were Stephen Davis born in 1767 and died in 1863 and Elizabeth "Lizzie" Smith born in 1770 and died in 1863. They had ten children. Elizabeth Davis' grandparents (Mary's great grandparents) were Robert Davis born in 1744 and died in 1828 and Cibby (do not have a last name). They came from Wales. Robert and Cibby had two sons, Stephen and Levi Davis. Cibby wanted to go back to her country and Robert did not. So she left Stephen and Levi with Robert and went back home. Robert later married Nancy Cheek and lived near Putman. – Noah was sent to Petersburg, Virginia to serve with the confederate army. He was listed as a deserter after he ran off and went home. When the officers came looking for him, Noah hid in the hollow of an old tree not far from his house. It came a big snow while he was hiding out. The family was unable to take food to him because their tracks would lead the officers to his hiding place. The officers tried to make "Polly" tell where he has hiding, but she refused, because they had told her they would kill him when they found him. They took James "Jim" the youngest son with them, thinking it would make her talk, but she still refused to tell them anything. An hour or so later Jim came running home, they had released him. Knowing that they would come back "Polly" gathered up the chickens, pigs, and what supplies that she could load in the wagon and tied the milk cow to the back. She took the children and went back into the hills. It is not known how long she hid out, or when Noah joined them, but he was never caught. The old oak tree still stands on the land owned by H. Taft Williams, a grandson of Noah. Taft has refused to let

anyone cut down the tree. It is a landmark of the Williams family history. The tree was the hiding place of his grandfather Noah, but it was also the rally point for the wagon train to Tennessee in 1872. The day of the departure the wagon of Elias Williams set under the old oak tree with his wife sitting on top crying, they had such a long way to go and she would never see her family again.

4. Milly Williams born 1829 – she married Alfred Williams
5. Mary Williams born 1832 and died in 1851. She married a Brewer.
6. Jerry Williams born 1834 – he married Ann Britt
7. Rebecca Williams born 1835
8. Franny Williams born 1837
9. Edward Williams born 1839 – he married Martha Jane Morris (sister to Ann Morris). During the civil war Edward was sent to Petersburg, Virginia with the confederate army. In an attempt to run away, he was shot in the arm. The shot broke his arm.
10. Elias Williams born 1842 – he married Ann Morris (sister to Martha Jane Morris). During the civil war Elias would stand on the breast-works and shoot at the Yankees while the other boys would load the guns. He was the bravest of the three brothers that went to Petersburg to serve in the war.
5. Matthew Williams born 1805. He married Lydia Stutts born in 1806. Both are buried in the Williams Family Cemetery one half mile west of Robbins Crossroads. Lydia Stutts was the daughter of Christian and Celia Maness Stutts.
6. George Williams was born 1814. He married Prisasey Horner

The second wife of Jeremiah Williams was Elizabeth “Betsy” Wallace. She was born in 1808 in Moore County. She was the daughter of Everett Wallace and Catherine Horner. Jeremiah took his wife and children with him, and made many trips back and forth from Moore County in North Carolina to Madison County in Tennessee. They made these trips on foot, as there were no roads to support a wagon. He put the smaller children on an old horse called, “A Rat Tail Horse”. Jeremiah and Betsy, along with the older children walked. They were only able to take a few supplies with them, “salt, coffee, flour, beans, and dried beef jerky”, in the way of food. They took with them a cook pot, fry pan, coffee pot, bedrolls, and a waterproof tarp for shelter. He carried a musket, a knife, and a hand ax. It has been told by descendants, that Jeremiah was killed by the Indians, but no one knows just when or where. The old homeplace in Tennessee is south of Henderson on Highway 45 across from the Estes Cemetery. The lower part of Madison County in Tennessee later became McNaire County. Jeremiah may have been a brother to William Williams. His daughter Elizabeth married Thomas Greene Williams the son of William Williams. They have all been placed at the Williams Plantation in Moore County in North Carolina.

Jeremiah and Elizabeth "Betsy" Wallace had the following children:

1. Raleigh Williams
2. Mary Jane Williams was born December 9, 1825 and died May 22, 1905. Her first husband was Bryant Stafford, second husband was Charles G. Clayton and third husband was Aaron W. Williams.
3. Enoch Spinks Williams was born July 6, 1827 in Moore County and died April 16, 1894 in Texas. He married Rodah Jane Morgan born January 5, 1831 in Moore County and died October 5, 1898 in Texas. Enoch with his wife and two small children left Moore County in North Carolina about 1854 and crossed into Tennessee to settle near Mt. Pinson post office in Madison County. During the Civil War Enoch enlisted in the Army. When they ask him what his occupation was, he told them, a boot maker. Instead of sending him to the front lines, they put him to making boots for the army. In the late 1870's Enoch packed up his family and boarded a train traveling west as far as the tracks went. From there he took his family 20-30 miles north of Ft. Worth and settled in Parker County, Texas. Enoch lived as a devoted Christian for 25 years. There are still family in and around Springton, Texas.
4. Lorenzo "Loe" D. Williams born December 1829 in Moore County and died August 3, 1890 in Tennessee. He married Sarah (do not know last name) born August 14, 1844 and died May 1885 in Tennessee.
5. Amanda Jane Williams was born July 6, 1836 in Moore County and died July 27, 1907 in Tennessee. She married Nathaniel Britt born June 1836 in Moore County and died February 19, 1871 in Tennessee.
6. Phrany Williams born 1837
7. David Anderson Williams born December 14, 1838 in Moore County and died January 25, 1900 in Tennessee. He married Elizabeth Ann Mosier. She was born May 11, 1845 in Mississippi and died April 12, 1876 in Tennessee.
8. Katy Williams was born 1840 in Moore County.
9. Ann Williams
10. James Wesley Williams was born 1845. He married Margaret M. Hart. She was born 1851.
11. Joseph Williams was born 1847 in Moore County.
12. Bryant Williams was born 1848 in Moore County. He married Mary Latham.

Ollie Williams said that the old home place of Jeremiah Williams was across the road from the Wallace Cemetery on Highway 24-27. It is under a big mulberry tree near the home of Barney Britt. He said that Jeremiah left Moore County and went west to live.

The John Williams home place was near the old Ollister "Babe" Williams home place. This is not far from the Williams Cemetery on Will Road.