

William Cooksey, R.W. (ca. 1745–1829)

Spouses:

1. [Unknown]
2. Zilpha (Watts) Price

Research Notes

FAMILY SUMMARY

William Cooksey

(var. Cucksey, Cucksie, Cooksey Cooxy, Coxy)

Born: b. ca. 1745–50, South Carolina or Georgia¹

Married: 1. ca. 1785, Wilkes or Washington Co., Ga., possibly **Duke, Sizemore, or Alexander**²
2. ca. 1819,³ **Zilpha (Watts) Price**,⁴ Laurens Co., Georgia, or Lawrence Co., Mississippi

Died: 28 March 1829, Covington Co., Miss.⁵

Parents: Unknown; possibly William Cooksey I and wife Sarah Young of Savannah⁶

Children: By unknown first wife:

1. **William E. [Elston?] Cooksey**, b. 26 June–23 November 1786, probably Washington Co., Ga.; d. 25 July 1874, Russell Co., Alabama; m. 22 May 1816, Greene Co., Miss., **Flora McPherson**.⁷
2. **John Cooksey**, b. ca. 1787–88, probably Washington Co., Ga.; d. mid-1818, Laurens Co., Ga., or Lawrence Co., Miss.;⁸ m. license 8 January 1809, Tattnall Co., Ga., **Zilpha (Watts) Price**.⁹
3. **Letitia “Letty” Cooksey**, b. ca. 1790;¹⁰ d. after 3 October 1821;¹¹ m. (1) ca. August 1811, Tattnall Co., John Daugherty;¹² (2) **Zachariah Bell**.¹³
4. **Mary Cooksey**, b. before 1795; d. after 2 September 1811;¹⁴ m. 23 April 1810, Montgomery Co., Ga. **Robert Watson**.¹⁵

¹ This approximation of birth time and place is developed in the subsequent section headed “Birth & Origin.”

² Suggestive evidence for her possible identity is developed in the section headed “Marriage.”

³ Estimated from the birth of their first child, James W. Cooksey.

⁴ Evidence for Zilpha’s birth identity will be developed throughout the attached Research Notes.

⁵ The Bible record kept by William’s youngest son gives the date as 28 March 1828; however, William was still alive on 8 Sept. 1828. His young son, who would have been 9 at his death, erred when, as an adult, he created the Bible. See James W. Cooksey Bible pages, image copies supplied Aug. 2008 by Kelly Parks (2112 Hawkins Road, Pattison, MS 39144), to whom J. L. Cooksey, apparent owner of the Bible (location unknown) supplied a copy after 1996. Also Affidavit of William Cucksey, 8 Sept. 1828, in William Cucksey/Cucksey (Pvt., Shadrack Wright’s Co., 1st Regt., Ga. Cont’l. Line), pension applications 1278 and R20354; digital images, *Footnote.com* [now *Fold3*] (<http://www.footnote.com> : downloaded 30 August 2008), image 2.

⁶ The evidence in support of this possibility is summarized in the section “Birth & Origin.”

⁷ William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson’s Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), pension no. S.C. 19,478, Case Files of Pension and Bounty-Land Applications Based on Service in the War of 1812; Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁸ The evidence for this son and his dates is developed throughout the throughout the Research Notes.

⁹ Tattnall Co., Ga., Marriage Book 1 (Reconstructed records): 1; Family History Library (FHL) microfilm 106,419.

¹⁰ Extrapolated from the fact that she bore Henry Duke by 1804, when she registered for the 1805 lottery. See Tattnall Co., Ga., Mixed Records of the Inferior & Superior Courts, 1807–45; microfilm A&H 101 (drawer 37, box 47), Ga. Depy. of Archives & History, Atlanta. Also Tattnall Co., “Inferior Court Sitting for Ordinary Purposes, 1805–1839,” 5 Aug. 1811; FHL microfilm 206,434, item 2.

¹¹ Allen Thomas, *Laurens County, Georgia, Records, 1807–1832* (Roswell, Ga.: W. H. Wolfe Associates, 1991), 196, reporting marriage of Mrs. Lettice Daughterty to Zachariah Bell in ceremony performed by George W. Welch, Justice of the Inferior Court.

¹² Tattnall Co., Ga., “Inferior Court Sitting for Ordinary Purposes, 1805–1839,” 5 August 1811 binding out of son of Lettice Cooksey, now Lettice Daugherty.”

¹³ Thomas, *Laurens County, Georgia, Records, 1807–1832*, 196.

¹⁴ Montgomery Co., Ga., “State Papers in the Clerks Office ... Sept. the 2nd 1811,” p. 10, court attendance of Mary Watson.

¹⁵ “Georgia Marriages to 1850,” database, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com : accessed 1 June 2009).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

By Zilpha (Watts) Price Cooksey:

5. **James William Cooksey**, b. 16 (18?) Nov. 1819; d. 11 Aug., 1903, Newton Co., Miss.; m. (1) 11 May 1843, Newton Co., Elizabeth Miller; (2) 29 July 1858, Louisa [—?—]¹⁶
6. **Elizabeth Cooksey**, b. about 4 June 1821; d. 27 May 1917, buried 28 May 1917; m. Shadrack Odom ca. 1840, Newton Co., Miss.¹⁷

BIRTH & ORIGIN:

CA1749-53

GEORGIA

Analysis.

No known record states an age, birthplace, or parentage for William Cooksey.¹⁸ As a Revolutionary War soldier who saw service in 1779, he was likely born 1735–65. His inclusion on an 1823 list of inhabitants over the age of 70, in Bainbridge (Covington) County, Mississippi, places his birth in or before 1753.¹⁹ His age might be further estimated from two circumstances:

- 1804–05: Cooksey is dropped from the poll tax rolls of Tattnall County (see abstracts under that date), apparently because of infirmity. When Georgia codified the maximum poll-tax age in 1825, it was set at 60. If that age applied when Cooksey was exempted, it would place his birth at 1745.
- 1809–10: In this period, Cooksey seems to have wound down his active life (presumably as a farmer), sold his land on credit (thereby generating an annual income), and moved to a new area with his son John. If William were 60–65 at that time, then his birth would have occurred about 1745–50.

¹⁶ James W. Cooksey Bible.

¹⁷ Mississippi Bureau of Vital Statistics, Death Certificate of Elizabeth Odom, née Cooksy, 1817, State File No. 24406. Her death certificate erroneously cites the death day and month as 15 July, but the correct date is revealed by other internal evidence.

¹⁸ Almost all of the widespread but unproved or inaccurate assertions about this William Cooksey line are traceable back to the late J. L. Cooksey of Austin, Texas, who believed this William to be "William IV of Maryland." Several years before his death in 2003, J. L. Cooksey posted online a summary of his conclusions (but no supporting evidence) as follows:

"William Cooksey IV, son of William Cooksey and Mary Hudson was born in Maryland in 1754. He married Leanna Wesley. He served in the Revolution and was paid 22 lbs sterling for service rendered in the SC Militia. In 1787 Walter Cooksey arrived from England. William and Leanna move to Tatnol Co Ga. where he obtained two land grants in 1788 and 1789. William and Leanna were blessed with my relation John C. Cooksey around 1785. John Cooksey son of John C. Cooksey and Zelpha Rayburn, at the age of 74 in 1880, stated that his father was born in Ga. My G Grandfather, James W. Cooksey's bible shows William Cooksey died in MS in 1828. John and James W were brothers. William Cooksey and Leanna had another son William E. Cooksey who was born at Tatnol Co Ga in 1787. William E served in the War of 1812. William and Leanna had other children: John C, William E, Mary, Nancy E, and George W. The wife, Leanna Wesley, of William Cooksey IV was given to me by Mrs Agnes Altrup of Washington DC in 1960. I have never been able to find a marriage bond or license for this marriage. She also said Leanna was from Halifax Va. and that she had sme conection to John and Charles Wesley of England and Ga. I might add here that William Cooksey was the first entry in my GGrandfathers bible. Tomorrow I will give you a little history on William E. and John C Cooksey. JLCooksey Austin, Texas." See, J. L. Cooksey, "J COOKSEY (jcooksey@webtv.net)," undated message (<http://normabischel.tripod.com/COOKSEYresearchers.html> : last accessed 10 July 2010); typos and misspellings are reproduced exactly here.

The faulty assertions include these: William's parentage and birthplace (no evidence), his identification as the William Cooksey who served from SC. (totally in error), the attribution of the middle initial "C" to John Cooksey (no evidence), the identification of Zilpha as a Rayburn (totally in error), the attribution of a son George W. (no evidence of his existence); and the statement that William died in 1828 (the cited Bible *does* state that date, but it errs by one year, as evidenced by William's pension application for which he filed several documents *after* his alleged date of death).

¹⁹ 1823 Bainbridge County, Mississippi (partial census), p. 3, William Cooksey; digital images, "Mississippi State and Territorial *Census Collection, 1792-1866*," *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.Ancestry.com> : accessed 12 September 2010), citing Mississippi State and Territorial Censuses, 1792-1866, microfilm collection V229, roll 1; Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

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William's period of birth is significant to the identification of his parentage. Faith Parks Rayburn, a daughter of William's alleged daughter Nancy, is said to have asserted that her mother was born to William at Savannah in 1804. Records place the adult William elsewhere in Georgia during that time frame. However, circumstantial evidence suggests that he may be the son of an early Savannah settler of the same name:

William Cooksey I migrated from Worcester, England, to Savannah in 1737. He selected a tract of farm land next door to the Creek trader Joseph Watson and Watson's partner, the Creek "empress" Mary Musgrove. After his death, his widow sold his town lot to Mary and her new husband, Thomas Bosomworth. William's widow, Sarah (Young) Cooksey, was a sister of Isaac Young Jr. and the putative neice of the Creek Indian trader George Galphin of Silver Bluff, South Carolina, and Augusta, Georgia (the area in which William Cooksey II first appeared during the Revolutionary War). By the 1750s, Sarah's brother Isaac was a trusted associate of not only the Creek Mouse family but also the Creek countryman Timothy Bernard, who also operated upriver at Augusta and Silver Bluff, South Carolina. The last record on William I states that he left Savannah with his Young in-laws about 1740, bound for S.C. None of them have been found in the records of the S.C. Lowcountry between Savannah and Charleston. The widowed Sarah and brother Isaac returned to Savannah by 1756, where Isaac would become a colonial legislator. The rest of the Youngs and William Cooksey I, disappear from known records. The Augusta-Silver Bluff area is a likely possibility for them that remains to be explored.²⁰

REVOLUTIONARY WAR SERVICE:

OVERVIEW

- Records exist to document two terms of service for William Cooksey (var. Cooksie, Cucksey):

1778 February-March

Col. Elijah Clark's Minute Men Battalion (later militia)²¹

1779 April-August

First Regiment, Continental Line²²

²⁰ Elizabeth Shown Mills, "Research to Date: William Cooksey of Worcester, England, and Savannah, Georgia," report to Cooksey Research Group, 2 December 2008, 21 pp.

One other possible parent has been discounted. A "C. Cooksey" is said to have received a grant in Richmond County during "1756 to 1770"; see "Headrights Granted by the Georgia Colonial and State Governments from 1754 to 1800," name lists, *Georgia Genealogy Trails* (<http://genealogytrails.com/geo/state/headrights.html> : accessed 28 August 2010).

No further details have been discovered for any "C. Cooksey" in Georgia during that era. An examination of Wilkes County records of this era reveals only one C. C. _____ grantee: Cornelius Cochran who, when the land office opened in 1785, requested a replacement for an "old warrant" previously issued to him:

"February 1785: Ordered that Cornelius Cochran have a Warrant for Four hundred acres of Land in Wilkes County on Little River in Lieu of an old Warrant of said Cochrans. [No 'paid' notation.]" and "COCHRAN, Cornelius 200a Little River 1784 FFF: 17." See Wilkes County Court of Ordinary, "Orders of Land Court, 1785," FHL microfilm 163,599, Item 2.

In the phrase "Cornelius Cochran," the last five letters of the surname are hard to read; the name could easily be read as Cook_an." However, the surname is very clearly written in the second instance at which it appears.

²¹ In April 1785 Elijah Clarke issued a certificate attesting service for a number of militiamen who had fought under him, each of whom was eligible for bounty land; William "Cucksey" appears on that list. See Grace Gillam Davidson, Lelia Thornton Gentry, et al., *Historical Collections of the Georgia Chapters Daughter of the American Revolution* (1929; reprinted Baltimore, MD: Clearfield, 1995), 172. An extract appears later in this compilation, with extensive commentary.

²² William Cuksey/Cucksey (Pvt., Shadrack Wright's Co., 1st Regt., Ga. Cont'l. Line), pension applications 1278 and R20354; digital images, *Footnote.com* (<http://www.footnote.com> : downloaded 30 August 2008), image 2; imaged from Revolutionary War Pension and

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

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- William’s pension application asserts that he served as a private in **Shadrack Wright’s company** [8th Co., aka Rifle Co.]²³, 1st Regiment, Georgia Continental Line.²⁴
- The War Department’s “Compiled Service Record” for William “Cooksie,” created in the late 1800s and now available from the National Archives, abstracts three muster rolls on which William appears. The abstract cards assert that he joined 1 April 1779 (**an error**) and that he was injured at Augusta by 1 June (**also an error**). They correctly report that, by 1 July, he was “on furlough.”²⁵ A fourth surviving muster roll for his unit reveals that by 2 August, he had not returned and was cited as a “deserter.”²⁶ The errors are addressed in detail in the notes that follow.
- The most-complete list of Georgians in the Revolution, compiled by Lucian Lamar Knight “under Authority of the Legislature,” has no record of William Cooksey under any known variant spelling.²⁷
- William probably did not receive bounty land, although he did receive a warrant for land—a warrant that veterans were allowed to sell if they preferred.
- His own sketchy account of service, if not due to age and failing memory, may well have reflected a need to obscure the part of his service record that might disqualify him if it came to light: the desertion.

**REVOLUTIONARY WAR SERVICE
RECORDS FOUND TO DATE**

1776–1782

RICHMOND COUNTY?, GEORGIA

Pension application.

William’s description of his service, for which he provided no dates or location, other than “Georgia,” briefly states:

Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files, microfilm publication M804 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, [n.d.], roll number not cited but should be 707. See complete transcript, herein, under date 8 September 1828–25 June 1829. *Footnote.com* is now *Fold3*.)

²³ The identity of Wright’s company as the 8th or Rifle Co. is from Lucian Lamar Knight, *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1967), 9–10; *Archive.org* (http://www.archive.org/details/georgiasrosterrev00_knigrich : accessed 8 June 2008).

²⁴ William Cuksey/Cucksey (Pvt., Shadrack Wright’s Co., 1st Regt., Ga. Cont’l. Line), pension applications 1278 and R20354; digital images, *Footnote.com* (<http://www.footnote.com> : downloaded 30 August 2008), image 2; imaged from *Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files*, microfilm publication M804 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, [n.d.], roll number not cited but should be 707. See complete transcript, herein, under date 8 September 1828–25 June 1829.

²⁵ *Compiled Service Records of Soldiers Who Served in the American Army During the American Revolution*, National Archives microfilm publication M881 [roll not stated], for “William Cooksie” (Pvt., 1 Geo. Batt., Revolutionary War); image copies in “Revolutionary War Service Records,” database, *Footnote.com* (<http://www.footnote.com> : accessed 30 August 2010), images 17080038, 17080042, 17080046.

²⁶ “Georgia Militia and Continental Regiments of Infantry,” *Marquis de Lafayette Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution* (<http://www.lafayettesar.org/gamilitia.htm> : accessed 4 September 2010), for “A Muster Roll of the 1st Georgia Battalion of Continental Troops Commanded by Col. Robert Rae, August, August the 2nd 1779.”

²⁷ Lucian Lamar Knight, *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution: Containing a List of the State’s Defenders; Officers and Men; Soldiers and Sailors; Partisans and Regulars; Whether Enlisted from Georgia or Settled in Georgia after the close of Hostilities* (1920; reprinted, Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2008).

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“I **William Cuksey** of the County of Covington in the State of Mississippi do hereby declare that I enlisted in the continental line of the army of the Revolution for and during the war and continued in its Service until its termination at which period I was a private in **Shadrack Wright’s Company** in the **first Regiment of the Georgia line**. I Cannot declare that I afterwards received Certificates for the reward of eighty dollars, to which I was entitled under a resolve of Congress, passed the 15th day of May 1778. ... Witness my hand this Eighth day of September in the Year Eighteen hundred and twenty Eight. [Signed] William Cuksey (X his mark).”²⁸

1 APRIL–1 JULY 1779

RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA

Compiled service record.

Three service cards briefly chronicle Cooksey’s service. From these, researchers deduced that

- he enlisted on 1 April 1779 and served until 1 July of that year;
- he was at Augusta, Georgia, on 1 June 1779 when he was named on a payroll;
- he was, at that time, a “casualty,” but the record does not state the nature of his “casualty” or the conflict in which it occurred; and
- he was furloughed before the 1 July pay date—likely due to the seriousness of his injuries.

His CSR also reports that he served in the 1st Georgia Battalion, but it makes no mention of Shadrack Wright or the 8th Company of the Georgia Line for which Wright was a captain.²⁹

COMMENT:

The CSRs present a seriously flawed picture of Cooksey’s role in the Revolutionary War, as detailed below.

The CSRs are official documents. Each is an original creation. Nonetheless, each man’s file is a *derivative source*. The CSR project, which embraced all wars through the Philippine Insurrection, was begun nearly a half-century after Cooksey’s death. The War Department, “to permit more rapid and efficient checking of military and medical records in connection with claims for pension and other veterans’ benefits,” combed its trove of military rolls and created “summaries” of the service of each identifiable veteran of conflicts between the Revolutionary War and 1903.³⁰

²⁸ William Cuksey/Cucksey (Pvt., Shadrack Wright’s Co., 1st Regt., Ga. Cont’l. Line), pension application 1278 (and widow’s application R20354); digital images, *Footnote.com* (<http://www.footnote.com> : downloaded 30 August 2008), 2nd image in digital file; imaged from Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files, microfilm publication M804 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, [n.d.], roll number not cited at Footnote.com. The widow’s application that has been linked to William’s file is erroneously connected, as discussed under image 5.

²⁹ “William Cooksie” (Pvt., 1st Geo. Batt., Revolutionary War); digital images in “Revolutionary War Service Records,” database, Ancestry.com’s *Footnote.com* (<http://www.fold3.com> : accessed 30 August 2010), images 17080038, 17080042, 17080046; imaged from *Compiled Service Records of Soldiers Who Served in the American Army during the American Revolution*, National Archives microfilm publication M881 [roll number not cited; likely roll 396]. For the identification of Wright’s company in which Cooksey would have served, see Francis Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army during the War of the Revolution* (Washington, D. C.: Rare Book Publishing Co., 1914), 100; and Lucian Lamar Knight, *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution* (Atlanta, Ga.: Index Printing Co., 1920), 9–10.

³⁰ Anne Bruner Eales and Robert M. Kvasnicka, *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives of the United States*, 3d ed. (Washington: National Archives and Records Administration, 2000), 127. This work is an excellent guide for all historians. Its discussions of major record collections and their history go far beyond most other NARA publications, including the standard *Guide to Federal Records in the National Archives of the United States*, available in a 3-volume edition and online at <http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/>.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

The *actual* muster rolls are abstracted below, with analysis that corrects the CSR errors.

1 APRIL–1 JULY 1779

RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA

Military Pay & Muster Rolls.

“A Pay Roll of the Field Commissions Staff & Non Commissiond Officers and Privates belonging to the first Georgia Battallion of Contintal Troops Commanded by **Col^o Robert Rae** from the *first day of April to the first day of June 1779.*”

William Cooksie Private

Time frame: 1st April–1 June, 2 months @ \$6 ²/₃ per month , total \$13 ¹/₃

“Causalties: Augusta”

“Receipts”: No signature for pay

[*He and Andrew Forster, “waggoner at Silver Bluff,” were the only men not paid*]³¹

[Untitled roll, dated “June to July” 1779:

William Cooksie Private

Time frame: Same data as above

“Casualties: On Furlough”

“Receipts”: [*Again, he and Andrew Foster, “wag^r at Silver Bluff,” were only 2 men not paid*]³²

“A Muster Roll of the 1st Georgia Battallion of Continental Troops Commanded by Col. Robert Rae, August, *August the 2nd 1779.*”

“Privates (all enlisted for the war):

“**William Coucksie**, deserted”³³

COMMENT:

A careful analysis of the original muster rolls creates a radically different conclusion from the hasty notes made on the Compiled Service Record.³⁴

1.

³¹ “1 Georgia Battn. Col. Robert Rae, Maj. John Habersham, 1779–1780; 4 Pay rolls—April 1, 1779 to Feb. 1, 1780,” *Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775–1783*, National Archives microfilm publication M246 [roll not shown]; image copies in “Revolutionary War Service Records,” database, *Footnote.com* (www.footnote.com : accessed 10 September 2010), images 7661708, 7661709, 7661612, 7661716, 7661733, 7661738.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ “Georgia Militia and Continental Regiments of Infantry,” *Marquis de Lafayette Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution* (<http://www.lafayettesar.org/gamilitia.htm> : accessed 4 September 2010), for “A Muster Roll of the 1st Georgia Battallion of Continental Troops Commanded by Col. Robert Rae, August, August the 2nd 1779.” This source also states: “**1779 2 August**—Muster rolls for 1st GA, 3d GA, 4th GA indicate combined strength of 73 privates, 41 non-commissioned officers, drummers and fifers, and 44 commissioned officers, *inclusive of deserters, sick, and captured*—the actual effective strength was 9 officers, 11 non-commissioned officers, 2 drummers, 1 fifer, and 18 privates.”

³⁴ Here, I summarize a more-detailed analysis published as Elizabeth Shown Mills, “QuickLesson 3: Flawed Records,” *Evidence Explained: Historical Analysis, Citation & Source Usage* (<http://www.evidenceexplained.com/content/quicklesson-3-flawed-records>). **The actual CSR cards and muster rolls are imaged in that article.**

William did not enlist on 1 April. His enlistment could have been months or years before 1 April 1779. A study of available records for all of the men named on the rolls, conducted by Rachal Lennon, has found that—when actual enlistment dates or time frame could be determined—those dates were all well before the start date of the 1 June payroll.³⁵

The data on William’s compiled service record is from payrolls, a type of record compiled irregularly in Revolutionary Georgia, as money actually became available to pay the men. *When a new roll was compiled, its “start date” was the date of the last payroll.* This series of records has three different payrolls, carrying the following dates.

1 April–1 June 1779
 1 June–1 July 1779
 1 July – 1 November 1779

2.

William was not a casualty. There is no evidence that he was ever wounded. On both the June and July rolls, every individual in his company has an entry in that “casualty” column. On the 1 June roll, the “Casualties” column was used to record the following status information about each man:

Status

“In Augusta”	[Col. Robert Rae, the brigade commander]
“Absent”	[1 man, Francis Henry Harris, listed immediately under Rae]
“Present”	[15 men]
“Augusta”	[4 men: Cooksie, Thos. Glascock, Jesse Walton, Jesse Walton (<i>sic</i>)]
“Silver Bluff”	[5 men]
“Augusta Hosp.”	[2 men; David Peters & Reuben Windham, listed consecutively]
“Waggr at Silver Bluff”	[1 man, Andrew Foster]

Nothing suggests why William did not collect his pay for those two months of service.

On the 1 July roll, the “Casualties” column was also used to record *status information* about the men, as follows:

“Absent”	[2 men, Col. Rae and Francis Henry Harris]
“Present”	[17 men]
“At Silver Bluff”	[5 men]
“Waggr at Silver Bluff”	[1 man, Andrew Foster, who again was not paid]
“Pres. after War Parole”	[1 man]
“Genl. Hospital”	[1 man; Hugh Bell]
“Augusta Hosp.”	[2 men; Peters & Windham, again]
“On furlough”	[2 men; Cooksie and John King]
“Pris. of war released”	[1 man]

³⁵ Rachal Mills Lennon, CG, “William Cooksey II (ca. 1745-1829) of the 8th Rifle Company, First Georgia Battalion, Continental Troops,” report to Elizabeth Shown Mills, 7 November 2010, p. 7 especially.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

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“Omitted...prisoners” [3 men]
[unreadable] [3 men]

William did not return from his furlough as scheduled. When the next roll was created for his company, a muster roll dated 2 August 1779, his commanding officer assumed that he had deserted.

1 AUGUST 1779
[AUGUSTA?]

Military Pay & Muster Rolls

“A Pay Roll of the Field Commissioned Staff & Non Commissioned Officers & Privates belonging to the First Georgia Continental Battalion Commanded by Colonel Robert Rae from the 1st Day of July to the 1st Day of November 1779.”³⁶

COMMENT:

William Cooksie is not referenced at all.

The 35 named men include almost all of those on the 1 April to 2 August rolls, including John King who in July was, like Cooksie, on furlough.

WILLIAM’S RW OFFICER:

LIEUT. SHADRACK WRIGHT

1775–1779

GEORGIA

Analysis.

Lucien Lamar Knight’s “authoritative” list of officers of the Continental Line assigns Shadrack Wright (Cooksey’s named officer) to the **Second** battalion of the Georgia Line:

Wright, Shadrach (Ga.) 1st Lieutenant, **2d Georgia**, 7th January 1776; Captain, ----, 1778, and served to October 1782.³⁷

However, Wright’s alleged service in the **Second** battalion appears to be an error. Knight also provides a list of officers dated 10 February 1776 that identifies Wright as “First Lieut. in the Eighth or Rifle Company” of the **first** battalion:

³⁶ This roll can be found in the series “1 Georgia Battn. Col. Robert Rae, Maj. John Habersham, 1779–1780; 4 Pay Rolls—April 1, 1779 to Feb. 1, 1780,” image copies in “Revolutionary War Service Records,” database, *Footnote.com* (www.fold3.com : accessed 10 September 2010), images 7661708, 7661709, 7661612, 7661716, 7661733, 7661738; imaged from *Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775–1783*, National Archives microfilm publication M246 [roll not stated].

³⁷ Lucian Lamar Knight, *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1967), 9–10; *Archive.org* (<http://www.archive.org/details/georgiasrosterrev00knigrich> : accessed 8 June 2008).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

“A RETURN OF THE OFFICERS chosen for the battalion, ordered to be raised for the protection and defence of the Colony of Georgia, Feb. 16, 1776:

Colonel—Lachlan McIntosh

Lieut.-Colonel—Samuel Elbert

Major—Joseph Habersham

<snip>

“Eighth or Rifle Company.

Capt—Colson

First Lieut.—**Shadrach Wright**

Second Lieut.—George Walton

Ensign— ——— [sic]

Chaplain—John Holmes”³⁸

COMMENTS:

Wright

- The 2 August muster roll for the **First Battalion** lists Shadrack Wright as a prisoner of war, on parole. The 1 November 1779 payroll for the **First Battalion** places him back in active duty, collecting pay for the 4 months since the last payroll was made on 1 July.³⁹
- Wright’s general Lachlan McIntosh, on 3 February 1784, gave Wright’s heirs a bounty-land certificate stating that Wright “enlisted as Captain in **1st Ga. Continental Line** and died in service.”⁴⁰

Cooksey

- When Cooksey joined this unit remains undetermined.
- Lieutenants typically raised companies in the area of their own residence. Knight does not state where Wright’s company was formed. *However, two pieces of evidence place Lt. Wright at Augusta, St. Paul Parish (Richmond County after 1777).* See Hemperley and Mims, below. **By extrapolation, Cooksey was likely residing in St. Paul’s parish during the Revolution—or just over the line in Wilkes County, where Cooksey subsequently enlisted in Col. Elijah Clarke’s minutemen forces.**
- Note that two of Cooksey’s officers were men prominent in the Creek trade: McIntosh and Holmes.

1775

RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Grant.

³⁸ Lucian Lamar Knight, *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1967), 9–10; *Archive.org* (<http://www.archive.org/details/georgiasrosterrev00 knigrich> : accessed 8 June 2008).

³⁹ “1 Georgia Battn. Col. Robert Rae, Maj. John Habersham, 1779–1780; 4 Pay rolls—April 1, 1779 to Feb. 1, 1780,” *Revolutionary War Rolls, 1775–1783*, National Archives microfilm publication M246 [roll not shown]; image copies in “Revolutionary War Service Records,” database, *Footnote.com* (www.footnote.com : accessed 10 September 2010), image 7661752.

⁴⁰ Knight, *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution*, 9–10, 185.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

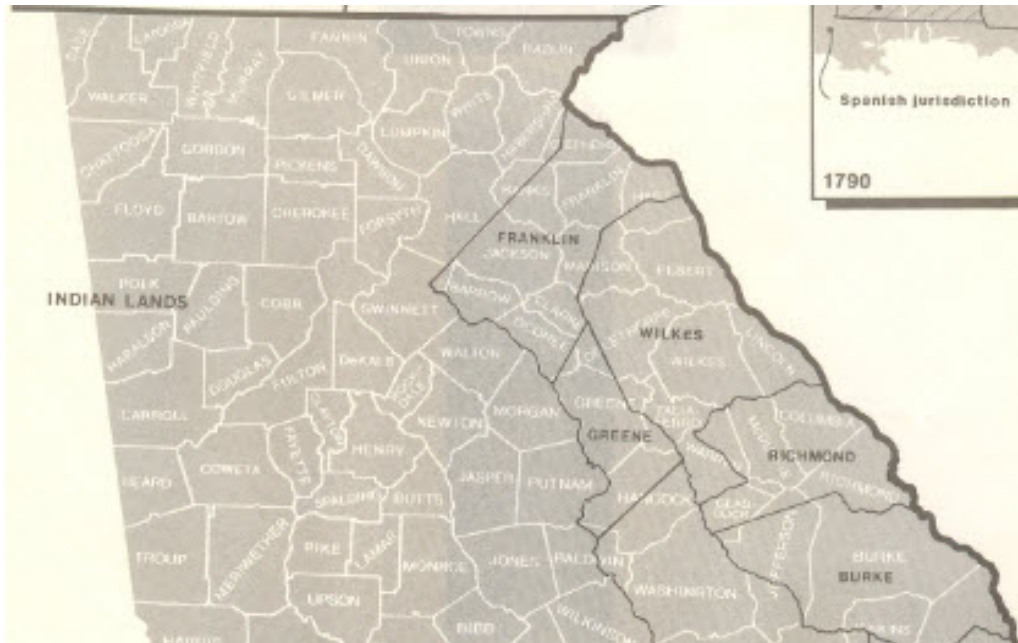
Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

“WRIGHT, SHEDRICK: 150 acres, St. Paul Parish [Richmond County after 1777], Granted, February 7, 1775. Grant Book M, page 1062. Bounded on all sides by vacant land.”⁴¹

1776-1790

RICHMOND & WILKES COUNTIES, GEORGIA



1776–1784

**RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA &
WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA**

Mims genealogy. “**William-4-a Mims** (son of Benjamin and Judith)”... “bought property in Richmond County, Georgia in 1779, was one of the appraisers of property that belonged to **Shadrack Wright** . . . He served in the American Revolution. On July 12, 1784 he was permitted to file on 287 acres of land in Washington County, Georgia by virtue of his service in the American Revolution.”⁴²

COMMENT:

Clearly, Shadrack Wright was a Richmond County resident at the time he raised his company for Revolutionary service.

Washington County, to which the Mims removed, was the county in which William Cooksey next surfaced in 1793. Created on 25 February 1784, Washington would eventually be subdivided into Greene, Hancock, Johnson, Montgomery, and Warren Counties.

⁴¹ Marion R. Hemperley, Surveyor General Department, State of Georgia, *English Crown Grants in St. Paul Parish in Georgia, 1755–1775* (Atlanta: State Printing Office, 1974), 204.

⁴² Sam Mims “Leaves from the Mims Family Tree: A Genealogic History of First Five Generations of American Mims” (MS, Minden, Louisiana: March 1961); transcript by Terry Riegel, *RiegelRidge.com* (<http://www.reigelridge.com/Genealogy/Resources/Leaves%20From%20The%20Mims%20Family%20Tree.pdf> : accessed 7 September 2008).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

1776–1784

RICHMOND COUNTY, GEORGIA &

Land (Bounty)

“Certificates of Service in American Revolution”

“WRIGHT, SHADRACK. Certificate that he enlisted as Captain in 1st Ga. Continental Line and died in service. Lachlan McIntosh, Maj. Gen., Feb. 3, 1784. 300 acres granted **heirs** of Shadrack Wright, Warrant 39.”⁴³

**REVOLUTIONARY WAR CONFLICTS
IN WHICH COOKSEY MAY HAVE SERVED**

GEORGIA

1775–1782

Analysis.

The surviving records of North Georgia’s backcountry battles, skirmishes, and expeditions are seriously incomplete. Little is known about the identity of the participants in any of the North Georgia battles. Most of what is discernible must be pieced together from two sources:

- bounty-land records, most of which are published; and
- affidavits of aged soldiers who lived long enough to apply for a pension, most of which remain unpublished.

Records on the company commanded by Shadrack Wright are exceptionally scarce, as are records on Wright himself. Thus far, I’ve found no pension affidavits from any other men who served under Wright.

Accounts rendered by the veterans spotlight other reasons why it is difficult to reconcile official records for any one man:

- Soldiers from one unit were regularly sent out to scout, or as messengers; in the course of both they might be caught up in skirmishes or battles in which the rest of their company was not engaged.
- Men from one unit might “swap out” with soldiers from another unit, with the permission of their officers.
- As units were depleted, the men might be reassigned or consolidated with another unit.

I have found no evidence, yet, that the First Battalion of Continental Line participated in any North Georgia actions during the four months that are documentable for William’s Continental Line service. The only documentable action for them in North Georgia was at Briar Creek in Burke County on 3 February 1779.

⁴³ Lucian Lamar Knight, *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1967), 185; *Archive.org* (<http://www.archive.org/details/georgiasrosterrev00knigrich> : accessed 8 June 2008).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

However, Clarke's Wilkes County-based militia, together with SC militia and some men recruited as far away as North Carolina, saw heavy fighting throughout North Georgia. Chronologically, the next notes recap the conflicts, spotlight items of potential relevance to William's Revolutionary War experience.

1778

WILKES COUNTY, GEORGIA

Analysis.

Elijah Clarke's Minute Men:

The two battalions of minutemen raised by Elijah Clarke in February 1778 were extremely short lived. The standard study of the Revolution in Georgia does not mention them specifically.⁴⁴ No substantive biography exists for Elijah Clarke.⁴⁵ A brief biography posted at the online *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, has only a passing reference to the period William Cucksey/Cooksie would have served under Clarke.⁴⁶ A chronology of Georgia's Revolutionary War activities created by the Georgia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution suggests that the service of the militiamen was extremely shortlived:

1778

Feb. 6 "Two Battalions of minute Men raised in Wilkes County for defense of the State."

Mar. 7 "Battalion of Minute Men reduced by resolve of the Assembly."⁴⁷

Daniel Elliott's recent study of the battlefield at Kettle Creek, where Clarke's militia played a critical role in 1779, is more informative. Passages key to William are boldfaced in the excerpt below:

Patriot Militia:

"The Patriots in the southern states who had not joined the Continental Army were organized by county The concept of 'minuteman' was an American invention that predated the American Revolution. Minutemen were militia soldiers who were ready to serve on a minute's notice. This term won popular appeal, associated first with Massachusetts militia troops in battles at Lexington and Concord. The concept spread to other states, including Georgia. **Elijah Clarke's troops were frequently referred to as minutemen, as well as riflemen, mounted horsemen, and militiamen.** Wilkes County was an American frontier before and during the American Revolution. Citizen settlers in this region were accustomed to defending themselves against Indian attack, which came with little or no warning. When the Revolution began, hostile Tories were added to that defensive

⁴⁴ Kenneth Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763–1789* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958).

⁴⁵ At least two relevant but minor works remain to be consulted:

• Louise Frederick Hays, *Hero of Hornet's Nest: A Biography of Elijah Clark, 1733 to 1799* (New York: Stratford House, 1946). An index of Google's digitized copy of this work reveals only four references to "Minutemen"; the full text seems not to be available at Google or elsewhere online.

• Richard K. Murdock, "Elijah Clarke and the Anglo-American Designs on East Florida," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 35 (Fall 1951): 174–90.

⁴⁶ Robert Scott Davis, "Elijah Clarke," *New Georgia Encyclopedia* (<http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-668> : accessed 6 January 2011).

⁴⁷ Untitled chronology, *Georgia Society, Sons of the American Revolution* (<http://www.georgiasocietysar.org/rev1778.htm> : accessed 27 December 2010).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

equation. Numerous veterans stated in their pension applications that their garrison and ranging services, while posted in Wilkes County, were intended mostly to protect the citizenry from Indian and Tory attack. . . .⁴⁸

“Elijah Clarke served the Patriot cause as a militia officer throughout the American Revolution. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant Colonel in Colonel John Stewart’s 1st Battalion in 1777. Stewart’s Battalion was authorized for two years of service and it participated in the East Florida campaign in May and June, 1778. **The 1st and 2nd Battalions of Georgia minutemen were officially disbanded on March 1, 1778**, prior to participation in the East Florida campaign, where, at the battle of Alligator Creek, Clarke was badly wounded. Clarke recuperated from his wounds at Sunbury, Georgia and later returned to Wilkes County. Clarke received another commission as a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Wilkes County militia only a few weeks before the battle of Kettle Creek, on January 26, 1779 (Candler 1908, Volume 2:136-137; 2001). He was second in command of the Georgia militia at Kettle Creek. Clarke is credited with achieving the rout of the Loyalists at Kettle Creek after he pursued them across the creek and to a hill on its western side. That status was confirmed by the present research.⁴⁹

“Colonel John Dooly’s death in July 1780 led to Elijah Clarke’s advancement in the Georgia militia for the duration of the war. Clarke commanded Georgia and South Carolina militia troops at battles in Augusta, Savannah, and numerous engagements in South Carolina and North Carolina. He also participated in Colonel Pickens’ campaign against the Lower Cherokee towns. Following the first battle of Augusta in September 1780, Clarke led a group of Wilkes County refugees to the Blue Ridge Mountains, where they joined with other Patriots. That group of soldiers, also known as the Overmountain men, helped to turn the tide of the war against the British with their participation in the battles of King’s Mountain, Cowpens and other places in the Carolinas. Elijah Clarke is Georgia’s most celebrated Revolutionary War hero. Clarke continued to serve as a military leader in the Georgia militia after the American Revolution. His creation of a “Trans-Oconee Republic” was received by the U.S. Government as a treasonous act. In early 1790 he led the Georgia troops against the Creek Indians in several engagements. General Elijah Clarke died on December 15, 1799 (McCall 2004, Volume I: 14).”⁵⁰

I have found no master list of the Wilkes County men who served in Clarke’s minutemen forces. Some can be identified from the published certificates issued by Clarke so that his men could apply for bounty land. One such certificate, drafted apparently in April 1785, includes William “Cucksey.” (See full transcript under that date amid the chronological notes, below.)

In that certificate, Clarke explicitly identifies William and his compatriots as part of his (Clarke’s) minutemen battalion. The distinction is significant. In every county, all able-bodied men were required to serve in the militia, with exceptions granted only for a few categories (e.g., Quakers, non-whites). The minutemen, however, were volunteers—militiamen who agreed to be ready for

⁴⁸ Daniel T. Elliott, *Stirring up a Hornet’s Nest: The Kettle Creek Battlefield Survey*, Lamar Institute Publication Series, Report No. 131 (Savannah: The Lamar Institute, 2009), 37; PDF posted online at http://shapiro.anthro.uga.edu/Lamar/images/PDFs/publication_131.pdf.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

service on “a minute’s notice.” The point is relevant to William’s character, given the implication of the desertion notice credited to him on the 2 July 1779 First Georgia payroll.

Clarke’s certificate does not identify the time frame in which William served or any actions in which he fought. Given that no military action is reported for the shortlived (one month) existence of the minutemen battalions, it is virtually certain that Cooksey’s service under Clarke occurred while officially a militia man. For certain, the disbanding of the minutemen in March would not have relieved William Cucksey of military service, considering both the militia law and the difficulty of remaining neutral amid the conflict that brought war, literally, to their doorsteps.

In the case of the Wilkes County militia, its men would be mobilized several additional times during the course of the war:

SUMMER 1778

FLORIDA EXPEDITION:

In June 1778, Clarke and Col. John Dooly led a regiment from Wilkes County into South Georgia on their ill-fated Florida Expedition. On 29 June, they were beaten back at Alligator Bridge along the Florida line. Clarke was wounded and the expedition was aborted shortly afterwards. Most discussions of the battle speak of Clarke’s militiamen, although the SAR chronology asserts that the Wilkes County forces who left home to join the Florida expedition were volunteers. Elliott’s narrative provides some additional detail about the Wilkes County militia, but muddies the issue by referring to the Florida Expedition forces as minutemen after the official disbanding of that class:

Captain John Peartree Burke ... took command of a militia company in Colonel Stewart’s regiment of Wilkes County militia. Colonel John Stewart, who commanded the regiment in 1777–early 1778, was replaced by Elijah Clarke in late 1778. Captain Burke was in command of his company as late as 1778, when it fought with Elijah Clarke’s minutemen in the battle of Alligator Creek in East Florida. ... Evidence is lacking that Captain John Burke participated in the battle of Kettle Creek.⁵¹

No known list exists for the Clarke militiamen who participated in the Florida Expedition, although several can be identified from the abstracted bounty-land records published by Lucien Lamar Knight and others.

TO DO:

- **Compile a full list of these men, using the search capability of the online version of Knight to identify them.**
- **Seek a pension for each of them at Fold3.com, to glean from their affidavits any information that might be relevant to Cooksey.**

FEBRUARY 1779

WILKES COUNTY

In this month, Wilkes was the site of two battles that likely involved most, if not all, of the Wilkes County militia under Elijah Clarke: Carr’s Fort and Kettle Creek.

10 FEBRUARY 1779

⁵¹ Ibid., 55, citing RW pension applications of Joshua Dover, R3053, Thomas Connell R224, and Thomas Snelson S17111.

CARR'S FORT

On 10 February 1779, a contingent of about 200 Loyalists under Col. John Hamilton entered Wilkes County as part of a British effort to retake North Georgia. There, at Robert Carr's Fort, they were stopped by forces under Lt. Col. Elijah Clarke and his superior, Colonel John Dooly—both Wilkes County residents whose men were Wilkes County militiamen—together with South Carolina forces under Andrew Pickens. Within a day, the Patriots had virtually routed the Loyalists. Then word came of a far larger force of Loyalists crossing the Savannah, headed for Augusta. Dooly, Clark, and Pickens pulled their men from the Fort Carr effort and set out to intercept the bigger threat.⁵²

14 FEBRUARY 1779

KETTLE CREEK

After a three-day chase, the Patriot forces under Dooly, Clarke, and Pickens confronted a force of 600 British from North Carolina. Led by an enigmatic Colonel Boyd (a man of uncertain identity and origin), this Loyalist regiment had crossed into Georgia at Cherokee Ford on the Savannah. After a successful skirmish against a small unit of local militia at Cherokee Ford, the Redcoats moved into Wilkes County and set up camp on Kettle Creek.

There, on 14 February, the British were beaten back by the militiamen under Dooly, Clarke, and Pickens. The Patriots were heavily outnumbered: the best estimates credit 200 men to Pickens's force and just 140 to Dooly. By the end of the day, however, the Patriots had killed the Loyalist colonel, routed his men, and took most of them prisoner.⁵³

A full list of the 140 men of Dooly's and Clarke's unit has never been compiled. Twenty-six of them have been identified from thirteen Revolutionary War pension applications that others have studied. William is not mentioned in those applications. Similarly, longer lists compiled for the South Carolina units do not mention Cooksey.

Several other engagements occurred in the next two months, before William "Cooksie" made his first appearance on a surviving pay roll. The Marquis de Lafayette Chapter, SAR, provides a synopsis that I've supplemented below with notes from elsewhere:⁵⁴

18 FEBRUARY 1779

HERBERT'S STORE

Savannah River; county undetermined. Apparently, this engagement did not involve Clarke's forces. The units involved here are said to have been those of Col. LeRoy Hammond (South Carolina's Lower Ninety-Six District Regiment) and John McIntosh and Lt. Col. John Twiggs (heading a regiment of Georgians).⁵⁵ Heitman's authoritative register of Continental Line officers identifies John McIntosh as lieutenant colonel of the Third Battalion of Georgia's continental line, from 18

⁵² "American Revolution—Feb 10, 1779: The Battle of Carr's Fort," *This Day in History* (<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-battle-of-carrs-fort> : accessed 6 January 2011). The same description of the battle appears, virtually word for word, at the webpage, "The Battle of Carr's Fort, February 10th, 1779," *San Antonio Chapter of the Texas State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution* (<http://sarsat.org/HistoricalAccounts/17790210TheBattleofCarrsFort.htm> : accessed 6 January 2011). It is not discernible which site silently copied the other.

⁵³ The most complete account of the battle is that of Robert Scott Davis, *Georgians in the Revolution: At Kettle Creek (Wilkes Co.) and Burke Co.* (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1986), particularly 11–44.

⁵⁴ "Georgia Militia and Continental Regiments of Infantry: A Selected Historical Timeline," *Sons of the American Revolution, Marquis de Lafayette Chapter* (<http://www.lafayettesar.org/gamilitia.htm> : accessed 6 January 2011).

⁵⁵ "The American Revolution in South Carolina: South Carolinians Outside of South Carolina in the American Revolution," *Carolana.com* (http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/sc_troops_militia_outside_sc.html : accessed 7 January 2011).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

June 1778 to the end of the war.⁵⁶ Heitman offers nothing on Twiggs, but the author of his sketch in *New Georgia Encyclopedia* places him in the Fourth Company of Lachlan McIntosh's First Continental battalion in 1779.⁵⁷ No known evidence suggests that William Cooksey's Eighth Company of the First Continental participated in this engagement.

22 FEBRUARY 1779

THOMAS'S PLANTATION

This engagement, included in the Georgia SAR chronology, might be an error. On 22 February 1781 there occurred an engagement at Thompson's Plantation in South Carolina. However, I can find no other information on a 1779 engagement for Thomas's Plantation or any 22 February engagement in Georgia.

3 MARCH 1779

BRIER (BRIAR) CREEK

This significant battle in Burke County (now Screven) apparently engaged both militia forces and Continental soldiers from the Second line, but not from the First in which William served. According to the Georgia Society, SAR:

“On the same day that Colonel Boyd was defeated at Kettle Creek, and Colonel Archibald Campbell withdrew from Augusta, a large force of North Carolina troops appeared across the [Savannah] river from the Augusta outpost on the Georgia frontier. A planned rendezvous with Campbell at Wrightsville by Boyd's Loyalists led to the capture of some of Boyd's men when [British] Colonel Campbell unexpectedly failed to show up.

“The North Carolina patriots, under the command of General John Ashe, smelled blood. With the victory at Kettle Creek, Ashe's men were hot on the trail of Campbell's loyalists. Unknown to Ashe, however, was that Campbell had received reinforcements from Savannah under the command of General Augustine Prevost. Together the British forces totaled 2,300 men, although less than a thousand participated in the battle.

“Camping at the confluence of Brier Creek and the Savannah River, Ashe's men were caught unaware by hundreds of handpicked soldiers and loyalist militia on March 3, 1779. The Tories from North Carolina, along with their commander, Ashe, fled. Only Colonel Samuel Elbert and his Georgia militia remained. Outnumbered and overpowered, the men defended the camp until almost all were dead. The late afternoon action ended at sunset, with the rebellion forces suffering a humiliating defeat. Almost 400 Americans were killed or captured, while the British only lost 5 men.⁵⁸

The identification of the Brier/Briar Creek forces under Col. Samuel Elbert as “militia” appears to err. Heitman's *Register* states that Elbert, as a lieutenant colonel, served in the First Georgia,

⁵⁶ Francis Bernard Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army during the War of the Revolution, April 1775 to December 1783* (Washington, D.C.: Rare Book Shop Publishing Co., 1914), 29.

⁵⁷ Russell K. Brown, “John Twiggs (1750–1816),” *New Georgia Encyclopedia* (<http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-3710> : accessed 7 January 2011).

⁵⁸ “Georgia Militia and Continental Regiments of Infantry: A Selected Historical Timeline,” *Sons of the American Revolution, Marquis de Lafayette Chapter* (<http://www.lafayettesar.org/gamilitia.htm> : accessed 6 January 2011).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Continental Line from 7 January 1776 to 5 July 1776; at that point he was appointed to the Second Georgia, Continental Line, where he served to the end of the war.⁵⁹

MARCH 1779

FORT MORGAN

This engagement occurred at a Patriot outpost on the Ogeechee, county undetermined. I've not yet identified the forces that served.⁶⁰

MARCH 1779

NEWSOME'S FORT

The site of this engagement was said by one participant (in an 1850 affidavit when he was nearly 100) to be in Wilkes County near the Richmond line. That veteran identified the 1850 location of the site as Warren County.⁶¹

A Newsom genealogy offers the following assertion, without documentation (although other assertions in the same paragraph are adequately sourced):

“Solomon Newsom (the 2nd) married to (1) Jane White (2) widow Elizabeth Mitchell. Solomon was a Captain during the Revolutionary War. He escaped the Tait's Indians in 1779 and reached a fort on the south side of Briar Creek in present day Warren Co., Ga. in time to warn them of the impending attack. According to Dr. George, Solomon II was a Melitia [sic] Capt. in Col. Elijah Clarke's Regiment in the Revolution.⁶²

Knight's *Georgia's Roster of the Revolution* (p. 135) abstracts the certificate that Elijah Clarke provided to Solomon Newsome, qualifying him for bounty land in Washington County.

The conflict in which Elijah Clarke's forces met “Tait's Indians” in 1779 is the 22 March 1779 Battle of Rocky Comfort Creek near Augusta. It is discussed in greater detail under that date below.

20 MARCH 1779

ABERCORN CREEK

This naval engagement occurred in South Georgia, across from Purrysburg, South Carolina.⁶³ I've found no evidence that either Clarke's militiamen or Georgia's Continental Line was involved.

21 MARCH 1779

THE CROSSROADS

This engagement on Beech Island apparently occurred in Burke County. One of the few sources available for it summarizes the encounter this way:

⁵⁹ Francis Bernard Heitman, *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army during the War of the Revolution, April 1775 to December 1783* (Washington, D.C.: Rare Book Shop Publishing Co., 1914), 29. However, when Henry Deshasure applied for a Revolutionary pension as a veteran of Georgia service (but a resident of Mercer County, Ky.) he stated that he served in the Third Georgia under “Colonel Ray or Rhea and Lt. Col. Elbert at the Battle of Savannah and at Briar Creek.”

⁶⁰ “Revolutionary War Raids and Skirmishes in 1779,” *The American Revolutionary War* (<http://www.myrevolutionarywar.com/battles/1779s.htm> : accessed 7 January 2011).

⁶¹ This placement of Newsome's Fort is found on page 3 of the 19 August 1850 pension affidavit of Micajah Brooks of Paulding County, Ga.; see Micajah Brooks (Revolutionary War, Ga.) and Widow Margaret T. Brooks, Pension Application W27,694; BLM 51,752-160-55, *Footnote.com* (<http://www.footnote.com> : accessed 9 January 2011), especially image 10999895.

⁶² Chad Williams, “Separating the Facts from Mere Assumption on the Solomon Newsom(e) I, II, Family,” *GenForum* (<http://genforum.genealogy.com/newsome/messages/895.html> : accessed 9 January 2011).

⁶³ “Revolutionary War Naval Minor Engagements: 1775–1783,” *The American Revolutionary War* (<http://www.myrevolutionarywar.com/battles/1775-1783n.htm> : accessed 7 January 2011).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

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Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

“On March 21, at 8:00 P.M., the 200 Loyalist Militia, commanded by Maj. John Spurgin, attacked the Patriot camp at ‘the Crossroads.’ All but 60 out of 200 men of the Patriots fled the scene. The remainder managed to drive the Loyalists back to the Burke County Jail.”⁶⁴

22 MARCH 1779

ROCKY COMFORT CREEK

The Battle of Rocky Comfort Creek occurred, apparently, in modern Richmond County, near Augusta. The “Georgia in the Revolution” timeline of the Georgia Society, SAR, generalizes this and other early March encounters this way:

“Tories and Creek Indians under the command of British Capt. David Taitt raided or destroyed several Wilkes County Forts and Settlements, including Fort Well’s, Drury Rogers Fort, Benjamin Fulsam’s Fort, Solomon Newsome’s Fort, Harris’ or Marbury’s Fort.

“At Daniel Gunnel’s Fort on the Sandy Creek in Wilkes County, Col. John Dooly and Col. Andrew Pickens and their Georgia and South Carolina Militia defeated Capt. David Taitt’s Indians. The Militia parted here after the victory over the Creeks.”⁶⁵

Scoggins’ and Edgar’s study of the back-country South Carolinians in the Revolution, including their activities in Georgia, provides more detail:

“Following the Battle of Briar Creek, the New Acquisition Regiment [from South Carolina] retreated North toward Augusta and fell in with Colonel LeRoy Hammond’s militia regiment from the Ninety-Six District, which was pursuing a party of Cherokee and Tory raiders. On 29 March 1779, Ross and Hammond overtook and attacked the raiders five miles east of Rocky Comfort Creek, in modern Richmond County, Georgia. A fierce hand-to-hand battle ensued between the militia and the Indians, and Ross received a tomahawk wound in the abdomen. John Linn, who was in Captain William Gaston’s company during the battle, wrote home to his wife from Camp Augusta on 1 April:

‘... They [Capt. William Gaston’s men] killed and scalped eight Indians & two white men, and took three Indians & three white men prisoners, & brought the eight Indian scalps along to camp. We [his S.C. company] had only one man wounded, Maj. Ross, who got a slight wound below his short rib, and is hoped he will live.’

“Ross did not recover from his wound; he died on 1 April and was buried with full military honors, across from Augusta on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River.”⁶⁶

Wikipedia’s biography of General John Dooly provides a lengthier account:

“A month later [a month after the Battle of Kettle Creek], George Galphin received warning of an approaching pro-British Indian invasion of seven hundred warriors under David Taitt

⁶⁴ “Revolutionary War Raids and Skirmishes in 1779,” *The American Revolutionary War* (<http://www.myrevolutionarywar.com/battles/1779s.htm> : accessed 7 January 2011).

⁶⁵ “Georgia in the Revolution,” *Georgia Society, Sons of the American Revolution* (<http://www.georgiasocietysar.org/rev1779.htm> : accessed 7 January 2011).

⁶⁶ “Georgia in the Revolution,” *Georgia Society, Sons of the American Revolution* (<http://www.georgiasocietysar.org/rev1779.htm> : accessed 7 January 2011).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

and Emistisiguo. This force of Indians and Loyalists burned Folsom's Fort and other outposts along the Ogeechee River in what was then western Wilkes County. South Carolina militiamen again came to the rescue.

“The Indians with Alexander McGillivray met defeat at Rocky Comfort Creek on March 29 at the hands of militiamen under colonels Leroy Hammond of South Carolina and Benjamin Few of Georgia. The battle resulted in the deaths of nine Indians, including two headmen, and three Loyalists who had accompanied them. Among the three Indians and three "white savages" (white men who lived as Indians) captured was Emistisiguo's son. The next day, Pickens and Dooly led their men against Emistisiguo himself. Three Indians were reportedly killed at the head of the Ogeechee River. In the face of such opposition, most of Taitt's followers deserted; he had only seventy warriors still with him when he reached Savannah. The men of the Georgia militia paraded the scalps of their victims in Augusta although they released Emistisiguo's son as a peace gesture. Pickens and Williamson now had high praise for Dooly and specifically for the intelligence from his network of scouts.(n39)”⁶⁷

Benjamin Few, commander of the Georgia Militia in this action at **Rocky Comfort**, is **one of three brothers** (all officers from Wilkes County), who **took out bounty land in Washington County. One of them is named as an adjacent landowner on William Cooksey's 1793 survey.**

The SAR timeline shows no further military action in Georgia until 26 June, by which time William *seems* to have ended his Revolutionary service.

CA. JULY 1782

GEORGIA

Occupation.

“... another matter of concern was citizenship legislation. The first act on this subject was passed just after the British evacuation [July 1782]. . . . The same act declared that all who neither cultivated sufficient land to support their families nor followed a trade should be termed vagrants and either be sent out of the state or required to serve two years in the Continental Army. Later, a vagrant was defined as anyone who did not cultivate three acres of land or follow a trade. People convicted as vagrants were to give bond for good behavior and for engaging in employment or they might be bound out for a year's service. Vagrants who could not be bound out because no one would take them for the year's service might either be given thirty-nine lashes and released or enlist as state soldiers.”⁶⁸

COMMENT:

William Cooksey did not apply for land until 1790, although he qualified for bounty-land in 1785. This fact suggests that he had another occupation.

⁶⁷ This long *Wikipedia* sketch appears to be copied verbatim from an unnamed source—likely a work by a historian or genealogical scholar, considering the extent to which it is referenced; the references, however, are not copied. *Wikipedia* (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Dooly : accessed 7 January 2011), has the text flagged for “cleanup” or deletion. I have yet found no other detailed discussion of the action at Rocky Comfort Creek.

TO DO: Identify the source of this narrative and study its own sources.

⁶⁸ Kenneth Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763–1789* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Three known records suggest two occupations, which could have been practiced simultaneously: *cattle grower* and *gunsmith*.

- William's first two land grants, warranted and surveyed in May 1791, were for small tracts on an island in the middle of Oconee River. Such locations were common for men who raised cattle. Once cattle were transported to the island, there would be no need for fencing.
- On 26 June 1872, his son William E. Cooksey filed for a pension from Russell County, Alabama, stating that he had been drafted into the War of 1812 while residing in Telfair County, Georgia, and that he was then a gunsmith by trade.⁶⁹ One observable characteristic of tradesmen and craftsmen, across place and time, is an inclination to teach the trade to sons. Craftsmen needed helpers; young sons provided "free labor" that, in turn, taught them a trade with which they could earn their living as an adult.

William E., when he was drafted in late 1812, was then about twenty-five, unmarried and was not living at home. His father was then in Laurens. However, when the War of 1812 erupted in the summer of that year, the U.S. built a string of forts along the Ocmulgee to protect citizens from British-incited Indian attacks. None of those forts were built in Laurens County, but three were built in Telfair: Fort Adams, Fort Clark, Fort McIntosh. Those installations would have been a key source of employment for gunsmiths.

On the premise that the older William may have been a gunsmith as well, we might focus our pre-1790 search for him in the neighborhoods where forts were located. Specifically:

- Fort Advance (179?), Baldwin County near Milledgeville; built by Elijah Clarke on his Trans-Oconee Expedition
- Fort Barrington aka Fort Howe (c1765—) "on the Altamaha at the intersection of King's road"⁷⁰
- Fort Cornwallis (1779-1781) Richmond County, at Augusta
- Fort Defense (1794), Wayne County, near Doctortown (north of Jesup)
- Fort Defiance (1795), Baldwin, near Milledgeville
- Fort Fidius (after 1792), Baldwin
- Fort George (1761), Chatham County at Savannah
- Fort Halifax (1754), Chatham County near Savannah; later Fort Prevost
- Fort Prevost (1779), Chatham County near Savannah
- Fort Wilkinson (1796), Baldwin Co.

TO DO:

Search for records of all these forts.

⁶⁹ Applicant's Declaration for Pension, 26 June 1872, in William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson's Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), pension no. S.C. 19,478, Case Files of Pension and Bounty-Land Applications Based on Service in the War of 1812; Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C. Also see William E. Cookey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson's Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), bounty land warrant file 8488, 80 acres (Act of 1850) and William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson's Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), bounty land warrant file 38,812, 80 acres (Act of 1855); both in Military Bounty Land Warrants series; Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Record Group 49; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁷⁰ This quote and other information on Georgia forts is taken from Golden Ink, "Georgia Forts," *Our Georgia History* (http://ourgeorgiahistory.com/lists/Georgia_forts.html : accessed 3 January 2011).

CA. 1783–85

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Bounty).

C. Cooksey	1756–70	Wilkes Co.
William Cooksey	1783–85	Wilkes Co.
William Cooksey	1783–85	Washington Co. ⁷¹

COMMENT:

My search of Wilkes County's land court records turned up no references to Cooksey grants—only the existence of William's name on a list of men to whom Col. Elijah Clarke of Wilkes County gave a bounty-land certificate for minuteman service.⁷² The only C. C. _____ grantee I could identify for Wilkes was one Cornelius Cochran. [See n. 2, above.]

As for William Cooksey (or variant spelling),

- No record was found in these Wilkes County records.
- Warrants for the two grants (50+125=175 acres) in the middle of Oconoee River (Washington/Montgomery/Tattnall counties) were issued on 2 May 1791. See plats under that date, below.
- Subsequently he held another tract of land (200 acres) under warrant of 3 May 1793, survey of 14 May 1793, and patent dated 1 November 1795. However, the tax rolls of 1797–98 credit him with only the first 175 acres.

APRIL-MAY 1784

FRANKLIN COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Bounty).

"Names of Rev. Sols, found in the records of Franklin Co., Ga. (State Dept. of Archives; names not in Knight's 'Roster of Rev. Soldiers.' They received certificates for bounty lands for their service, signed by Col. Elijah Clarke, Col. Samuel Jack, and Col. Greenberry Lee.

Hugh Anderson	Robert Carey
Peter Anderson	David Cooper
George Beall	John Cooper
John Beall	Richard Cowsley
John Bratcher	William Cucksey
Moses Bruer	Alexander Davis
Elisha Burrus	John Dennison

⁷¹ George Gillman Smith, *Story of Georgia and the Georgia People* (Macon: George G. Smith, 1901), Appendix: "Headrights Granted by the Georgia Colonial and State Governments from 1754 to 1800," pp. 567–69.

⁷² The searched records included Wilkes Co., "Orders of Land Court, 1785," unindexed and much of it barely legible, Ordinary's Office, Washington, Georgia; consulted as FHL microfilm 0,163,599, item 2. Also Wilkes Co., "Index to Land Grants 1 & 2, 1784–1839, FHL microfilm 0,227,284.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Catlatt Cawley
John Cawley
Richard Cawley

Sabra Dinkins
James Dunman
Joshua Edwards”⁷³

COMMENT:

The dating for this list is suggested by the other Franklin County certificates whose text Knight does provide.

Note that while the compilers of this list say these names were omitted by Knight, there are several duplications: John Bratcher, Catlatt Cawley, Richard Cawley, and Sabra Dinkins.

APRIL 1785

[WILKES COUNTY?] GEORGIA

Land (Bounty).

“Certificate of service signed by Elijah Clark, to men of “ ____ Battalion: Peter Bradshaw, Arch. Mickson, Nich. Gunnels, John Wooten, Zach. Henderson, George Runnalds, Andrew McGruen, John Thegott, William Russell, James Hill, Amos Razon, James Anderson, Richard Cawley, John Soultter, **William Cucksey**, Wm. Odio (Osier), Jacob Wardman, George Miller, Benjamin Perkins, John Bratcher, Hugh Woods, John Woods, Edward Williams, Bailey Gains, Sabry Dinkins, David Burks, Catlatt Cawley, Anthony Cooper, William Rogers, Philip Steed, Philip Rasberry, John Cawley.”⁷⁴

COMMENT:

Clues to a man’s origins and familial connections often can be found in the identities of the men with whom he enlisted and served. Toward that end, I have searched both Knight’s *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution* and Bockstruck’s *Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants*. See notes below.

CA. 1785–1800

GEORGIA

Land (Bounty).⁷⁵

(Reconstructed by Knight)

“Non-residents” of the state at time of enlistment:

Bradshaw, Peter
Dinkins, Sabry

Men for whom no residential status is stated:

⁷³ Ettie Tidwell McCall (Mrs. Howard H. McCall), *Roster of Revolutionary Soldiers in Georgia*, 3 vols. (1941; reprint, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1968–69), 1 : 249–50.

⁷⁴ Grace Gillam Davidson, Lelia Thornton Gentry, et al., *Historical Collections of the Georgia Chapters Daughter of the American Revolution* (1929; reprinted Baltimore, MD: Clearfield, 1995), 172.

⁷⁵ Lucian Lamar Knight, *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution: Containing a List of the State’s Defenders; Officers and Men; Soldiers and Sailors; Partisans and Regulars; Whether Enlisted from Georgia or Settled in Georgia after the close of Hostilities* (1920; reprinted, Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2008).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Anderson, James	“Lieut. Minute men, 1777. Certificate Col. E. Clark, 18 May, 1784. Prays for 200 acres of land in Franklin Co. Granted 24th May, 1784.” (Knight, 23)
Gunnels, Nich.	“Certificate of Elijah Clarke, Col., April 20, 1784. Petitioner prays bounty in Franklin Co. Warrant 529. (Knight, 90).
Henderson, Zach.	“260 acres, (bounty) Washington Co. , bounded N. & E. vacant, S. Oconee river, W. vacant, lot 723. Warrant —. Aug. 1, 1784. p. 240. (Knight, 211)
Russell, William	“Certificate of Elijah Clarke, Col., Nov. 16, 1784. Warrant 733.” (Knight, 154)
Steed, Philip	“Certificate of Elijah Clarke, Lt. Col., April 6, 1784. Petitioner prays bounty in Washington Co. Warrant 762.” (Knight, 165)
Thegott, John	“Certificate of Elijah Clarke, Col., Jan 25, 1785. Warrant 796.” (Knight, 168)
Wardman, Jacob	“Certificate of E. Clarke, Lt. Col., Jan. 3, 1785. Warrant 848.” (Knight, 185)

Minute Men for whom Knight has nothing:

Bratcher, John	Gains, Bailey	Rogers, William
Burks, David	Hill, James	Runnalds, George
Cawley, Catlatt	Mickson, Arch.	Soulter, John
Cawley, John	Odion (Osier)	Williams, Edward
Cawley, Richard	Perkins, Benjamin	Woods, Hugh
Cooper, Anthony	Raspberry, Philip	Woods, John
Cucksey, William	Razon, Amos	Wooten, John

28 AUGUST 1785

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Bounty).⁷⁶

(As reconstructed by Bockstruck)

“**Cucksey, William**, Ga. Minute Man. 28 Apr. 1785. ——— [Blanks indicate no acreage actually entered by the claimant.]

FELLOW SOLDIERS:

Anderson, James	Ga.	Lieutenant	26 May 1784	460 acres	B p. 9
Bradshaw, Peter	Ga.	Minute Man	22 Mar. 1785	250 acres	B p. 57
Bratcher, John	Ga.	Citizen	28 Apr. 1785.	—	B p. 59
*Burks, David	Ga.	—	5 May 1785	—	B p. 76
Cawley, Catlett	Ga.	Minute Man	2 Mar 1784	—	B p. 94
*Cawley, John	Ga.	—	5 May 1785	—	B p. 94

⁷⁶ Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, *Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants Awarded by State Governments* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1996), 127 for William Cucksey. The asterisks that are added to this list are my own; they flag the men whose certificates were later turned in by Elijah Clarke for land granted in Clarke’s name. See “Georgia, Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783-1909,” images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org> : 10 January 2014), volume “Clemmens, James J.–Cockson, William,” folder “Elijah Clark,” images 274, 280, 293, 297, 321, 323, and 335. In addition to these men, Clarke personally redeemed the certificates of *many* others.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Cawley, Richard	Ga.	Minute Man	22 Mar. 1785	250 acres	B p. 94
*Cooper, Anthony	Ga.	Minute Man	3 Oct. 1783	287.5 acres	B p. 116
*Dinkins, Sabray	Ga.	Minute Man	22 Mar. 1785	250 acres	B p. 148
*Gaines, Bailey	Ga.	Minute Man	22 Mar. 1785	250 acres	B p. 191
Gunnels, Nicholas	Ga.	Minute Man	22 Jul. 1784	287.5 acres	B p. 218
*Henderson, Zachariah	Ga.	Lieutenant	14 Mar. 1784	250 acres	B p. 242
Hill, James	Ga.	Refugee	15 Mar. 1784	500 acres	B p. 247
Mickson/Mixon, Arch. Odion (Osier), William		[<i>not found</i>]			
Odom, Uriah[?]	Ga.	Minute Man	27 Apr. 1784	287.5 acres	B p. 397
Perkins, Benjamin	Ga.	Minute Man	24 Aug. 1785	250 acres	B p. 414
Raspberry, Philip		[<i>not found</i>]			
*Razon, Amos		[<i>not found</i>]			
*Rogers, William	Ga.	Refugee	27 Apr. 1784	287.5 acres	B p. 455
*Runnels, George	Ga.	Minute Man	29 Jul. 1784	287.5 acres	B p. 460
Russell, William	Ga.	Minute man	22 Mar. 1785	250 acres	B p. 461
Soulter, John	Ga.	Minute Man	28 Apr. 1785	—	B p. 495
*Steed, Philip	Ga.	Soldier	20 Apr. 1784	287.5 acres	B p. 502
Thegott, John	Ga.	Minute Man	22 Mar. 1785	250 acres	B p. 524
Wardman, Jacob	Ga.	Minute Man	5 May 1785	—	B p. 553
*Williams, Edward	Ga.	Minute Man	5 May 1785	287.5 acres	B p. 574
Woods, Hugh	Ga.	Minute Man	30 Apr. 1785	575 acres	B p. 587
Wood, John	Ga.	Minute Man	1784	287.5 acres	B p. 585
Wooten, John		[<i>not found</i>]			

COMMENT:

Bockstruck's foreword discusses the regulations and circumstances surrounding the various types of grants. Especially relevant portions are these:

(pp. x-xi)

"The ranks and classes with the corresponding acreage for Georgia's Revolutionary War personnel and inhabitants were:

private in Georgia line	230 acres	
private in minute battalions	287 ½ acres	[but note the 250 grants above]
private in militia	287 ½ acres	
refugee private in militia	287 ½ acres	
citizen	287 ½ acres	
[I'm skipping several types]		

(p. xi)

refugee private in militia (also citizen)	575 acres
captain in militia	575 acres
captain in minute battalions	575 acres"

"There were five classes of recipients who received bounty land grants in Georgia. The first included those who served in the Continental Army. Georgia was unique in that the bounty land acreage was actually greater for a man who served as a private in the militia than as a private in the Georgia Continental Line. There were four regiments of the Georgia Line

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

attached to the Continental Army. While some have argued that this class of soldiers deserved the most but received the least, such a claim is distorted by a modern perspective which has elevated the Continental Line to a position it did not necessarily enjoy during the Revolutionary War. Even the Executive Council of Georgia dismissed the petitions of Continental Army veterans for additional refugee warrants on the basis that as Continental soldiers they had drawn their pay and performed their duties in a position of their own choosing.

“From 3 June 1777 to 1 March 1778 Georgia had a second class of minute-men. These men and officers were in three Minute Battalions and were *all non-residents* of Georgia at the time of their enlistments.”

COMMENT:

This statement by Bockstruck might assume too much. Knight’s abstracts show that some minute men identified themselves as non-residents of the state at the time they enlisted, but most of them did not.]

“Georgia’s third class of bounty land recipients was the militia who sprang up to handle local emergencies and then disappeared.

“The fourth class was that of refugees who were former Georgia residents who fled the state when the British reimposed royal authority and served in the militia regiments of neighboring South Carolina and North Carolina.

“The fifth class was that of the citizen. The act of 20 August 1781 attempted to come to grips with the exodus of Georgia’s population just ahead of the advancing British forces. Any resident who remained in Georgia until after the expulsion of the enemy in July 1782 had to produce a certificate from *the commanding officer of his district* to the legislature that he had steadfastly [*p. xii*] done his duty and was entitled to 250 acres. Moreover, the recipient could not have been convicted of plundering and distressing the country. In other words, he could not have been a Loyalist. [*Emphasis added.*]

“The sixth and smallest class involved deserters from the British.

“It is important to be aware that many Georgia bounty land warrantees qualified in more than one class.

“Applicants for bounty land pursued a five-step process. If they were citizens, they had to obtain their certificates from the commanding officer of the district in which they lived. If they were in the army or navy, they had to obtain a voucher from *the commanding officer of their unit or battalion*. They in turn presented the voucher to the Executive Council which sat as a land court for Franklin and Washington counties. If the Executive Council approved the voucher, the governor issued a numbered certificate in the name of the petitioner, giving his name; his classification of refugee, minuteman, or citizen; the acreage; and the name of the certifying officer found on the initial certificate. [*Emphasis added.*]

“Although this certificate was issued in the name of the petitioner, it could actually be issued to anyone to whom the petitioner had assigned his rights. The Executive Council would then issue a numbered warrant directing the county surveyor to lay out the acreage stated in the bounty. The county surveyor, or his deputy, would then survey the land which the applicant had selected and make three plats. He would enter one in his own records and forward the other two to the Surveyor General. The Surveyor General would record and file one plat and

attach the third copy to the warrant. The Surveyor General would transmit one copy of the plat and the executed warrant to the Secretary of State who would issue the grant after the filing fees had been paid. The designation of bounty would be entered in the grant book.

“The petitioner could also locate his bounty land in one of the eight old counties of Georgia. In those counties the county land court rather than the governor and Executive Council handled the transaction. ...

“It is imperative to note that *nothing but the governor’s numbered certificate indicated the status of the recipient*. Any other step in the paper trail could pertain to a soldier, a civilian, a transferee, or a purchaser of the right. ... It is estimated that *no more than half of the numbered warrants signed by the governor survive*. Half of the numbered warrants signed by the Executive Council’s president also survive. The incomplete extant records defy any attempt to bring order out of chaos. ... [Emphasis added.]

[p. xiii]

“On 22 February 1785 the General Assembly delegated to the land courts of the ten counties the duty of issuing warrants for bounty grants. The act stipulated that all applications had to be filed by 22 February 1786; otherwise, the bounty grant would not be allowed. The act further specified that a warrant issued by the president of the Executive Council or by a county land court would not expire if surveyed within two years from the date of issuance. Accordingly, true bounty land grants in Georgia cannot exist for warrants bearing a date after 22 February 1786.”

“... Holders of vouchers and numbered certificates used such legal instruments as a medium of exchange. They were treated as money or as stock certificates and could be sold or traded to other people. These people could then receive the grants themselves, and they may not have been entitled to bounty grants in any of the six classes. These purchasers in turn would present the vouchers and certificates singly and collectively to county land courts where they would receive new warrants in their own names, have surveys made, and subsequently have grants issued in their names. [Lucian Lamar] Knight [in his *Georgia’s Roster of the Revolution*] mistakenly listed many of these grants which were in the amount of 230, 287, and 575 acres as going to Revolutionary soldiers when in fact the grantees were merely purchasers or assignees of the veterans.

“While Georgia had ten counties with functioning land courts, the records of only one survive—Washington County. Its records have been transcribed by Mary Bondurant Warren and Jack Moreland Jones in *Washington County, GA Land Warrants, 1778–1787* (Athens, Ga.: Heritage Papers, 1992).

“*Revolutionary Soldiers’ Receipts for Georgia Bounty Grants* (Atlanta, Ga.: Foote and Davies Company, 1928) is a facsimile reproduction of a manuscript containing the names of more than a thousand refugees, citizens, soldiers of the Georgia Line, and officers and men of the Georgia State Galleys.”

“Marion Hemperley compiled a list of some 2,000 Revolutionary individuals who applied for bounty land based upon vouchers setting forth the Revo- [p. xiv] lutionary War service of the applicant and the certificates issued by the governor after the service had been found valid. He also used other records found among the 200,000 documents so that there are a

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

few entries included which seemingly have no bounty land connections. Hemperley's book, *Military Certificates of Georgia 1776–1800 on File in the Surveyor General Department* (Atlanta, Ga.: State Printing Office, 1983), also includes post-Revolutionary references to veterans of the Oconee War who qualified for bounty land.

“The most inclusive collection of published Georgia Revolutionary War bounty land records is Nicole O’Kelley and Mary Bondurant Warren’s *Georgia Revolutionary Bounty Land Records, 1783-1785* (Athens, Ga.: Heritage Papers, 1992).

“The Georgia entries in this [present] book are an amalgamation of extracts made from the original records. Since many of the records did not bear a date, all of the data may not be reflective of the date shown.”

TO DO:

All the books cited by Bockstruck need to be studied. I have just ordered the two by Warren.

5 MAY 1785

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA?

Bounty Land.

“By account of Justices of the county of Franklin. To John Gorham, Esq., County surveyor for the said county.

“You are hereby authorised and required to admeasure and lay out or cause to be admeasured and laid out unto **Elijah Clark** a tract of land which shall contain Eleven hundred & fifty acres in the county of Franklin in lieu of two bounty certificates of **William Cucksey & Amos Reason** . . . Taking especial care that the same has not heretofore been laid out to any person or persons—and you are hereby also directed and required to record a plat of the same in your office and transmit a copy thereof together with this warrant to the surveyor general within six months from this date. Given under my hand as senior Justice, this 5th day of May 1785. [Signed] Walker Richardson, C.F.C.”⁷⁷

TO DO:

The Clarke file shows nearly 100,000 acres granted to him, personally, across several counties, upon his presentation of certificates of service issued by him to soldiers who are said to have served under him.

The 1150 acres Clarke received for two grants, using Bockstruck’s table, means that Clarke presented Reason and Cucksey, each, as a “refugee private in militia (also citizen),” rather than a militiaman as Clarke said Cucksey was in the 1784 certificate transcribed above.

Presuming that William legally conveyed his right to Clarke, then it would appear that he had some occupation other than farming and/or was not a “family man” in need of a tract on which to settle his family.

⁷⁷ “Georgia, Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783-1909,” images, *Family Search* (<https://familysearch.org> : 10 January 2014), Volume “William Clemmens, James J.-Cockson, William,” image 274, for 5 May 1785 warrant to Elijah Clark on service of William Cucksey & Amos Reason.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Georgia & By a court of Justices of the county of Franklin
To John Graham esq. County surveyor for the
said county

You are hereby authorized and required
to measure and lay out as cause to be
admeasured and laid out unto Elijah
C. Cook, a part of land which shall contain
One hundred fifty acres in the county of Franklin
in favor of his County Certificate of William Cooksey
& John Ransom

Taking especial care that the same be not
herebefore been laid out to any person or
persons - and you are hereby also directed
and required to cause a plat of the same in
your office and transmit a copy thereof
together with this warrant to the Surveyor
general within six months from the date
Given under my hand as Justice
this 5th day of May 1785

Walker Richardson C. J.

MARRIAGE:

TRADITION VS. EVIDENCE VS. POSSIBILITIES

CA. 1785–86

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA?

Analysis.

William is said to have married one Leanna Wesley, by whom he allegedly had all his children. The apparently oldest son, **William E.**, was born between 26 June and 23 November **1786**, purportedly

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

in Washington County, Georgia.⁷⁸ The second son, **John**, first appears on record in 1809 as a juror (i.e., born before Spring **1788**), but was dead before any census was taken. William's apparent daughters **Mary** and **Letitia** (not previously identified for him by other researchers) married in 1810 and ca. 1811, suggesting births around **1790–95**. A third attributed daughter, **Nancy**, is said to have been born in Savannah on 12 April **1804**.

All these dates seem to be contradicted by a frequently mentioned record: the Georgia Land Lottery list of 1805. The only William Cooksey who applied (for which registration occurred between May 1803 and 1 March 1804). According to both standard lists used by researchers—published transcriptions of the master list in the State Land Office, a list that alphabetizes all names statewide—William was allotted just one draw: that being the allotment for a single man with no minors.⁷⁹ However, a surviving fragment of the local Tattall County list assigns two tick marks to William: that of a married man or a man with minor children.⁸⁰

The gap between Nancy and William's other children, a gap for which no other Cookseys have been discovered, implies that she had a different mother. Other circumstances, as well as mtDNA evidence, strongly imply that she was the daughter of **Zilpha (Watts) Price**, who John Cooksey attempted to marry in 1809. Zilpha, after John's death, lived with and bore a son and daughter by her "father-in-law" William Cooksey.⁸¹

The birth of William E. in the burned county of Washington about 1786, coupled with the fact that no marriage record has been found for William elsewhere, suggests that William's marriage occurred in Washington County about 1785.

Two possibilities need to be explored in the search for William's wife.

- **Dukes and Sizemores.** The original registration list for the 1805 lottery, which is transcribed under "May 1803–1804," clusters William at the head of a trio that included himself, a fatherless child named "Henry Duke" and a putative widow named "Letty Duke." The two Dukes should be William's daughter Letty and her son Henry, born of a union that was not legal.

Shortly before the Revolution (about 1773), during which time William appears to have been in the Wilkes County area, there arrived in Wilkes a couple from Fairfield District, South Carolina: **Henry and Letitia "Letty" Duke** (*var.* Dukes). They settled along Fishing Creek—the border

⁷⁸ The time frame of his birth is drawn from his bounty land application of 23 November 1851 and his pension application of 26 June 1872. His widow, in applying for her pension, stated that he was born in Tattall County, Georgia—an area that would have been in Washington County, Georgia, at the time of William E.'s birth. See

- William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson's Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), pension no. S.C. 19,478, Case Files of Pension and Bounty-Land Applications Based on Service in the War of 1812; Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson's Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), bounty land warrant file 8488, 80 acres (Act of 1850); Military Bounty Land Warrants; Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Record Group 49; National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson's Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), bounty land warrant file 38,812, 80 acres (Act of 1855); Military Bounty Land Warrants; Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Record Group 49; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

William first appears on record on the 1820 U.S. census, Greene Co., Miss., p. 52, line 31, Wm. E. Cooksey; National Archives microfilm publication M33, roll 57; digital images at *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 27 January 2005).

⁷⁹ Virginia S. Wood and Ralph V. Wood, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery* (Cambridge: Greenwood Press, 1964), 77; Paul K. Graham, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery: Persons Entitled to Draws* (Decatur, Ga.: The Genealogy Company, 2005), 123.

⁸⁰ Tattall Co., Ga., Mixed Records of the Inferior & Superior Courts, 1807–45; microfilm A&H 101 (drawer 37, box 47), Ga. Dept. of Archives & History, Atlanta. Ignatius Hall appears on a separate page as no. 211. However, no "number of draws" appears after his name. If single and over 21, he should have been entitled to one draw; if married, two draws.

⁸¹ Nancy Cooksey's mtDNA is an exact match for the mtDNA carried by descendants of Zilpha's sister Rhoda Watts (wife of Mark Rayburn). This and other evidence is being currently developed by me for publication in a peer-review journal.

area between modern Wilkes and Lincoln Counties. The migration included not only Henry, his wife, and children (known children: Henry, William, Thomas, and James Duke), but also Henry's apparent brother-in-law **William Sizemore** with wife **Mary**, and two other families named Funderburk and Hogg.⁸²

The Dukes and Sizemores are of special interest to me because *my autosomal matches include numerous individuals who report descent from the Carolina-to-Georgia Sizemores and Dukes*. Preliminary research to date indicates that Henry Duke's mother, Elizabeth Ragland (daughter of John Ragland and wife of Adam Duke) had a sister Mary, the wife of William Sizemore. William Cooksey, as shown in this set of compiled research notes, named his two daughters **Letitia** (the name of Mrs. Henry Duke) and **Mary** (the name of Mrs. William Sizemore).⁸³

- **Alexanders.** William first grandson—by John Cooksey and Zilpha (Watts) Price—was given his father's name: John. He is not known to have used a middle name. However, John and Zilpha's second son did have a double name: **Samuel Alexander** Cooksey. Neither the name Samuel nor the name Alexander have been found in Zilpha's family (the Watts), or the Price family into which she first married, or that of any other known associates.

One Samuel Alexander lived in Wilkes County, Georgia, during the Revolution—the area in which Elijah Clarke raised his militia unit that included William Cooksey. A number of parallels can be drawn between this Samuel Alexander and the William Cooksey family:⁸⁴

- Samuel Alexander (Sr. or Jr. has not been determined) served as an RW captain under Elijah Clarke; Cooksey also served under Clarke.
- Under Clarke's certificate of 2 February 1784, Alexander was entitled to 287.5 acres of bounty land. He took out that land in Washington County, even though he already owned extensive lands in Wilkes County. Washington was also the county in which Cooksey next surfaced in 1790.
- Alexander's 287.5-acre tract adjoined "College land" and lay on Richland Creek. This creek lies at the extreme northwest corner of original Washington County; today it falls near the intersection of Greene, Hancock, and Baldwin Counties. However, Cooksey's first known land (see abstracts under 2–10 May 1791, below) lay in the portion of old Washington that was cut away to create Montgomery and later Tattnall.

⁸² For a preliminary survey of Duke-Sizemore records in Wilkes County, see Rachal Mills Lennon to Elizabeth Shown Mills, report "Dukes and Associates of South Carolina," dated 12 March 2012.

⁸³ For the Ragland-Sizemore-Duke relationship, see deed of Henry Duke and wife Lettice to Aaron Loocock, sale of land on Beaver Pond, Craven Co., S.C., memorialized in the subsequent (2 May 1776) deed of Loocock and wife Mary to Archibald Brown, abstracted in Brent H. Holcomb. *South Carolina Deed Abstracts, 1776–1783, Books Y4 through H5*. Columbia, South Carolina: SCMAR, 1994), 66, citing Deeds A5: 236-42.

Related tangle to pursue: Henry Duke Sr.'s son Thomas in 1784 held Wilkes County land next door to **Robert Kilgore** (Deeds HH:42), who died in 1812 ("Estates 1811-19," pp. 11, 13). Kilgore's heir Hannah then married **John W. Cooksey** (origins unknown), who was in Wilkes by 1812 (Kilgore estate) and d. 1825–27, leaving a will witnessed by **Lewis Parks** (Wills HH: 211). About that same time in Mississippi, William Cooksey's stepdaughter Nancy Cooksey m. **John Parks** who had migrated there from Wilkes County.

⁸⁴ For Samuel Alexander's landholdings, see Grace Gillam Davidson, *Early Records of Georgia: Wilkes County* (1932; reprint, 2 vols. in 1, Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 1991); snippet provided, without context, by Google Books (www.books.google.com : accessed 20 November 2010); and Washington Co., Ga., "Surveyor Plat Book A," p. 80. For the Alexander family, see Marge Lawson, "Samuel Alexander, Sr (b. 1730, d. 1790)," *The Hall-Smith Family of Blakely, Ga.* (familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/l/a/w/MARGE-LAWSON/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0300.html : accessed 9 January 2011); and Jean Mayo Hirsch, "The Family of Joseph Alston and Caroline Green Hatcher," *RootsWeb's WorldConnect Project* (<http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=REG&db=7213&id=I18011> : accessed 30 December 2010). These two genealogies are not adequately documented; any material used from them must be explored in original records.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

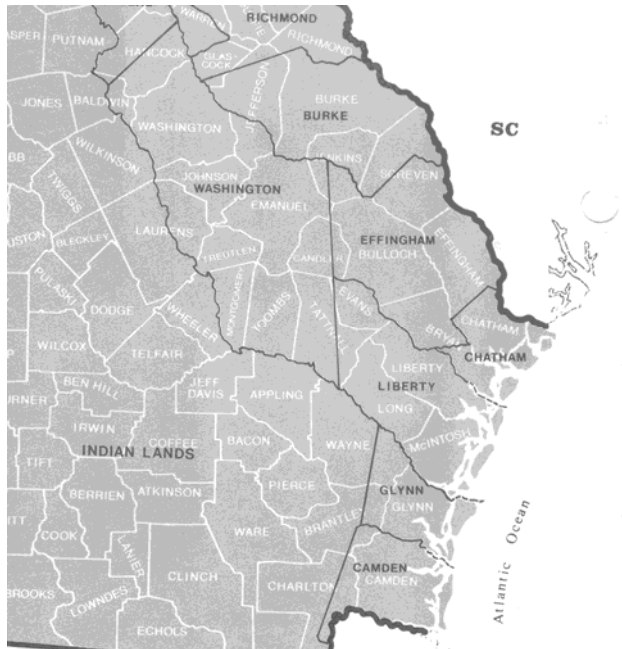
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

- Samuel Alexander and wife Olivia Wooten named a daughter *Faitha* and their son Asa married a cousin *Fathia* Wooten. Nancy Cooksey (alleged daughter of William Cooksey and [—?—] but more likely a daughter of Zilpha by an unidentified father) named a daughter *Faitha*. This female name is relatively uncommon in the lower South and has not been found among any other known associates of William Cooksey or Zilpha (Watts) Price.
- Samuel's Alexander's mother was Bethia Castellaw, grandddaughter of Joseph *Alston*. William Cooksey and his unknown wife named their first son William *Alston/Elston*.
- In weighing the likelihood of a kinship to the Alexanders, one other factor is relevant: Outside of "elite" families, double given names were not common until after the Revolution. As they came into use, most represented the name of a Revolutionary hero (e.g., Francis Marion, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, etc.). It would be another generation or so before there was a significant practice of using the first and last names of ancestors as given names for children.

CA. 1785–1790

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Map of Georgia counties.⁸⁵



1791

WASHINGTON (MONTGOMERY) COUNTY, GEORGIA

Jury Service.

William Cooksey does not appear on a published list of jurors serving this year from the portion of Washington County that would become Montgomery in 1793.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ William Thorndale and William Dollarhide, *Georgia 1790–1820* (Bountiful, UT: American Genealogical Lending Library, n.d.), 1790 map.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

2 MAY 1791

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Warrant.⁸⁷

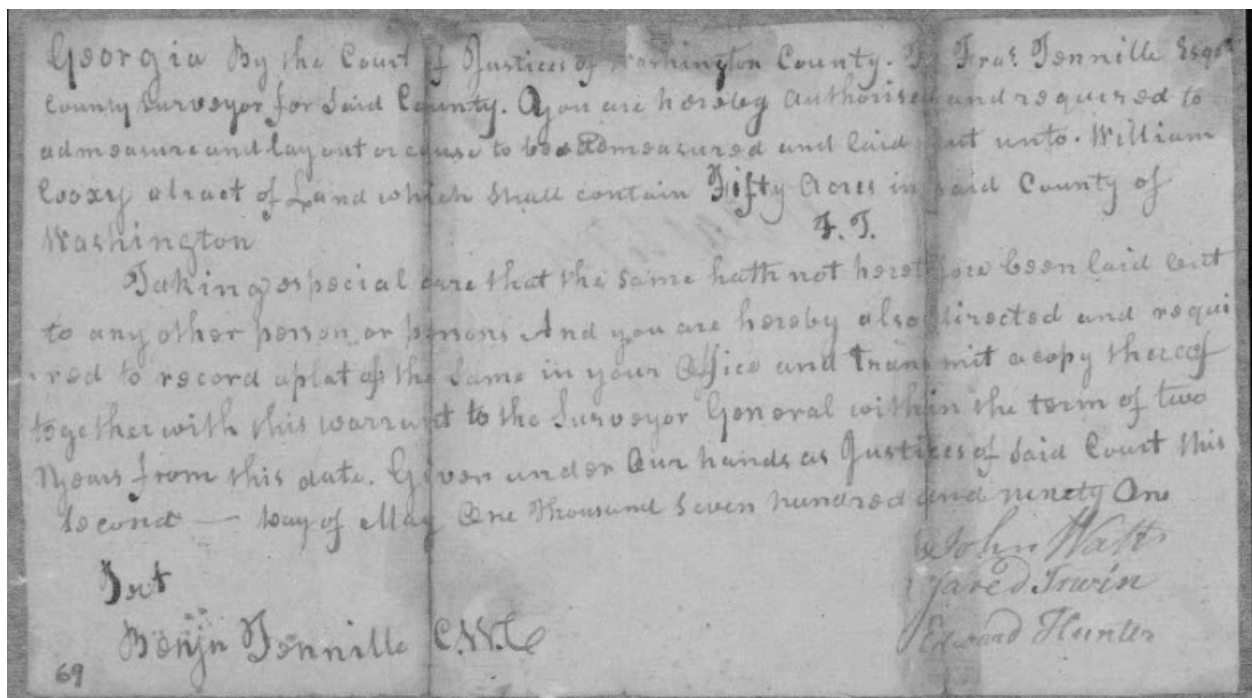
“Georgia. By the Court of Justices of Washington County, to Fra^s Tennille, Esqr. & County Surveyor for Said County, You are hereby authorised and required to admeasure and lay out or cause to be admeasured and laid out unto **William Cooxy**, a tract of Land which shall contain **Fifty Acres** in said County of Washington. F.T.

“Taking aspecial care that the same hath not heretofore been laid out to any other person or persons. And you are hereby also directed and required to record a plat of the same in your Office and transmit a copy thereof together with this warrant to the Surveyor General within the term of two Years from this date. Given under Our hands as Justices of said Court this second day of May One Thousand Seven Hundred and ninety One.

Test:
Benjn. Tennille C.W.C.

John Watts
Jared Irwin
Edward Hunter

69



Georgia By the Court of Justices of Washington County. To Fra^s Tennille Esqr
County Surveyor for Said County. You are hereby Authorised and required to
admeasure and lay out or cause to be admeasured and laid out unto. William
Cooxy a tract of Land which shall contain Fifty Acres in said County of
Washington F.T.
Taking aspecial care that the same hath not heretofore been laid out
to any other person or persons And you are hereby also directed and requi
red to record a plat of the same in your Office and transmit a copy thereof
together with this warrant to the Surveyor General within the term of two
Years from this date. Given under Our hands as Justices of said Court this
second day of May One Thousand Seven hundred and ninety One
Test
Benjn Tennille C.W.C.
John Watts
Jared Irwin
Edward Hunter
69

⁸⁶ Clifford S. Dwyer, *Montgomery County, Ga., Jury Lists, 1791, 1795, 1804* (Vidalia, Ga.: Montgomery County Records Preservation Committee, n.d.).

⁸⁷ “Georgia, Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783-1909,” images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org> : 10 January 2014), volume “Conrad, Hannah-Coward, Zachariah,” folder “William Cooxy,” image 6.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

2 MAY 1791

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Warrant.⁸⁸

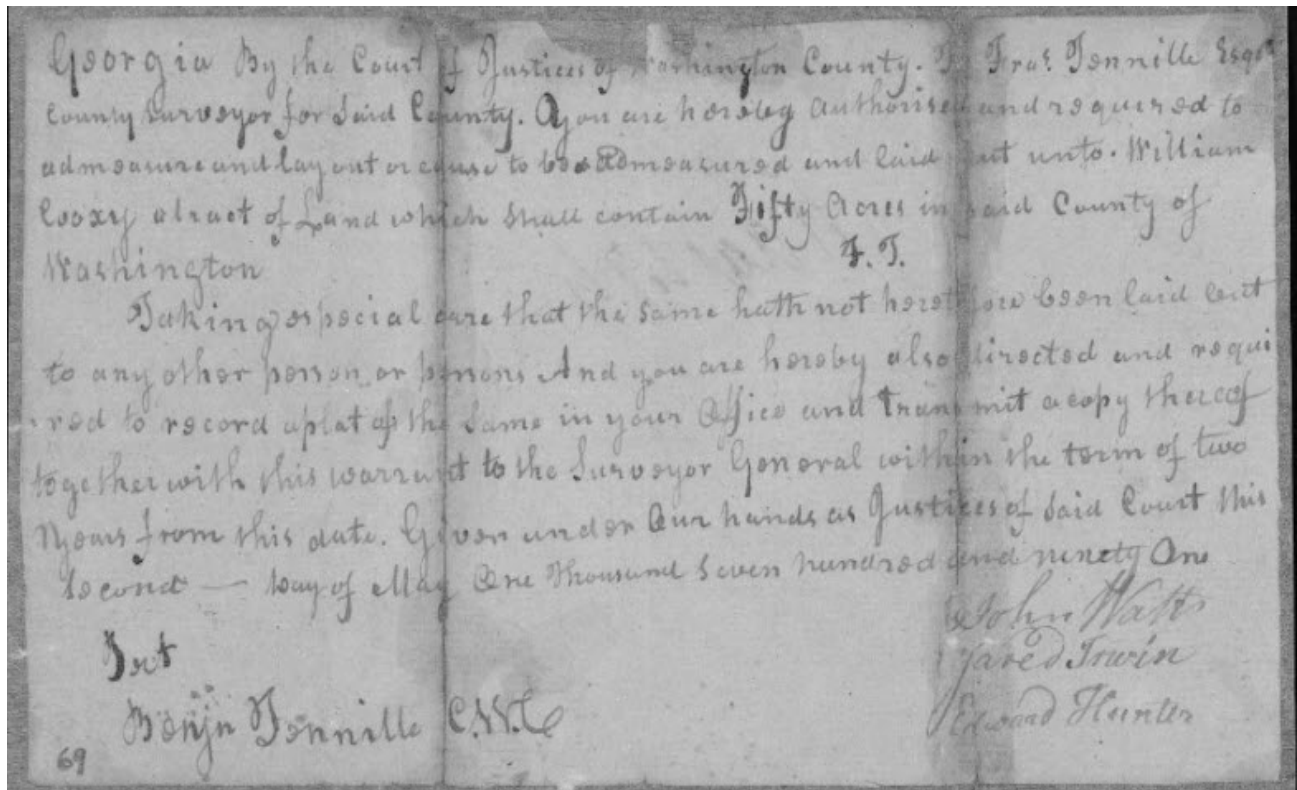
“Georgia. By the Court of Justices of Washington County, to Fra^s Tennille, Esquire & County Surveyor for Said County, You are hereby authorised and required to admeasure and lay out or cause to be admeasured and laid out unto **William Cooxy**, a tract of Land which shall contain **One hundred and Twenty five acres** in said County of Washington. F.T.

“Taking especial care that the same hath not heretofore been laid out to any other person or persons. And you are hereby also directed and required to record a plat of the same in your Office and transmit a copy thereof together with this warrant to the Surveyor General within the term of two years from this date. Given under Our hands as Justices of said Court this Second day of May One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety One.

Test:
Benjamin Tennille C.W.C.

68

John Watts
Jared Irwin
Edward Hunter



⁸⁸ “Georgia, Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783-1909,” images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org> : 10 January 2014), volume “Conrad, Hannah-Coward, Zachariah,” folder “William Cooxy,” image 4.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

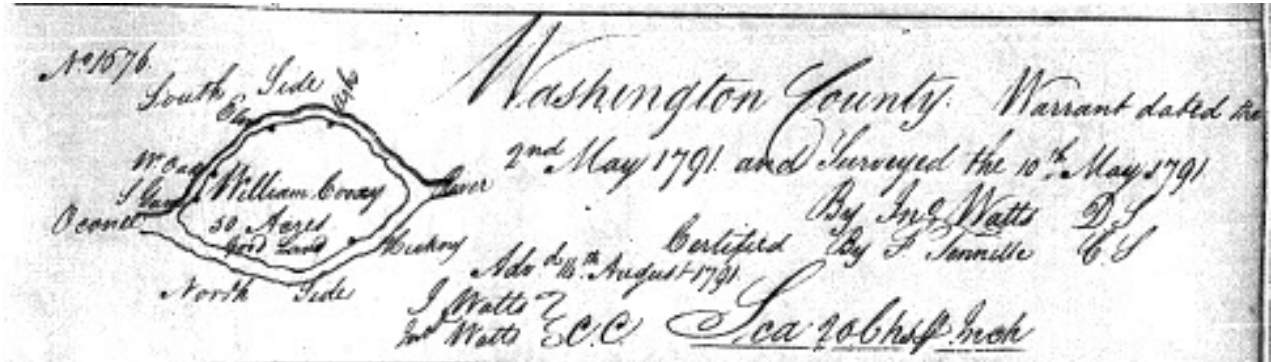
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

10 MAY 1791

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Plat.

50 acres, being an island in Oconee River.



"No. 1576. Washington County. Warrant dated the 2nd May 1791 and Surveyed the 10th May 1791 By Jn^o Watts, D.S. [Deputy Surveyor]. Certified By F. Tennelle, C.S. [County Surveyor]. Advd. [Advertised?] 14th August 1795. [Chain carriers:] J. Watts, Jno. Watts, CC. Scale 206 Chs. p[er] Inch."⁸⁹

2-10 MAY 1791

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Plat.

125 acres, being an island in Oconee River.

"Washington County. No. 1679. Warrant dated the 2nd May 1791 and Surveyed the 10th May 1791 By Jnⁱ Watts, D.S. [Deputy Surveyor]. Certified By F. Tennelle, C.S. [County Surveyor]. Advd. [Advertised?] 18th August 1795. [Chain carriers:] William Saffold, J. Watts, CC. Scale 206 Chs. p[er] Inch."⁹⁰



⁸⁹ Georgia Surveyor General, Land Plat Book CC:474 (Washington County); Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.

⁹⁰ Georgia Surveyor General, Land Plat Book CC:475 (Washington County); Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

COMMENTS:

Location: Both tracts surveyed for William on this day are islands in the middle of Oconee River—suggesting that cattle ranching may have been a major source of income for him.

John Watts: At least three men of this name lived simultaneously in Washington County and in Washington’s offshoot, Montgomery. All held various county positions, all three appear to have been a county justice, one a senator, one a county clerk, and one a surveyor. To-date, 16 sample signatures (with positions attached to the names) have been accumulated from surviving land warrants; but the identities still remain to be sorted.

John Watts’s “signature” above: This document is not an original. Rather it is the land office’s recorded copy. As such Watts’s “signature” is only a copy.

Chain carriers: The document implies the presence of three men named “J.. Watts”: the surveyor John, the chain carrier John, and the chain carrier identified only as “J. Watts” (possibly the man named Jacob Watts who also received land grants in Washingt Co. It is more likely that the surveyor John and the chain carrier John were one and the same. In studying the full register in which this plat is recorded, one sees numerous instances in which the surveyor had only one assistant—including the document recorded immediately before this one, in which deputy surveyor “R. Burney” also cited himself as chain carrier.

TO DO:

- Determine if the original plats, created by Watts’s himself, still survives.

3 MAY 1793

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA > MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Land Warrant.⁹¹

“Georgia. By the Court of Justices of Washington County, to Fra. Tennille, Esquire County Surveyor for said County, You are hereby authorised and required to admeasure and lay out or cause to be admeasured and laid out unto **William Cocksey**, a tract of Land which shall contain **Two hundred and Twenty two acres** in said County of Washington on Head Rights

“Taking especial care that the same hath not heretofore been laid out to any other person or persons. And you are hereby also directed and required to record a plat of the same in your Office and transmit a copy thereof together with this warrant to the Surveyor General within the term of two years from this date. Given under Our hands as Justices of Said Court this Third day of May 1793.

Attest
Benj. Tennille C.W.C.
68

Jo^s Evans, J.P.
Thac^{ry} Irwin
B. Tennille J.P.

⁹¹ “Georgia, Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783-1909,” images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org> : 10 January 2014), volume “Clemmens, James J.–Cockson, William,” folder “William Cocksey,” image 645.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Georgia by the Court of Justice of Washington County to Fra. Jennille
Esquire County Surveyor for said County you are hereby authorized & required
to admeasure and lay out or cause to be admeasured and laid out unto
William Cooksey and Twenty two ^{acres} of Land which shall contain Two hundred
acres in said County of Washington On Head-
Rights
Taking special care that the same hath not heretofore
been laid out to any other person or persons and you are hereby
also directed and required to record a plat of the same in your
office and transmit a copy thereof together with this warrant to
the Surveyor General within the term of two years from this
date Given under our hands as Justice of said Court this
Third day of May 1793
Attest
Benja. Jennille C. J. C.

COMMENTS:

The official register in Georgia's State Land Office records this as a grant of **200** acres to **William Cooksey**, Washington County.⁹²

Under Georgia's headright law of 1 August 1783, 200 acres was the standard headright for a single adult male citizen of the U.S. If he were a head of household, he would also have been entitled to an additional 50 acres for each family member or slave, not to exceed one thousand acres. By 1793, William should have qualified for this 200, plus fifty each for a wife, son William, son John, and (likely) daughter Letitia—i.e., a total of 400 acres.

Why William did not receive the full acreage to which he was entitled is yet unclear. No fee payment was required between the acts of 1785 and 1831. Possibly it rested in the fact that grantees were required to not only settle on the land but also to "improve three out of every one hundred acres within eighteen months of receiving the grant, or the land would be subject to a treble tax."⁹³ A request for all 400 acres would have required William, whose two sons were still small children, to clear 12 forested acres in 18 months.

As with his island tracts, William had his land promptly surveyed. His new headright land was surveyed just 11 days later.

Faris W. Cadle, the leading authority on Georgia land grants and surveys, describes the land grant process this way: "To obtain a headright grant, the applicant had to appear before the land court in the county where the land he desired was located, describe the tract for which he wished to obtain a warrant, and take on oral oath declaring that he was legally entitled to

⁹² Georgia Surveyor General, Land Grants Book BBBB: 360; Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.

⁹³ Faris W. Cadle, *Georgia Land Surveying History and Law* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 68.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

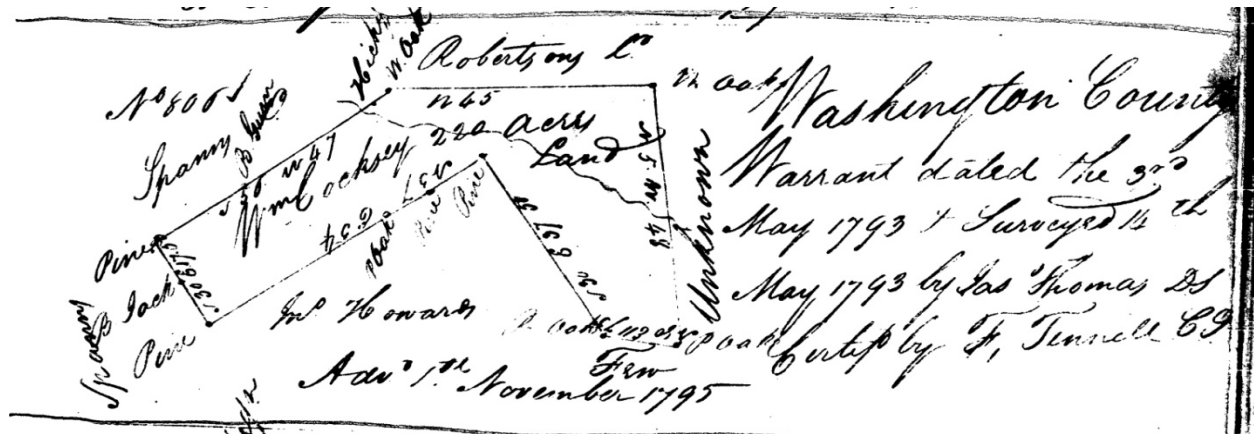
a grant. ... The applicant usually accompanied the surveyor to show him the exact bounds to be laid out to supplement the vague description given in the warrant. The applicant was allowed great latitude in fixing his bounds. ... In addition, the applicant was obliged to furnish chainmen, who usually consisted of the applicant himself and one other person—perhaps a close relative or neighbor."⁹⁴

3-14 MAY 1793

WASHINGTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Plat.

3 May 1793 (warrant) and 14 May 1793 (Survey). 200 acres for **William Cooksey**, Washington County; performed by James Thomas, Deputy Surveyor. According to the survey and patent, the land was bounded on the North by lands of "Few's" and John Howard, on the East by "Spann's," on the South by "Spanns and Robertson,"⁹⁵ and on the west by "unknown land."⁹⁶



COMMENTS:

Robertsons:

Individuals surnamed Robertsons were William Cooksey's neighbors in Washington and Tattnall Counties, Georgia, and in Covington County, Mississippi.⁹⁷

Washington's Plat Book A identifies two men of this name among original settlers in 1784:

- Jonathan Roberson's Heirs, 287.5 acres on Buffalo, adj. Phillips (p. 102)
- Joseph Robertson, 287.5 acres "swamp land 4 miles below Long Bluff," adj. Green Harris and Few? (p. 142)

John Howard:

Howard's warrant contains the assertion by Elijah Clarke that Howard was from out of state when he enlisted in Clarke's militia.

⁹⁴ Faris W. Cadle, *Georgia Land Surveying History and Law* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 68, 71.

⁹⁵ For William Cooksey's Robertson neighbors in Georgia and Mississippi, see "[Rev.] Norvell Robertson," *Daughters of the American Revolution, Norvell Robertson Chapter* (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~msnrctdar/NorvellRobertson.html> : accessed 8 March 2010). Supposedly, Norvell married Sarah Powell in Georgia and they had their first child in 1792.

⁹⁶ Georgia Surveyor General, Land Grants, Plat Book CC (1784–1799): 227; Department of Archives and History, Atlanta.

⁹⁷ "[Rev.] Norvell Robertson," *Daughters of the American Revolution, Norvell Robertson Chapter* (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~msnrctdar/NorvellRobertson.html> : accessed 8 March 2010). Supposedly, Norvell married Sarah Powell in Georgia and they had their first child in 1792.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

The "Fews":

Plat Book A shows four adult males named Few among the original 1784 settlers:

- Travis Few, 287.5 acres, "cane brake" land, adj. Samuel Berryhill (p. 34); no survey plat appears for Berryhill, however
- Benjamin Few, 1150 acres, "low ground," adj. Moses Hill (p. 56); Hill's land lay on Buffalo adj. Thomas Ramsey (p. 57); Ramsey's 287.5 acres lay on Buffalo, adj. Jesse Jones (p. 58) and Jones's 287.5 acres on Buffalo adj. Bird and Matthews (p. 58)
- William Few Jr., 1207.5 acres "oak, Hickory & Pine land," on Buffalo Creek (p. 57)
- **Ignatius** Few, 287.5 acres "low Grounds" on Buffalo Creek, adj. Gardner (p. 57); Wm. Gardner's 287.5 acres of "pine land ... low ground" adj. Ignatius Few on the Oconee R. (p. 73)
[Ignatius appears later, below, with William Cooksey, as a taxpayer in Tattnall County]
- John Few, 287.5 acres adj. John Offert and Reaves (p. 238)
- Isaac Few, 287.5 acres on Buffalo, vacant on all sides (p. 281)

Spann and John Howard:

No plats appear for either in Plat Book A. However, Bockstruck shows the following:⁹⁸

Howard, John	Ga.	Minute Man	19 June 1784	287.5 acres	B p. 259
Spann, Charles	Ga.	—	13 Apr. 1787	450 acres	B p.495
Spann, George	Ga.	—	16 Apr. 1787	287.5 acres	B p.495

TO DO:

- **Study Washington County plat books, 1785–1800.**
- **Get surveys of surrounding tracts.**

1793–1794

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

County Creation.

Montgomery County was created in December 1793 from the lower half of Washington County. **William Cooksey's land** apparently fell into the bounds of Montgomery.

Those bounds have been described as follows:

"... beginning at Carr's Bluff on the Oconee River, and running along the Uchee Path, to the place where said path crosses Williamson's Swamp; thence in a direct line to the Ogeechee River; thence down said river to the Effingham (now Screven) line; thence along said line to where it strikes the line of Liberty County; thence along said line to the Altamaha River, thence up the said river to the confluence of the Oconee and Oakmulgee Rivers; thence up to the Oconee to the beginning."⁹⁹

COMMENT:

This **John Watts** appears to be the John who was appointed 19 December 1793 to a committee to determine the location of the new Montgomery courthouse. He and his fellow

⁹⁸ Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, *Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants Awarded by State Governments* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1996).

⁹⁹ F. Edward Schwabe Jr., *The Boundaries of Original Montgomery County* (N.p.: Montgomery County Historical Society, 1989), 6–7.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

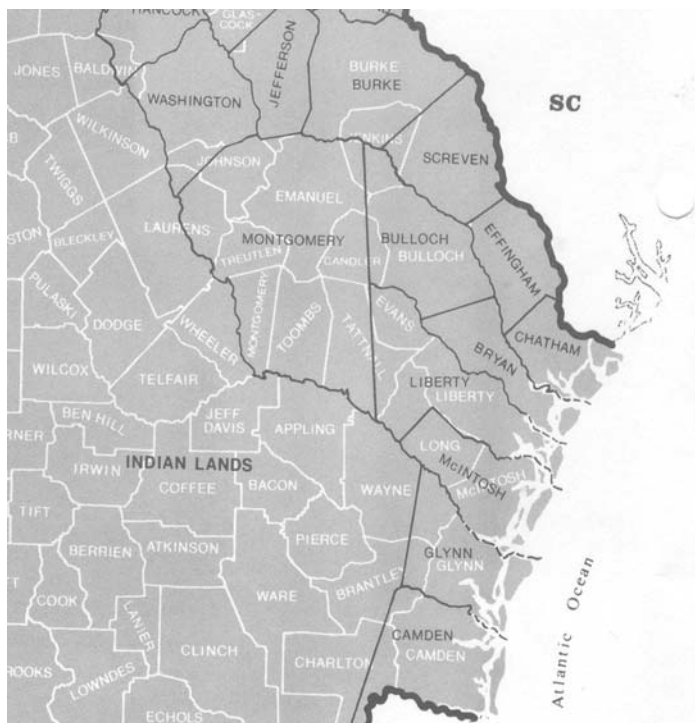
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

advisors chose the land of Watts's future in-law Arthur Lott.¹⁰⁰ Lott subsequently became the tax collector for several years before being replaced by William Cooksey's friend, William McCall.¹⁰¹ (Note also that one of the John Watts who remained in Washington was appointed that same day to a different team of men who were to determine the location of the *Washington* County courthouse.¹⁰²)

1793–1800

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Map of Georgia counties.¹⁰³



APRIL–NOVEMBER 1794

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Miscellaneous.

A short, published list of names appearing in various cattle records during these months, with no

¹⁰⁰ Robert & George Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia ... to the Year 1798, Inclusive ...* (Philadelphia: R. Aitken, Printer, 1800), 619; digitized at Archives.org (<https://archive.org/details/digestoflawsfst1800stat>; last accessed 22 January 2014), 529.

¹⁰¹ Montgomery Co., Ga., *Deeds & Mortgages, Books E-F, 1797–1800* (inside cover identifies the book as "Old Book Transcribed No. 1") has many tax sales by both men; consulted as Family History microfilm 218,756.

¹⁰² Robert & George Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia ... to the Year 1798, Inclusive ...* (Philadelphia: R. Aitken, Printer, 1800), 619; digitized at Archives.org (<https://archive.org/details/digestoflawsfst1800stat>; last accessed 22 January 2014), 525.

¹⁰³ William Thorndale and William Dollarhide, *Georgia 1790–1820* (Bountiful, UT: American Genealogical Lending Library, n.d.), 1800 map.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

detail other than a date for the name, has no Cooksey entries but includes several associates:¹⁰⁴

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 10. Jesse Price, Aug. 4, 1794 | |
| 20. James Hancock, Aug. 25, 1794 | [tavern keeper, apparent father of Cader Hancock] |
| 21. Thader Price, Aug. 25, 1794 | [Cader Price, father-in-law of Zilpha] |
| 25. John Price , Aug. 25 1794 | [husband of Zilpha ca. 1798–99] |
| 28. John Watts , Aug. 25, 1794 | [proposed father of Zilpha] |

TO DO:

- **Research Hughes-Folsom Papers, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, from which this list was extracted.**

1795

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Analysis.

Jury lists for 1795 have been published. None include William Cooksey.¹⁰⁵ Nor did I find him in my search of the *original* deeds and court records that have survived for Montgomery.

The records that do exist for his Montgomery County landholdings, over the next several years, are contradictory and seemingly incomplete. According to Cadle, the following process should have been followed:

“Within three months after recording the plat in his office, the county surveyor transmitted a copy of it, along with the executed warrant, to the state surveyor general. When the grant fee [none applied in 1793] and office costs were paid, the surveyor general made a copy of the plat in a record book kept in his office. He retained the original plat in his files and transmitted a copy of it to the secretary of state’s office. This copy was attached to the grant, which was then signed by the governor. This done, the grant was returned to the secretary of state’s office for registering and affixing the state seal. it was then transmitted back to the county surveyor to be recorded in the county records and delivered to the grantee. If the grant fee and office fees were not paid into the state treasury within one year of the date of the warrant, the grant would be deemed lapsed and could be issued to any qualified person who should apply for it.”

However, there appears to be no patent issued to William for six years. (See abstract under 30 June 1799.) That patent specifies 200 acres, leading superficially to an assumption that it was the same 200 acres surveyed in 1793. If so, that assumption raises questions:

- Why did the grant not lapse at the end of the specified one year for completion of the grant?
- Was William’s land one of those for whom patents were lost and then reissued?

¹⁰⁴ James E. Dorsey and John K. Derden, *Montgomery County, Georgia: A Source Book of Genealogy and History* (Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Co., 1983), 201; citing “Records, Marks and Brands and Estray Book, Hughes-Folsom Papers, Georgia Historical Society Collection 406, Box 3, Folder 44.”

¹⁰⁵ Clifford S. Dwyer, *Montgomery County, Ga., Jury Lists, 1791, 1795, 1804* (Vidalia, Ga.: Montgomery County Records Preservation Committee, n.d.).

CA. JANUARY 1797
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.¹⁰⁶

Data categories:

- Land (Swamp; Pine; Oak & Hickory, 2d or 3d quality)
- No. of Negroes
- No. of Polls
- Amt. of Tax [no distinction between state & county tax]

Data arrangement: Semi-alphabetical by first letter of surname

“C”

Craig, Robt. Esqr.

Carson, Willis

Cox Needham

Chance, Vincent

Cannon, Williby

Calhoon, Joseph

Carter, William B

Carpenter, Robt

Carter, Frederick

Carter, Giles

Cooksey, William 175a swampland, 200a 2d qual
1 poll, \$1.43¾

Cox, Josiah

[end of “C” section]

COMMENT:

Georgia at this time had no maximum age for the payment of poll tax. All males over 21 were charged. Not until 1825 did Georgia automatically exempt males over the age of 60.¹⁰⁷

William Cooksey was the only Cooksey to pay a poll in Montgomery in these two years, suggesting that his sons William E. and John were either under 21 (i.e., born after 1775) or that they did not reside in Montgomery with their father.

John Price is also missing from this roll, although his father Cader is taxed. The implication is that John is not living in the parental county or else he is not yet 21. Cader’s position in the “P” section of the roll implies that he was one of the first taxpayers in this county.

William and Juniper Hall are taxed, but **not Ignatius**. [*Ignatius would not be taxed until 1805 Tattnall*, shortly before he appears on record with an alleged wife Zilpha.]

Regarding the land tax:

Cooksey is paying tax only on the 175 acres warranted and surveyed in 1791—not on the 200 acres warranted and surveyed in 1793. According to tax-records FAQs at the

¹⁰⁶ Montgomery Co., Ga., “Tax Digest ... 1797–1798”; FHL microfilm 159,160.

¹⁰⁷ Robert Scott Davis, *Research in Georgia* (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1981), 173.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

website of the Georgia Department of Archives and History: “Land that had been surveyed for an individual was subject to taxation even though the land had not yet been granted to that individual.” However, William would not pay tax on this land until after it was granted in 1799.¹⁰⁸ **Did the local tax assessor not follow the law or does the archive err in its instruction?**

McCAULE, William 0 land, 1 poll, \$.31 ¼ [2d name on list of 14; in county early]

COMMENT:

When McCall, a former tax assessor of Montgomery County, died in Laurens County in 1811, William Cooksey was a bondsman for his executor, Daniel Shine. (Laurens Co., Ga., “Book A, Administrators and Guardian Bonds [1809–1823],” pp. 23–24; FHL microfilm 0,414,388.)

CA. JANUARY 1798

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.

Semialphabetized by first letter of surname.

Cawley, George

Cooksey, William 175a swampland, 200a 2d qual., 1 poll, \$1.43 ¾

Cox, Josiah

Price, Cader

Price, John Junr.

[Same data as in 1797; he’s still poll age or has a son younger than John]

1 poll, \$.31 ¼

[Cader is apparently paying the tax on the land he gave to John]

Watts, John, Esqr.

460a 2d qual., 0 slave, 1 poll, \$.68 ¾

Watts, Thomas

400a 2d qual., 1 slave, 1 poll, \$.93 ¾

COMMENT:

The two Watts appear together in the middle of a 13-person “W” section that includes their in-laws, Daniel, Jesse (Sr. and Jr.), and Richard Wiggins.

Enoch Hall & Lewis Hall are added in this tax year, but not **Ignatius Hall** who, in 1806, was living with one Zilpha as his “wife.”

12 JULY 1798

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Petition.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ “Georgia Tax Records FAQ,” *Georgia Secretary of State: Brian P. Kemp* (http://sos.georgia.gov/archives/what_do_we_have/taxfaq.htm : accessed 23 July 2010), under question, “Why is my ancestor listed on the tax digests owning land before the date of the grant?”

¹⁰⁹Robert Scott Davis Jr., *History of Montgomery County Georgia to 1918* (Roswell, Ga.: WH Wolfe Associates, Historical Publications Division, 1992), 23–24; for his citation, Davis states “The following petition is from the Montgomery County File II, Georgia Department of Archives and History.”

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

“To his Excellency James Jackson Governor and commander in chief of the State of Georgia. The Remonstrance of the people on the frontier part of Montgomery County Set forth

“That the Citizens of the South end of the county aforesd. have for many months past laboured under very heavy and continual grievances and Depredations committed by and proceeding from parties of the Creek Indians, who has frequently come over in large bodies into the Settlement and have marched from house to house with their guns in their hands apparently in a very threatening & hostile manner while others at the same time have been active in stealing of horses and robbing of houses which has proved so disagreeable to the neighbourhood that without some speedy relief we the Subscribers and many others along the frontier must unavoidably leave them our Lands with our houses, and what property our Industry and hard Labour has accumulated.

“We also beg leave to observe to your Excellency that in our Opinion, a few horsemen stationed on the remotwe frontier, whose duty it should be to drive all such vagrant Indians from time to time who shoud [*sic*] cross the Oconee river woud have a great tendency to put a stop to this growing evil.

“However we submit to any measure that your Excellency in your wisdom may thing proper But our situation at present is so distressing and the lives of our Selves and our families in jeopardy every moment, that we are in reality in a much worse situation than if we were at open war.

“we therefore hope & trust that your Excellency will afford us some speedy relief and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

[Signed]

Jesse Embree^A
George Valley (Kelly?)
John Fouracre
John King
Ezekiel Clifton
Josiah Cox
Joseph Sikes
Robert Brazel^B
Brazil Overstreet^C
Thomas Gibbs
Thomas Hollomon
James Hancock^D
John Bowin
Stephen Bowen^E
B. Highsmith
Daniel Highsmith^F
William Cooksey
Cullen Edwards

James Thomas Jr.^G
William Johnson
Alen Johnson^H
James Thomas Sr.
Willoby Hogge
John Stuard
William Harvey
John Adamson
Ezekiel Stafford^I
James Whitten
Alen Rolls [aka Rawls]
Roger Hogge
Richard Geddians
John Nappier
David Williams
Charles Parin
Ept. (?) Wilson

COMMENTS:

The original petition needs to be obtained to determine whether the transcriber of this document actually kept the names in the original order.

The petition was likely initiated by Jesse Embree, whose family operated a trading facility whose goods included hides, lards, and wine—an operation large enough to keep “files.”¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 26, 27, 32, 37.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Those goods likely attracted those Indians whom Jesse said were terrifying the neighborhood. Whether the Embrees sold them the guns or ammunition with which they subsequently “walked about” could be germane to the problem. It seems possible that he instigated the petition, asking for government support of military guards in the area to appease neighbors who may have blamed the Embree establishment for being an “attractive nuisance.”

As background on some the signers:

- A. **Jesse Embree** was a Lott inlaw. In 1793, he and John Watts served on a committee to select the site of the courthouse for the new county of Montgomery and chose Arthur Lott’s land.¹¹¹
- B. **Robert Brazel** (var. Braswel) in 1790 sold 200 acres on the North side of the Great Ohoopce to Cader Price,¹¹² whose son would marry Zilpha Watts in 1798. In 1799 Brazel/Braswell made a donation to son Jacob Cannon Braswell, using the neighborhood J.P., Jesse Embree.¹¹³
- C. **Brazeal Overstreet** in 1804 owned land adjacent to James Hancock¹¹⁴
- D. **James Hancock**, as shown later in these notes, was (a) a Tattnall tavern keeper, (b) a friend of Ignatius Hall whose “wife” in 1806 was said to be one Zilpha, and (c) a friend of Cader Price for whom James’s son Cader Hancock was named.
- D. **Stephen Bowen**, in 1808, sold Tattnall land on which John Watts was living. The purchaser was Daniel Daugherty, the son or brother of the justice John Daugherty who married William Cooksey’s daughter Letitia about 1811.¹¹⁵
- E. **Daniel Highsmith**, in 1819, was called to testify in the case of William Cooksey vs. McFarland.¹¹⁶
- F. **James Thomas** and **Ezekiel Stafford**, in 1804, were witnesses when Jesse Embree cosigned Robert Smith’s bond as a Tattnall constable and again when Embree cosigned Allen Johnson’s bond as sheriff. Also an associate of Robert LOTT in 1805¹¹⁷
- G. **Allen Johnson**, sworn in as Tattnall sheriff in 1804, with Jonathan Embree as deputy.¹¹⁸
- H. **Ezekiel Stafford**, in 1804 was county surveyor and in 1805 was a Tattnall justice.¹¹⁹

TO DO:

Get this petition from the Georgia State Archives.

¹¹¹ Montgomery Co., Ga., Deeds & Mortgages, Books E-F, 1797–1800 (inside cover identifies the book as “Old Book Transcribed No. 1”) has many tax sales by both men; consulted as Family History microfilm 218,756.

¹¹² Montgomery Co., Ga., Deed Book CPG: 13-15

¹¹³ Montgomery Co., Ga., Deed Book __: __. [I’ve lost my source for this note!]

¹¹⁴ “Georgia, Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783-1909,” images, *Family Search* (<https://familysearch.org> : 10 January 2014), Volume “...mond, Abner-Hardey, Henry,” image 116, “James Hancock” folder.

¹¹⁵ Tattnall Co., Ga., “Deed Record A, B, C, D,” pp. 233-34 [Old Book C].

¹¹⁶ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 102. Murray does not identify the court in which the case was prosecuted.

¹¹⁷ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 3, 6, 12.

¹¹⁸ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 6.

¹¹⁹ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 8. For Stafford’s post as surveyor, see several of the warrants in the James Hancock folder, above.

30 JUNE 1799
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Grant.

Patent issued to **William Cooksey** for 200 acres.¹²⁰

1799–1804
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.

None seem to have survived.

1799
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

“John Price vs. Zilphy Price, Divorce, 1799”

No other data appears on the left half of this double-wide page. The right half carries 2 notations:

“Amended and Continued”

[no date for the action]

“Dismissed by Plaintiff’s request”

[no date for the action]¹²¹

COMMENTS:

- In the margin, beside John’s name, there is written “Caldwell.” In the margin, beside Zilphy’s name, there is written “Flournoy.” Caldwell & Flournoy were attorneys whose names appear frequently in this docket book. The fact that Zilphy, as a wife who would not have worked outside the home, had the means to engage an attorney suggests that she had family in the region who underwrote the cost of her defense in this divorce suit.
- The pages are filmed out of sequence. By matching left/right page data for all cases on that double-wide page, it becomes evident that the left side of this page is filmed opposite the left side of the next docket page, while the right side of this page is filmed opposite the right side of the next docket page.
- Cader Price, son of Zilphy, was born 8 January 1800 (according to his tombstone). The date suggests that Zilphy’s pregnancy may have prompted a temporary reconciliation.
- **This docket stops with April 1803; the next filmed docket begins March 1856.** Presuming that John re-launched his suit in Montgomery, there appears to be no local record.
- Reuben Price, Zilphy’s second son, is said to have been born about 1802.¹²² However, Zilphy and John did not remain married. As shown below,
 - Zilphy was a single mother of two children (who were *not* called orphans) in the May 1803–March 1804 time frame during which she registered for the 1805 land lottery.

¹²⁰ Georgia Surveyor General, Land Grants Book BBBB: 360; Georgia State Archives.

¹²¹ “Montgomery County Appearance Docket, March Term 1799,” unnumbered p. 3, a double-wide page; FHL microfilm 159,033.

¹²² 1850 U.S. census, Newton Co., Miss., p. 177 (stamped), dwelling 315, family 315 (Reuben Price, aged 48); National Archives microfilm publication M432, roll 378; images viewed at *Ancestry.com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : 7 June 2005).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

- John appears to be the John Price who died in 1811 in Laurens County, leaving ostensibly legitimate children by another woman.
- in January 1809 Zilpha was named as the intended bride in a license taken out by John Cooksey, presumed son of William; but that record carries no minister's return. Under Georgia law at that time, an 'innocent' plaintiff in a divorce case could remarry, but the 'guilty' party could not.¹²³ John, as the plaintiff in the 1799 suit, apparently did remarry and left legitimate heirs at his death in 1812, Laurens County (see below). Zilpha was not entitled to rewed.
- Zilpha's two sons were not named as 1811 heirs of John Price of Laurens. If the two Johns were one and the same, as they appear to be, the omission of Zilpha's sons as his heirs suggests that John's complaint against her was one of adultery, that he denied paternity, and that the court decision to grant him that divorce left the children legally deemed to not be his.
- The name given to Zilpha's first son, Cader, was the name of John Price's father. However, the name given to Zilpha's second son, Reuben, is not known to be a Price family name. Among Cooksey associates, **the name Reuben has been found only in the family of the Rev. John Watts Sr.**, amid whom the Cookseys lived and intermingled for several generations in Georgia and Mississippi. **Zilphy's youngest son (James William Cooksey) would, in fact, name his first-born son *Watts Cooksey*.**

All points considered:

- **It is possible that this marriage ended in annulment rather than divorce.** Divorce proceedings in this era were launched at the local level but had to go to the state legislature for the final decree. No record of a divorce decree has been found for the couple in those legislative records.
- An agreed-upon annulment between the two families might have been the reason why John's divorce action was dropped. Given the virtual certainty that Zilpha was the daughter of the county justice John Watts, her father and the tight-knit clique of the county's ruling elite, into which he fit, may have decided that a private annulment handled by the attorneys was a more-discreet option that would protect the reputation of both Zilpha and her family—and, as well, preserve her right to remarry and lead a normal life.
- An annulment would also account for the fact that Zilpha's sons were not legal heirs to the 1811 estate of John Price in Laurens.
- An annulment would also raise a critical genealogical question: Who was the father of Zilpha's two sons, Cader and Reuben, both born after the divorce action was launched?

7 DECEMBER 1799

¹²³ *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, Passed at Louisville in November and December, 1806* [Louisville, Ga.: Ambrose Day, Printer, 1806], 17; OCR edition online at University of Georgia, *Galileo: Georgia Legislative Documents* (<http://neptune3.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/legis-idx.pl>).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

7 December 1799 (drawn)

11 June 1802 (recorded)

William Cookson {seal} [no wife involved] of Washington County, Georgia, to John Roach of same place. Sale for \$40, ninety-eight (98) acres described as:

Beginning at a pine and running south 20° west 48 chains 60 links to an old marked pine, thence N 8y? E43 C[hains] 10 L[inks] to a pine and from thence to the beginning.

“...as will more fully appear by a plat of the same annexed to a grant to **William Cookson**, the 17th of January 1798 and assigned by his excellency James Jackson, Governor.” Witness: Jas. Hall. Official: D^d Blackshear, J.P.” No neighbors named.¹²⁴

COMMENT:

Cookson *could* be a misrendering of Cooksey’s name. However, I have found no evidence yet of a grant made to William Cooksey on that date or one in that amount. This should not be part of the ‘swamp land’ on which William has been paying taxes for two years because of the date of the grant.

Apparently, this land would eventually fall into Laurens County, where William Cooksey also settled. On 7 October 1830, Young Keen of Laurens County sold to [Hillary Labon?] of Laurens, “98 acres on north side of **Bruton Creek** with 1 acre reserved for meeting house. Land originally granted to William Cookson on Jan. 17, 1788. \$80.00. Witnesses William T. Blackshear and Justice of the Inferior Court Edward Bryan.”¹²⁵

1801–1810

MONTGOMERY-TATTNALL-WASHINGTON COUNTIES, GEORGIA

Map of Georgia counties.¹²⁶



¹²⁴ Montgomery Co., Ga., “Deed Record C & G,” pp. 302–3; FHL microfilm 218,755. All deeds on pp. 1–148 of this volume say they were copied from Book B “By order of the Inferior Court of Said County”; however, there is no date for the copying.

¹²⁵ Allen Thomas, *Laurens County, Georgia, Records, 1807–1832* (Roswell, Ga.: W. H. Wolfe Associates, 1991).

¹²⁶ William Thorndale and William Dollarhide, *Georgia 1790–1820* (Bountiful, UT: American Genealogical Lending Library, n.d.), 1810 map.

1801–1802

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

County Creation.

By act of 5 December 1801, Tattnall was created from Montgomery County. Records actually begin in 1802. The county's bounds are described as follows: "beginning at the mouth of Limestone Creek on the Oconee river, and from thence a direct course to the mouth of Wolfe Creek on Great Canouchee, from thence down Canouchee to the mouth of Cedar Creek, from thence keeping the late established line between Liberty County and Montgomery [at?] the mouth of Beard's Creek on the Altamaha."

1802

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.

The 1802 tax roll is said to carry the name **William Cooksey**. However, this published source provides no further data.¹²⁷

1802–12

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Analysis.

A correlation of extant rolls for Montgomery and Tattnall enables us to define the time frame each taxpayer lived in each county. As a summary:

- William Cooksey and most of the Lotts and Watts were all cut out of Montgomery and into Tattnall in 1801. The Price land fell on the Montgomery side of the new border.
- Cooksey, Lott, Price, and Watts were all in the same neighborhood both before and after the county split. Specifically for Tattnall:
 - 1802-3-4 Cooksey is registered consecutively with Arthur Lott
 - 1805-6-7 Cooksey is separated from John and Thomas Watts by only one individual
 - 1808 Cooksey and John Watts are separated by only 3 individuals
 - 1809 Cooksey and John Watts are separated by only 2 of those same 3 individuals
 - 1810 **Cooksey and John Watts have both sold their grants to Jno. B. McFarland and left the county.** (Cooksey is found 1810 in Laurens. John Watts made a cameo appearance in Telfairin 1811 to register the marriage of his daughter Amy. Thereafter, he has not been accounted for until 1818, at which time he and William Cooksey both surface in Mississippi.)
- Neither John Cooksey nor William Cooksey Jr. are taxed in Montgomery or Tattnall.

¹²⁷ *Index to Georgia Tax Digests* (Atlanta: R. J. Taylor Foundation, 1986), 2:8.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

- John Price was still in Montgomery on the roll of 1806. He does not appear on the next roll, 1811. In the interim, one John Price died in Laurens County leaving Montgomery land.

1802–37

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Grant.

County-level grant register offers no entries for Cookseys, Cooksons, or variant spellings.

1802–3–4

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.¹²⁸

Arrangement:

- Not alphabetical at all; unpaginated; no references to district
- Seems to consolidate data for three years under each name

*Data categories*¹²⁹

- Names of persons liable to pay tax
- County in which land &c is situated
- “High river Swamp & from Cathead on the Alatomaha &c to the mouth of the Oconee River
- “High river Swamp & from the mouth of the Oconee to the confluence of the Oconee and Apalachie
- Surveyed for or Granted to [Part of each name in this column is bound into crack]
- “Pine land throughout this state” [Most of column is bound in crack; entire heading is visible on just one page of the roll.]
- Free male white person above 21 years of age
- Negroes &c under 60 years of age
- Total amt. of each person’s tax
- Dates in which the is due [*sic*]
- County tax

COMMENT:

The two “High river Swamp” categories are broken down by 1st, 2d, and 3d quality.

p. 3

LOTT, Absalom	1802	200a 2d qual., Oconee mouth to confl., gr. to A. Lott, 1 poll, 11 slaves
	1803	Ditto
	1804	Ditto

p.4

¹²⁸ Tattall Co. Ga., “Tax Digest, 1802-1803,” section tab: “1802-3-4”; FHL microfilm 0,206,455, item 2.

¹²⁹ The first page has more categories; but its layout was not used past the first page. No people of interest appear on that first page. For full details, see E. S. Mills’s report, “Cooksey & Allied Families—Tax Data: Montgomery & Tattall Counties, Georgia,” 3 January 2011.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

LOTT, John Junr	1802	300a 2d qual., Cathead to mouth, gr. to Saml. M___ _50 pine land, gr. to Jones Biven _00 pine land, gr. to Jas. Biven 1 poll, 4 slaves
	1803	Ditto
	1804	Ditto, with 2 alterations: • addition of _00 acres pine land, patented to Robt. Lott • he now has 10 slaves

pp. 5-6, names in sequence

Moleley, John

Embree, Jesse

[1793 served with John Watts on committee to select courthouse location/
chose Arthur Lott's land]

[1806 witness to Arthur Lott's sale of land to Jonathan Embree]

Martin, Hardin

Stafford Ezekiel

[bought land from John Lott Jr. 1805]

Lott, Arthur

1802 50M___
237 ½ a 3d qual. Cathead to mouth, gr. to Hi___
_87 ½ a pine land gr. to Ford
_87 ½ a pine land gr. to Satawhite
_0 a pine land gr. to A. Lott
1 poll

1803-4 Ditto

Cooksey, Wm.

1802 175a (Mtgy), 3d qual, Ocone mouth to conf., gr. to Wm. Co___
200 pine land, gr. to Wm. Cooksey
1 white male above 21, 0 slave,
\$.87 ½ (state tax), \$.43 ¾ (county tax)

1803-4 Ditto

Cooper, Richd.

[1809: JP. His bondsman in a suit was Ignatius Hall (Murray, 1:46)
whose 1806 wife was said to be one Zilpha (Murray, 1:35)]

Longeno, Bartholomew

[page break]

Travis, Asa

1802-4 Part of pine land was acquired from **[Davi]d Boyd**

[rest of p. 6 not copied]

COMMENTS:

The column generally called 'poll' is, this year, called "white male white persons above the age of 21 years." There is no maximum age, only a minimum.

Three things are clear from this roll:

- William has no sons in his household who have reached the age of 21.
- William was a taxable resident of the county at the time Nancy (Cooksey) Parks was supposedly born "in Savannah."
- William, here in Tattnall as in Mississippi, is living in close proximity to the LOTTs, whose children married offspring of Rev. John Watts.

Past this point, the pages seem to be bound out of order, so that left-hand and right-hand pages seem mismatched. From the arrangement, it would be guesswork to attempt to

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

determine the area in which each landowner lived. The matches could (most likely) be made if all pages were printed out and resorted according to the spacing of lines and content of entries. However, there was not enough time left in this particular research trip to copy the rolls.

p. 7

LOTT, Robt. 1 poll

pp. 11-12

[sequence copied exactly]

LOTT, Mark

Daniel, Enoch

Standly, Wm.

HALL, Lewis for

 HALL, Enoch

Leary, Dempsey

LOTT, Nathn.

LOTT, Nathn. for Wm. Lott

LOTT, Simon

 Do. for Wm. Lott

[page break; then sequence continues]

WATSON, John **[Mary Cooksey** married Robert Watson, 1810]

BOWEN, Levi **[Bani Boyd, who raised Letitia Cooksey's child, married Nancy Bowen]**

WATSON, Jonathan

Coleman, Moses

BOWEN, Elijah

McKelvey, Wm.

[His presence places this n'hood in the "McElvy District" of the unknown-date tax roll]

[McKelvey owned 200 acres in Burke, patented to Eliza. McKelvey]

[rest of page not copied here; this marks end of roll]

MAY 1803–1 MARCH 1804

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Lottery).

1805 lottery. Official land-office roster has entries presented in alphabetical order statewide. Registration held May 1803–1 March 1804. **William "Coxy,"** Tattnall County, no. 1536, registered for 1 draw; drew a blank.¹³⁰ Required payment: 12.5¢ per draw.¹³¹

COMMENTS:

¹³⁰ Virginia S. Wood and Ralph V. Wood, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery* (Cambridge, Mass.: Greenwood Press, 1964), i (for rules) and 123 ("Coxy").

¹³¹ Paul K. Graham, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery: Persons Entitled to Draws* (Decatur: The Genealogy Company, 2005), i.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

No other Cooksey registered for the lottery anywhere in the state of Georgia.

*The attribution of one draw to William appears to be an error—a conclusion supported by the original registration that is transcribed and imaged in the next research note. One draw would mean that he was a free white male, over 21, and unmarried with no minor children. By the rules of that lottery, registrants made an oral oath as to their eligibility. They were not required to present proof of marital status or family members claimed. That situation resulted in individuals claiming larger families than they actually possessed, but I have not yet found cases in which individuals *under*-claimed family members in order to qualify for fewer draws. This circumstance presents problems for those who research this Cooksey family:*

- Researchers have long assumed this William of the 1805 land lottery to be the William who eventually died in Covington County, Mississippi. His alleged first wife, “Leanna Wesley,” supposedly bore him children between ca. 1785 and 1804.¹³² Their last child was alleged to be Nancy, born 12 April 1804 in Savannah, an assertion attributed to Nancy’s daughter.¹³³
- William’s marital category in the lottery registration information, is incompatible with these popular accounts.
- William’s established residence in Tattnall between 1804 and 1810 also contradicts the presumed granddaughter’s belief that he resided in Savannah in 1804. (However, the traditional association of him with Savannah would be logical if he is indeed the son of William I of Savannah.)

Data for key associates, drawn from the published editions of the statewide index:

“PRICE, John”	Montgomery County	No. 858	drew 2 blanks
“PRICE, Zilpha”	Tattnall County	No. 1008	drew 2 blanks
“PRICE, Zilpha (& 2 children)”	Tattnall County	No. 1013	drew 2 blanks
“WATTS, John”	Tattnall County	No. 1542	drew 2 blanks ¹³⁴

COMMENT:

Regarding John Price:

Two draws were allotted to men who claimed to be white male citizens, aged 21 or older, with a wife and/or legitimate minor children. John’s father Cader did not apply, having died about 1800–1.¹³⁵ The fact that John claimed a wife and/or children while Zilpha did also is further indication that their marriage had dissolved.

Regarding Zilpha:

Only one Zilpha Price has been placed in Tattnall County, the Zilpha who married John Price and was then sued by him for divorce just months later (1799). Tradition among her

¹³² See prior discussions for William’s “Birth and Origin” (ca. 1749) and “Marriage: Tradition vs. Evidence” (ca. 1782).

¹³³ Roy Gill, *Cooksey and Allied Families: A Work in Progress, Speculation, and Conjecture* (<http://www.sciway3.net/clark/gill/ThomasGill2003.htm> : 16 June 2008), posted 2004. As Gill notes in the title of his family compilation, much of what he offers carries no documentation and disagrees with existing evidence.

¹³⁴ Graham, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery*, 449; Wood and Wood, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery*, 281.

¹³⁵ For abstracts of the documents that bracket Cader Price’s death to the 1800–1 period, see Elizabeth Shown Mills, “Cooksey & associated families: Montgomery & Tattnall Counties, Georgia,” report to Cooksey Research Group, 1 June 2009.

offspring attribute two children to that marriage—the Rev. Cader Price (born 8 January 1800) and Reuben Price, born 1802—details compatible with the data above.

Two possible explanations exist for the duplicate registrations in the name of “Zilpha Price.”

- (Proposed by some researchers, but highly improbable) Shortly before his death, Cader Price *might* have remarried—and he *might* have married a woman with the same name as the girl who had married his son. The known facts are these:

Beginning 22 March 1796, the local clerk kept a loose sheet on which he listed the names of males who had procured marriage licenses. Under date of 15 September 1798 he entered the name “Cader Prise.”¹³⁶ No bride was named, only the name of the person who *paid for the license*. No such entry was made for John Price, who married Zilpha during the period this list was maintained.

Two possible explanations exist for the fee record: (a) Cader did indeed take a wife and leave a widow—one who, very coincidentally, bore the same uncommon name as the young girl his son married; or (b) Cader went in to the clerk’s office and obtained the marriage license for his son and the clerk entered Cader’s name in his fee book because Cader paid for the license. This second probability is the likeliest one.

If the first Zilpha of the 1803–4 registration was indeed Cader’s widow, then yet another coincidence exists, the second being that she (like John’s wife) left Montgomery and relocated in Tattnall. Obviously, these alternative explanations for the identity of the first Zilpha of the land lottery list invokes a tortured chain of circumstances.

- (More likely) Zilpha, as a single mother, was double-registered in Tattnall. By longstanding custom in the American South prior to the 20th century, legal business for females was most-often transacted by their male kinfolk, particularly if they were young women. Zilpha, as a woman who defied conventions, may have registered herself and children, not knowing that a family member had registered for her.

A fragment of the original roll survives for Tattnall County, penned in a small handbook with roughly 15–20 names per page. That fragment presents Zilpha’s proposed father, brother, and brother-in-law on the same page, in an eight-person cluster with William Cooksey, his daughter, and grandson. The arrangement also suggests that one of these family members applied for Zilpha, not knowing that she had applied separately. See the next research note.

**MAY 1803–1 MARCH 1804
TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA**

Land (Lottery).¹³⁷

1805 lottery. Original local roster, with entries presented in chronological sequence as the applicants presented themselves. The relevant page provides this cluster:

161 Neil Paterson

¹³⁶ “List of Marriage Licenses beginning March 22, 1796,” unnumbered sheet, in Montgomery Co., Ga., Miscellaneous Loose Papers filmed as FHL microfilm 159,033.

¹³⁷ Tattnall Co., Ga., Mixed Records of the Inferior & Superior Courts, 1807–45; microfilm A&H 101 (drawer 37, box 47), Ga. Dept. of Archives & History, Atlanta. Ignatius Hall appears on a separate page as no. 211. However, no “number of draws” appears after his name. If single and over 21, he should have been entitled to one draw; if married, two draws.

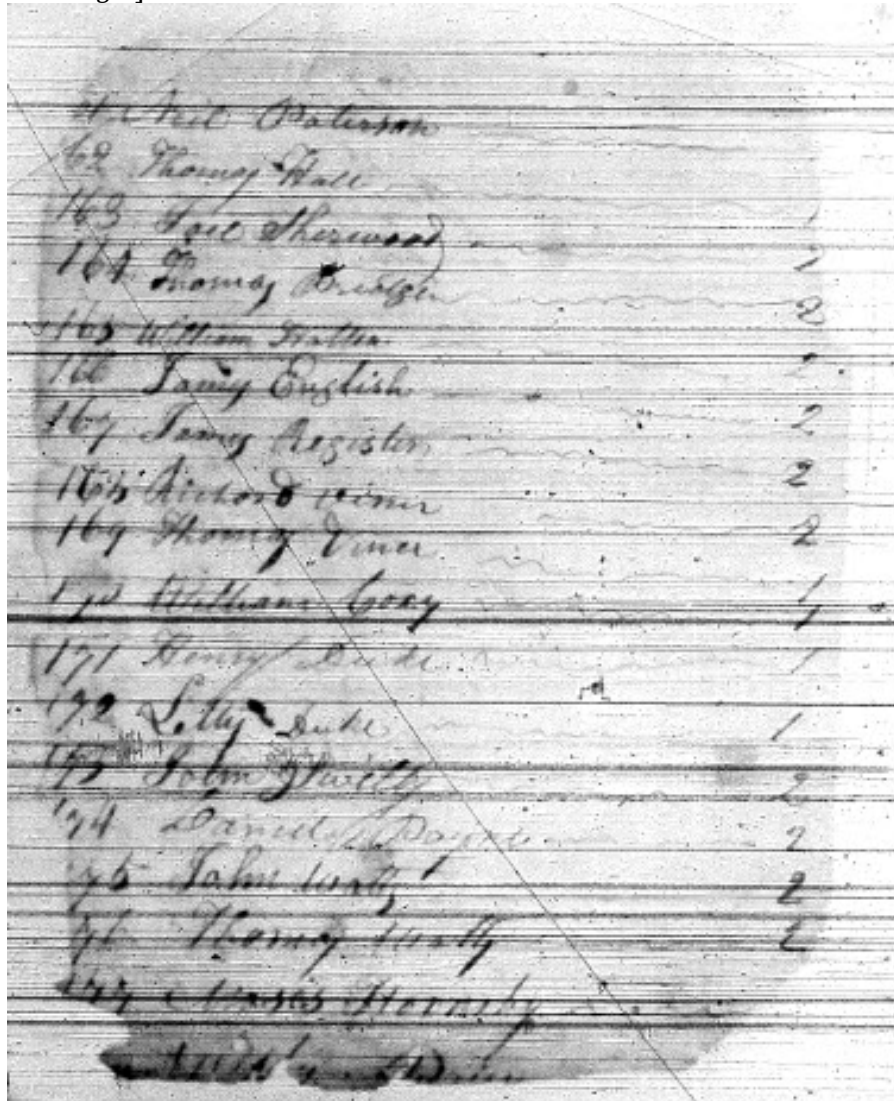
William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

162	Thomas Hall		
163	Joel Sherwood		
164	Thomas Bridges		
165	William Hatten		
166	James English		[Margaret English bore illegit child, 1804 (Murray 1:13)]
167	James Viner		
169	Thomas Viner		
170	William Coxy	1, 1	[sic]
172	Henry Duke	1	[illegitimate son of Letty]
173	Letty Duke	1	[Letty Cooksey, daughter of William]
173	John Swilly	2	
174	David [Daniel?] Payne	2	
175	John Watts	2	[proposed father of Zilpha, aka Zilphy]
176	Thomas Watts	2	[son of John Watts]
177	Moses Hornsby	[torn]	[m. Katherine Watts]
178	Zilpha Price		[Bottom half of name is torn away—top half is compatible with a <i>Zilphy Price</i> reading]

[Original Image:]



William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

12 APRIL 1804

?SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Birth.

On this day there was supposedly born to William Cooksey and wife “Leanna Wesley,” a daughter Nancy. (“According to daughter Faythe Katherine (Kate) Trammell, Nancy Cooksey Parks was born at Savannah, Georgia on 12 April 1804, and died in Newton County, Mississippi on 3 July 1876. She was a generation younger than her husband, John Parks, Sr. Nancy was, according to supporting evidence, the daughter of William Cooksey and Leanna Wesley.”)¹³⁸

COMMENTS:

- All evidence found for William suggests that he was a resident of Tattnall at this time, not Savannah.
- No evidence exists that William had a wife at this time. Ten or so years had passed since the birth of his last-known child, the Mary Cooksey who married Robert Watson in 1810.
- Nancy Cooksey’s birth falls precisely into a gap in known children for Zilpha [Watts?] Price Cooksey—i.e., between Reuben Price (ca. 1802) and John Cooksey (1806–7).
- Nancy Cooksey’s mtDNA is an exact match for the mtDNA carried by descendants of Zilpha’s sister Rhoda Watts (wife of Mark Rayburn).¹³⁹

1804

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Jury Lists.

Published jury lists for 1804 do not include William Cooksey.¹⁴⁰ Nor did I find him in my search of surviving deeds and court records.

COMMENT:

The practice by which petit and grand jurors were selected in this era was as follows:¹⁴¹

- Every three years, the assessor was to provide the court clerks with a list of all taxable white males aged 21–**60**, whose names would be put into a box for drawing
- All taxable males were entitled to serve on the petit jury.
- All taxable males entitled to vote (i.e., those worth at least 10 pounds, or practicing a mechanic’s trade, who had been resident in the state for at least six months), were also eligible to serve on the grand jury.

¹³⁸ Roy Gill, *Cooksey and Allied Families: A Work in Progress, Speculation, and Conjecture* (<http://www.sciway3.net/clark/gill/ThomasGill2003.htm> : 16 June 2008), posted 2004. As Gill notes in the title of his family compilation, much of what he offers carries no documentation and disagrees with existing evidence.

¹³⁹ The DNA evidence is currently being developed by me for a case study/proof argument to be submitted to the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*.

¹⁴⁰ Clifford S. Dwyer, *Montgomery County, Ga., Jury Lists, 1791, 1795, 1804* (Vidalia, Ga.: Montgomery County Records Preservation Committee, n.d.).

¹⁴¹ Robert & George Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia ... to the Year 1798, Inclusive ...* (Philadelphia: R. Aitken, Printer, 1800); digitized at Archives.org (<https://archive.org/details/digestoflawsofst1800stat> : last accessed 22 January 2014), 440 (1791 jury selection process), and 627 (1797 revision).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)
Wife 1: Unknown
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

1805–1806
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA¹⁴²

Tax Lists.

William has been dropped from the Montgomery roll.

COMMENT:

When Tattnall was cut away from Montgomery, William's land obviously fell into Tattnall, where he was taxed that year.

John Price, the Wiggineses; Mark, Jesse, and Ephraim Lott; John Doherty; Juniper Hall; and David Boyd (father of Bani) are still taxed in Montgomery.

APRIL 1805
TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court Minutes.

Superior Court petit jurors for October Term 1805 are to include **Wm. Cooksey**.

OCTOBER 1805 TERM
TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court Minutes.

Superior Court jurors. Cooksey was not among those called.¹⁴³

1805-6-7
TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax Roll.

A triennial roll.

Data arrangement:

- Same categories as 1802-3-4
- No division by district, no alphabetization, and no pagination

pp. 1–3 (double-wide)

[Exact sequence copied. Exact tax data not copied, due to lack of time]

HALL, Ignatius	[Ignatius is alleged this year to have a wife named <i>Zipha</i> .] ¹⁴⁴
LOTT, Simon	"High River Swamp on the Ocona River"
LOTT, Absalom	Montgomery Co. land

¹⁴² Montgomery Co., Ga., 1805–06 Tax Rolls; FHL microfilm 159,160

¹⁴³ Tattnall Co., Ga., "Superior Court Minutes, 1805–23," p. 3 (April) and unpaginated (October); FHL microfilm 206,463, item 2. Mostly unpaginated, unindexed; scanned every page for items of interest.

¹⁴⁴ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845, p. 27.

LOTT, Arthur	“High River Swamp on the Altamaha River”
LOTT, William	1 free white male over 21
Armstrong, Thos.	
Sharp, Parker	Land granted/surveyed to Robt. Lott
Sharp, John	
Berryhill, Samuel	
[page break]	
Sharp, Joshua	
Sharp, Howel	
Sharp, Wm.	
HANCOCK, James	[Father of Cader Hancock, close associate of Cader Price]
HALL, Lewis	[apparent brother of Ignatius who had wife Zilpha in 1806 Taxed on Tattnall Co. pine land granted to John Watts
Do. for Stanfil	
HALL, Thomas	
HALL, Alston	
HALL, Enoch	
Collins, Joseph	
[page break]	
Embree, Jesse	
Williams, Wm.	[22 Nov. 1806, Arthur Lott sold his land to Jonathan Embree, before William Williams, J.P.; Embree was Deputy Sheriff in 1804 (Murray 1:6)]
Stradley, Nimrod	
Blackmon, John P.	[Apparently this is the region earlier called “Blackmon’s District”]
Buie, John	
Buile, Malcolm	
Munroe, Archibald	[See 1810 Montgomery case in which Munroes & Williamses were charged with murder & William Cooksey (Sr. or Jr. not specified) served as bondsman for Malcolm Williams]

COMMENT:

This tax roll is clearly grouping taxpayers by neighborhood. Several details are coalescing in this neighborhood, which may or may not be coincidental:

- William Cooksey named his first son William E. (reputedly William Elston [Alston?]). No Elstons have been found anywhere in any region where he has been placed to date. One James Alston lived in this region, but no connection between him and the Cooksey-Lott-Watts cluster has been found in any local records.
- Ignatius Hall, who is listed adjacent to the Lotts is alleged to have had a wife Zilpha in this year 1806. The name Zilpha was extremely *uncommon* in the county during this era.
- Evidence overwhelmingly points to the Watts family as the birth family of Zilpha Price Cooksey; the Lotts and Moses Hansby would be her in-laws.
- The wife of John Watts Sr. is alleged to be a Ralls (var., Rawls, Rawl); however, DAR does not accept this assertion. The coupling of names in this community suggests that Ralls might be Hall, a family in which “Alston” appears as a given name.

p. 9

HALL, Lewis Jr.

LARD, Lodwick

Land in Liberty, Wash’n & Tattnall, incl’g land granted to **Jacob Watts**

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

pp. 13-14

[starting with last line of 13]

Jones, John Sr. Tatnall pine land gr. to **Arthur Lott**, acreage bound into crack of book

[page break]

Watts, John Tatnall pine land granted to McDowell

Watts, Thomas Tatnall pine land granted to "**John & Thos. Watts**"

Saucer, Howell [part of Byrd family with whom Lotts-Watts associated]

Cooksey, Wm. 1805-6-7 200 pine land granted to Wm. Cooksey,
0 "free white males over 21"
0 slaves, \$.61 $\frac{3}{4}$ tax; \$.36 $\frac{1}{2}$ tax to county

COMMENTS:

Note the proximity of William Cooksey to Watts, the proposed father and brother of Zilpha Price Cooksey. Here, as in Covington County, Mississippi, William Cooksey is just one taxpayer/household from Thomas Watts.

Two other important deductions might be drawn from the lack of a poll tax assessment:

- Neither of the Cooksey sons, William E. or John, appear to have reached 21 by 1805, when this triennial roll was compiled. This conclusion agrees with the birth data given for William E. in his and his widow's War of 1812 pension applications.
- By the creation of this roll in early 1805, William was no longer assessed a poll for himself. Georgia's tax law placed no maximum age upon the head tax, stating only that an exemption was possible for infirmity or poverty. Age 60 appears to have been considered the maximum age for sound cognitive health, considering state law set 60 as the maximum age to serve on a jury¹⁴⁵—and 60 would be set as the maximum for poll tax when that maximum was first set in the 1820s.¹⁴⁶

William was not impoverished. Thus, it appears that **William has obtained an exemption from the poll tax on the basis of infirmity—possibly having reached the age of 60. If so, then William was born ca. 1744–45, during the lifetime of William Cooksey and wife Sarah Young of Savannah.**

Durrence, Wm. [supposedly married daughter of William Williams, below]

Gideon, Tilmon [Tilmon, Gideon]

McDonald, Jeremiah

Wilson, David

Smith, Jas.

Daniel, Aaron

Williams, Rowland [alleged son of Samuel Williams & Delilah Neville; grandson of Wm. Williams]

Williams, Wm.

¹⁴⁵ Robert & George Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia ... to the Year 1798, Inclusive ...* (Philadelphia: R. Aitken, Printer, 1800), 619; digitized at Archives.org (<https://archive.org/details/digestoflawsofst1800stat> : last accessed 22 January 2014), 627.

¹⁴⁶ Prior to 1825, Georgia's annual tax laws did not set a maximum age for the poll. When it was set in 1825, it was set at 60. For the tax laws, see Robert & George Watkins, *A Digest of the Laws of the State of Georgia ... to the Year 1798, Inclusive ...* (Philadelphia: R. Aitken, Printer, 1800); digitized at Archives.org (<https://archive.org/details/digestoflawsofst1800stat> : last accessed 22 January 2014). Also *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, Passed at Louisville in November and December, 1806* (Louisville, Ga.: Ambrose Day, Printer, 1806); html edition at University of Georgia, *Galileo: Georgia Legislative Documents* (<http://nep.tune3.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/legis-idx.pl?sessionid=7f000001&type=law&byte=950416> : last accessed 22 January 2014).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

COMMENT:

Rowland and William Williams were in close proximity to Cooksey, Watts, and Lotts on the Montgomery rolls of 1797–1805, as well as Tatnall, 1805–7.

Tilmon, Jas.
Laremoor, Robt.
Durrence, Francis

p. 18

LOTT, Mark 300 acres pine land in Montgomery granted to Mark Lott

p. 19

DAUGHTRY, Jacob 1 white male 21+, 0 land

Defaulters for 1805-6-7

Hatten, William Land in Tattnall granted to Hatten, 1 male 21+

Embree, Jonathan Land in Tattnall granted to “Embree & Abner Davis” [Lott in-law?]

COMMENT:

On 22 November 1806, Jonathan Embree bought 287.5 acres from Arthur Lott, before Wm. Williams, J.P.

1 JUNE–1 AUGUST 1806
TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Legal Suit.

One Zilpha is alleged to be the wife of Ignatius Hall,¹⁴⁷ occupant of Cox’s Old Sawmill plantation, living in the immediate neighborhood of William Cooksey, and close friend of Cader Price’s friend James Hancock.

1 August 1806

“[Petition] John P. Blackmon says Ignatious Hall and Zilpha Hall, his wife, owe him \$1,000 in damages. On 1 June 1806 they publicly said, ‘He was a liar and a recorded liar in the Clerk’s office of Tattnall Co. and they could prove it’. They are required to appear at court the 2nd Monday in October.”

COMMENT:

Nothing further about this case appears in the loose papers abstracted by Murray. Nor have I found any further reference to this in the Inferior and Superior Court Minutes of Tattnall. Apparently, the case was dropped.

More importantly, I’ve found no further reference to any wife for a man named Ignatius Hall in Tattnall records, until a marriage on **7 December 1814 to Martha Lewis**.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845, p. 27.

Murray has nearly a dozen abstracts for Ignatius, from 1804 through 1811. Including these:

- In 1805, he was sued for rent on “a plantation called the Old Mills,” and “the Sawmill,” which he had “enjoyed” for two years and nine months,” and a levy was made against a Negro woman and 3 children that he owned (pp. 9-10, 17), but the actual owner of the land was Col. Francis Tennell (pp. 9-10, 17), the county surveyor of Washington County who appears on numerous Watts-Cooksey documents in earlier years.
- In April 1806 Jesse Bird (who had been a J.P. in 1803) was charged with assaulting Hall at “Coxes old Mill” (pp. 2, 22). Cox’s Mills had formerly been 287.5 acres belonging to John O’Neal (p. 11).
- On 3 Aug. 1807 Hall was surety for James Hancock’s liquor license (p. 36) and again on 10 March 1809 (p. 42). Hancock appears to have named his son Cader for Cader Price.
- On 10 May 1809, with Ignatius Hall as a witness, the Grand Jury charged Hancock with keeping a house of ill repute (p. 44).

The 1820 census shows Ignatius (male, 45+), a female (45+) and 8 slaves in Montgomery County, Ga. (unnumbered first page). That woman, presumably, was Martha Lewis who he married in Tattall County in 1814.

8 JULY 1806

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court Minutes.

Road to be laid out “from Montgomery line at or near **Thomas Watts** and to intersect the Savannah Road.”¹⁴⁹

COMMENT:

Thomas Watts, like Cooksey, lived along the Montgomery-Tattall line. As subsequently shown in this chronology, the 1820 Covington County, Mississippi, census places “Thomas Watts, Esquire,” just one house from William and Zilpha.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ “Georgia Marriages, 1699–1944,” database, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com : accessed 29 January 2009).

¹⁴⁹ Tattall Co., Ga., “Inferior Court Sitting for Ordinary Purposes, 1805–1839”; Family History Library microfilm 206,434, item 2. Unpaginated, unindexed, all pages scanned for relevant names.

¹⁵⁰ Thomas Watts and all known siblings moved to Covington Co., Miss., about the same time that Zilpha and William Cooksey migrated there. Thomas is considered the eldest son of Rev. John Watts, a county justice of Montgomery Co., Ga. (earlier Washington Co.) who was born about 1751 and died after the 1820 census of Covington County. John Sr. is alleged to have married Judith (Rawls?), by whom he had about 15 children. According to *Watts On-Line*, issue 55 (<http://www.wattslines.org/gen/watts/newsletter55.htm> : posted 22 November 1998), the core five that all researchers agree upon are:

- **Thomas Jr.**, b. ca. 1771, S.C.; d. bef. April 1854, Smith Co. Texas; m. **Elizabeth Lott**. (Also see <http://www.wattslines.org/gen/watts/newsletter30.htm>.)
- **Katherine S.**, b. abt. 1773, S.C.; d. aft. 1835, Miss.; m. **Moses L. Hornsby**.
- **Barbara**, b. 9 Feb. 1775, N.C.; d. 28 May 1845, Covington Co.; m. **William Jesse Wiggins** (Also see <http://www.wattslines.org/gen/watts/newsletter41.htm>.)
- **Dacey**, b. Abt. 1781, S.C.; d. aft. 1853, Miss.; m. **Nathan Lott**. (Also see <http://mallen4896.tripod.com/Lott-Nathan.html>.)
- **Reuben**, b. 24 October 1784, Georgia; d. 28 July 1870, Covington Co. Miss.; m. **Katherine Easterling**.

Zilpha named her second son Reuben and her first or second daughter Katherine. Barbara, above, named her first daughter Zilpha. For many similar parallels in names and other associations that link Zilpha to this Watts family, see Elizabeth Shown Mills, “Possibility to Pursue: Were John & Judith [—?—] Watts the Parents of Zilpha [—?—] Price Cooksey?”, report to Cooksey Research Group, 9 September 2010. Other likely children of Rev. John and Judith Watts include Amy (m. Thomas Aultman), Mary (m. Benjamin Leggett), and Rhoda (m. Mark Rayburn).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)
Wife 1: Unknown
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

1806–1807

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Lottery).

1807 drawing, for which registration occurred in 1806.

Cooksey:	NO	
Price, John	Montgomery Co., Militia District 50	drew Lot 96, Dist. 28, Wilkinson Co.
Watts, John	Montgomery Co., Militia Dist.: McDonalds	drew Lot 83, Dist. 16, Baldwin Co.
Watts, Reubin	Montgomery Co., Mil. Dist.: McDonalds	drew Lot 115, Dist. 16, Wilkinson ¹⁵¹

COMMENT:

This published list is a list of *winner*s. It does not name those who registered unsuccessfully. It does not indicate how many draws any successful person had. Registration rules excluded any person who had *won* land in the prior (1805) lottery. As was usual, to obtain title to the lottery land, a lucky drawer was required to pay \$12.15 per 202.5-acre lot.

25 APRIL 1807

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA¹⁵²

Land (Deed).

25 April 1807 (drawn)

16 November 1807 (recorded)

Arthur Lott of Tattnall to Jacob Linn Jr. of Edgefield District, S.C. Lott does “quit claim and convey ... one half of a tract of land containing one thousand [1000] acres **granted to the said Arthur Lott on the 16th of November 1802**, lying in Tattnall County and bounded Westwardly by Travis Thomas’s land, **Eastwardly by Robert Flournoy’s land**, and Southwardly by a line running North 70 East, being a continuation of the lower line of Travis Thomas’s? line on river tract. No consideration given. [signed] Arthur Lott (seal). Witnesses: James Pautor, Batt Wyche, J. J. C. Dower relinquishment of Sarah Lott (x), wife of Arthur, undated, before Batt Wyche, J. J. C.

COMMENTS:

- When John Price sued Zilpha for divorce in 1799, **her attorney** was “**Flournoy**.”
- Arthur Lott, the seller above, is on the 1802-3-4 tax lists **adjacent to William Cooksey**.

Meanwhile, two other men named John Watts lived contemporaneously in Washington County and their identities have not been adequately sorted from John above. They appear, with varying signatures and county positions on the land warrants of Washington between 1787—Washington Co.’s first senator, a senior justice, a lower justice, a surveyor, and a county clerk—with multiples Johns participating in the same warrant. One descendant merges these into a “Lt. Col. John Watts Sr. (1754–1803),” said to be a **signer of the state constitution**. [Get an image copy of this document for his signature.] He is also said to be the son of Thomas and Tabitha Watts of Virginia and Camden/Kershaw Districts, S.C. Newspaper accounts of his probate proceedings identify only two heirs: a widow Tabitha [sic] and a son Josiah. See Neal Watts, “John Watts,” *USGenWeb: Washington County, Georgia* (http://www.usgennet.org/usa/ga/county/Washington/famconnect/watts_j.htm : accessed 30 May 2010), who cites *Louisville Gazette and Republican Trumpet*, June 1st 1803, p. 4, col. 4 (and “microfilm 25140,” presumably held at the state archives), for the obituary of this John.

¹⁵¹ Silas Emmett Lucas Jr., *The Second or 1807 Land Lottery of Georgia* (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1986), 117.

¹⁵² Tattnall Co., Ga., “Deed Record A, B, C, D,” p. 93 [Old Book B].

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

APRIL 1807

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Jury Service ¹⁵³

April term, grand jury:

Asa Travis	Francis Durrance	Jesse Byrd, Senr.	John Watts
William Cooksey	Thos. Armstrong	Howell Sasser	Simon Whites
Sampson Carver	Clement Bryan	Moses Westberry	Littleton Wyche
Jno. B. Bennett	Jeremh. McDonald	John McClelland	Jno. McClendon
Reuben Nail	Joseph Collins	Jas. Perry	William Hall

COMMENT:

William Cooksey's presumed son William E. came of age in this year 1807. Whether the juror above was William Sr. or William Jr. is not known.

This set of abstracts/transcripts contains similar lists for 19 terms of court during the period in which William Cooksey might have been in the county.

April 1806	• May 1812	• November 1816
October 1806	• November 1812	• April 1817
April 1807	• May 1813	• April 1818
April 1809	• May 1814	• October 1818
October 1809	• November 1814	• March 1819 (& April 1819)
May 1811	• April 1816	• April 1820

Typically, 19–22 grand jurors were called for each session. Almost all of the men were called several times each. This April 1807 term is the last for which Cooksey appears as a juror in these loose papers. The bound minutes of the inferior and superior courts of Tattnall show no additional jury service there; although his name would continue to be drawn through 1809, he would not be called.

OCTOBER 1807

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court Minutes.

Superior Court. Grand jurors drawn for April 1808 term: **Wm. Cooksey**.¹⁵⁴

14 JANUARY 1808

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

¹⁵³ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall Co., Ga., Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 33.

¹⁵⁴ Tattnall Co., Ga., "Superior Court Minutes, 1805–23"; FHL microfilm 206,463, item 2. This work is rarely paginated and unindexed; I scanned every page for items of interest.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

14 January 1808 (drawn)

20 September 1820 (recorded)

Stephen **Bowen** to Daniel **Daughtary**, both of Tattnall, sale for \$400 sterling, 519 acres on Ohoopee River, “it being **the land said Watts now lives on**, the said land personally granted to Thomas McDonald and bounded as follows: Beginning at a Water Oak on said River, then S30W 71 chains to a pine, thence S40E 75 chains to a stake, thence N 30E 48 chains to a stake on the river, thence meandering the same to the beginning.” [signed] Stephen Bowen (seal). Witnesses: Thomas Cruthman (x), William McElvy, J.P.¹⁵⁵

COMMENTS:

- In 1808, [John?] **Watts** is living on land sold by Stephen Bowen to Daniel Daughtary.
- In 1810, Nancy **Bowen** married **Bani Boyd** (Murray 1:83)
- In 1811, **Lettice Cooksey**—as new wife of John **Daughtary**—gives up to **Bani Boyd** the son Henry she had previously borne outside of wedlock

CONCLUSION:

In 1808, as earlier, Cooksey and Watts are still in the same neighborhood.

1808

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.

p. 1

Embree, Jesse

Embree, Jonathan

p. 5

HALL, **Alston**

HALL, Lewis Jr.

HALL, Thos.

BUIE, John E.

[*skip 7*]

HALL, Lewis

& as agent for

John Stancel _00 acres pineland granted to **Watts**

p. 6

Pattison, Neill

Gifford, John

WILLIAMS, William [J.P. 10 July 1805 {Murray, 1:13}

[*skip several dozen taxpayers*]

pp. 9–12

LOTT, Arthur

LOTT, Simon

Gillen, Richard

¹⁵⁵ Tattnall Co., Ga., “Deed Record A, B, C, D,” pp. 233-34 [Old Book C].

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

LOTT, Absalom [his daughter Elizabeth m. John Watt's son Thomas; his sons Nathan & Philip m. John Watt's granddaughters, Zilpha Wiggins & Mary Wiggins]

LOTT, Mark
Morris, John
Wood, Hardy
Majores? John
Nipper, John
Sherrard, Joel
Pain, Zacheriah
Cowper, William
Wetherington, Wm.
RICKETSTON, Joseph
[page break]
Gainey, Reddick
Coxey, William 400 acres pine land granted/surveyed to Coxey,
0 white male 21+, \$.61 ¼ tax

HANCOCK, James [father of Cader Hancock and Watts Hancock; associate of Cader Price,
Zilpha's first f-in-law
500 +202.5 acres pine land granted to Hancock, 1 white male 21+
"1 lot Tatnall court house worth \$23"

Clifton, Ezekiel
Stripling, Benjamin [1807, Stripling cosigned bond by **Ignatius Hall**, whose 1806 "wife" was
said to be "Zilpha" (Murray, 1:35)

Watts, John 202.5 acres Oak land in **Randolph Co.**, 1 male 21+
Agt. For
Moses Hornsby 1 lot "Eadenton Courthouse" [Eatonton, **Putnam Co.**] worth \$50, 1 male 21+
[Moses Hornsby was married to Watts' daughter Katherine]

Stueart, John
Hysmith, James
Young, John
Johnson, Randle
[page break]
Johnson, Archibald
Standley, Robert
Hysmith, Daniel
DAUGHERTY, Daniel 202.5 acres in Laurens, granted to Tilmon
[skip 9, then page break]
McNabb, Daniel
Sadler, James
HALL, Ignatius
Hardin, Patrick
Hysmith, Isaac

pp. 13–18 Nothing of significance

1809

TATTNALL COUNTY

Tax List.

Data Categories

- “Sir Names”
- Given Names
- County in which land lies
- Swamp Land: Altamaha River
- Swamp Land: Oconee River
- Oak & Hickory land
- Surveyed for or Granted to
- Pine land
- Surveyed for or Granted to
- “White persons above 21 years of age”
- Mulattoes & free Negroes
- Slaves under 60 years old
- “Total amt. of each person’s tax”
- “The year the tax became due”

Data arrangement

- No alphabetization; no identification of districts
- No dates for submission of each return (something not shown on any of these Tatnall-Montgomery rolls)

p. 1

EMBREE, Jesse
EMBREE, Jonathan

p. 5

HALL, **Alston**
HALL, Lewis, Junr.
HALL, Thos.

p. 6

HALL, Lewis
Do., agent for
John Stancel 500 acres pine land (Tattnall) granted to **Watts**
Pattison, Neill
Gifford, John
WILLIAMS, William

p. 8

LOTT, William
HATTEN, Abl. L. 202.5 acres in Laurens, granted to Lilef__

pp. 9-12

LOTT, Arthur
LOTT, Simon
Gittens, Richard
Span, John **[Wm. Cooksey’s 1793 Washington County grant adjoined “SPANN”]**

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

LOTT, Absalom [3 of his children married Watts]
LOTT, Mark
Morris, John
Wood, Hardy
[page break]
Hasones, John
Nipper, John
Sherraid, Joel
Pain, Zachariah
Conner William
Witherington, Wm. [J.P., 1806 and 1811. See Murray 1:31, 57]
Ricketson, Joseph [County surveyor 1811, see warrant to Shadrack Stanley]
Bryan, John Hill [Protracted, acrimonious suit against him by Arthur **Lott**, Murray, vol. 1]
[page break]
Gainey, Redick
Coxey, William 400 acres pineland (Tattnall) granted to W. Coxey, 0 male 21+, \$.61 ¼
HANCOCK, James [data as in prior year; community tavernkeeper; son named for Cader Price]
Stripling, Benjamin [1000 pineland (Tattnall) granted to EMBREE; friend of **Ignatius Hall**]
Watts, John 300 acres pineland (Tattnall) granted to **McFarland**; 1 male 21+
& Agent for
Moses Hornsby [as before]

COMMENT:

In January of this tax year 1809, John Cooksey applied for a marriage license to wed Zilphy (but no return was subsequently filed by a minister or court officer). He also was summoned to serve on a jury in this year 1809. Yet he is not charged a poll on this 1809 list. By state law, the tax assessor was to provide the court with a list of taxable males, whose names were then put into a box for drawing jurors.

Why John would be called for jury service before going on the tax roll goes unexplained. It also complicates the issue of determining his age and whether he was old enough to be the father of Zilpha's children Nancy (born 1804) and John (born 1806–7).

Within months (by 1810), John had relocated in Laurens County where he bought land with William Cooksey as his witness.

Steuart, John
Hysmith, James
Young, John
Johnson, Randle
Johnson, Archabald
Standley, Robert
[page break]
Hysmith, Daniel
DAUGHERTY, Daniel [son or brother of John Daugherty who married Letitia Cooksey c1811]
[skip 10]

p. 13

Easter, William

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Sadler, James

Hysmith, Isaac

HALL, Ignatius 0 land, 1 (taxable) white person \$.31 ¼ tax due 1809

Harden, Patrick

BOWEN, William

Tire, Major

pp. 14-21

Nothing of apparent relevance

8 JANUARY 1809

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Marriage license.

Issued to **John Cooksey** and **Zilpha Price**. The record shows no “return” by a minister or justice of the peace, attesting that the marriage had been performed.¹⁵⁶

COMMENT:

Re John Cooksey:

- No prior record has been found for John in any of the four counties in which William has been tracked—i.e., Washington, Montgomery, Tattnall, and Laurens.
- The fact that three Cooksey marital unions occurred in Tattnall in 1809, 1810, and 1811 suggests that a family of children have all come to maturity.

QUESTION:

Could this be why William, about 1809, applied for another grant of 400 acres (see notes below)—to provide land for the newly adult offspring? If so, then why did he and his presumed sons leave that land?

Re Zilpha:

The lack of a marriage return might be explained in at least two ways:

- As the daughter of the Rev. John Watts Sr., he may have performed the ceremony and failed to make a return before he moved off to Laurens County. That would track the pattern that is documentable for Watts’s daughter Amy. In August 1810, he performed the marriage services for Amy to Thomas Aultman—a marriage for which he did not file the legally required return until October 1811.¹⁵⁷
- If Zilpha and John Price did indeed get a divorce, with John as the complainant as he was in 1799, then she would have been legally barred from remarriage until after John’s death. Under the divorce act passed by the Georgia legislature in 1806, section 3: “... In all cases where the verdict shall be for an absolute divorce, the party whose improper, or criminal conduct shall authorize such divorce, *shall not be permitted to marry again*

¹⁵⁶ Tattnall Co., Ga., Marriage Book 1 (Reconstructed records): 1; Family History Library microfilm 106,419.

¹⁵⁷ Telfair Co., Ga., “Marriage Book A, 1810–1858,” p. 1, doc. A. This is, in fact, the first marriage registered in the tardily created register for this relatively new county, which was created 10 December 1807 from Wilkinson County (whose lands had been distributed in the 1805 land lottery).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

during the life of the other party, and in case of such second marriage, the party so offending shall be subject to the pains and penalties enacted against bigamy.”¹⁵⁸

Note that **both the Cookseys and the Wattses drop out of Tattnall County records a few months after this license was taken out.**

6 MARCH 1809

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court Minutes.

Inferior Court. List of petit jurors sworn includes **Wm Cooksey** . . . List of petit jurors called for October term of court includes **Wm Cooksey**.¹⁵⁹

COMMENTS

- If William Cooksey did pass the age of 60 when he was dropped from the poll tax roll in 1805, then it would seem that the William Cooksey who did petit jury service was William Jr. who turned 21 in 1807.
- The fact that no William Cooksey was taxed a poll on the 1809 roll, while William Sr. was taxed on land seemingly suggests that the juror was William Sr. *However*, the April 1809 session of court named John Cooksey as a juror although he, too, is missing from the 1809 tax roll.

17 APRIL 1809

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Superior Court minutes.

Petit jurors drawn for next term (October 1809): **Jno. Cooksey**

OCTOBER 1809

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Superior Court minutes.

Petit jury: Jno. Cooksey is not seated

Petit jurors drawn for next term (April 1810): **Wm. Cooksey**¹⁶⁰

18 OCTOBER 1809

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

¹⁵⁸ *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, Passed at Louisville in November and December, 1806* (Louisville, Ga.: Ambrose Day, Printer, 1806), 17; html edition at University of Georgia, *Galileo: Georgia Legislative Documents* (<http://nep.tune3.galib.uga.edu/ssp/cgi-bin/legis-idx.pl?sessionid=7f000001&type=law&byte=950416>).

¹⁵⁹ Tattnall Co., Ga., “Inferior Court Sitting for Ordinary Purposes, 1805–1839”; FHL microfilm 206,434, item 2. Unpaginated, unindexed; all pages scanned for relevant names.

¹⁶⁰ Tattnall Co., Ga., “Superior Court Minutes, 1805–23”; FHL microfilm 206,463, item 2. Rarely paginated, unindexed; scanned every page for items of interest.

Promissory notes.

"{Note} I promise to pay to **William Cooksey** \$30 on 2 January 1813 as follows:

Young cows and calves at \$10 and other cattle in proportion. Merchantable hogs at the price they are now.

Peach brandy \$1 per bushel

Wheat \$1 per bushel.

Seed cotton \$3 per hundred [pounds] delivered at a machine [i.e., cotton gin].

[signed] John McFarland

Witnesses: **Alexander Macleod**, Joseph Jones.

"18 October 1809 - {Note} On 2 January 1811, I promise to pay **William Cooksey** \$23.33.
{Merchandise same as above note} John McFarland

"18 October 1809 - {Note} On 2 January 1811, I promise to pay **William Cooksey** \$30.
{Merchandise same as above note} John McFarland

"18 October 1809 - {Note} On 2 January 1813, I promise to pay **William Cooksey** \$23.33.
{Merchandise same as above note} John McFarland¹⁶¹

COMMENTS:

There are clearly date problems with the four above notes, taken verbatim from a published source. The abstract or transcript (we cannot be certain which of these Murray is providing) shows four notes executed on the same day. Supposedly, two are payable, but in differing amounts, on the same day in 1811, while the other two are payable—also in the same differing amounts—on the same day in 1813. Three points need considering here:

- It is illogical that two separate notes would be *due* on the same day by the same person, to the same person, all payable in the same merchandise.
- The typical pattern in this era—when multiple notes were given by one party to another, extending several years in advance—was for the notes to represent a series of annual payments, each due on the same day. Typically, such notes were given for the purchase of land or repayment of money advanced to them.
- In this case, McFarland gave four notes, with the last of them due four years in advance. The logical sequence would be for the four to be due "on or before" 2 January 1810, 2 January 1811, 2 January 1812, and 2 January 1813. It is probable that two of the four dates above (1811, 1811, 1813, 1813) were wrongly read or wrongly typed.

Missing Record

- In May 1811 (Murray, p. 55), the Grand Jury requested that a presentment be published in the *Georgia Journal*, a Milledgeville newspaper. The randomly surviving papers digitized in the Georgia Historic Newspaper module of the "Digital Library of Georgia"

¹⁶¹ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 48.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

does not include a paper for this time period or a published legal notice that relates to this problem.¹⁶²

OCTOBER–DECEMBER 1809

TATTNALL > LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Analysis.

In this interval, apparently, William and John Cooksey moved from Tattnall to the new county of Laurens on Georgia's western frontier. Created by legislative act of 10 December 1807, Laurens was taken partially from northern Montgomery County, while Tattnall had been cut from *southern* Montgomery. Consequently, there was a significant distance between the old Cooksey residence and the new location.

(The rest of Laurens was taken from the southern reaches of Washington and Wilkinson counties.)

COMMENT:

Was this move to the frontier triggered by John and Zilpha's inability to marry legally? Tattnall County's superior and inferior court records of this era show vigilant and vigorous prosecution of individuals who were living in common-law marriages.

CA. DECEMBER 1809

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.

The published index to the tax roll for 1810 (a roll that conventionally would have been created in late 1809) carries no entry for William or John Cooksey.¹⁶³

1810

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.

Data Categories:

- "Sir Names"
 - Given Names
 - County in which the land lies
 - River Swamp on the Altamaha
 - River Swamp on the Oconee
 - Oak & Hickory land
 - Surveyed for or Granted to
 - Pine Land
 - Surveyed for or Granted to
 - "White persons"
-

¹⁶² University System of Georgia, "Digital Library of Georgia," *Galileo* (<http://www.galileo.usg.edu/welcome/> : last checked 20 January 2014).

¹⁶³ *Index to Georgia Tax Digests* (Atlanta: R. J. Taylor Foundation, 1986), 3:19.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

- Slaves
- “Cor --- [sic] Horses
- P[leasure] Carriages
- Amt. of the Taxes
- County Tax

Data Arrangement:

- Semi-alphabetical by first letter of surname; unpaginated; arranged by district
- **Adjacent names are not copied, except where noted.**

Capt. Whiddon's Dist.

Hancock, Durham

Hancock, Wm.

Johnson, John

[Pine land granted to Davis, EMBREE, and Johnson]

Johnson, Danl.

[D]'s 200a grant adjoined William Lott when surveyed]

Johnson, Allen

Joyce, William

Joyce, John

Sharp, Parker

[200 a Pine land granted to LOTT]

Blackmon's Dist.

[1st entry, totally out of alpha sequence, is:]

HALL, Lewis

250a pine land (Tattnall) granted to HALL

70a pine land (Tattnall) granted to Thos. HALL

30 a on Altamaha & 257 ½ pine land (Tattnall) granted to HALL

70a on Altamaha & 217 ½ pine land (Tattnall) granted to Bowen?

300a pine land (Montgomery) granted to HALL

1 white person (taxable)

7 slaves

\$3.89 ½ / \$.65 tax

Bell's Dist.

Bryan, Clem

several tracts, including 100?a pine land granted to LOTT

Hall, Ignatius

1 white, 5 slaves, \$1.87 ½ / \$.31 ¼

LOTT, Mark

300 a (Montgomery), granted to LOTT

1 white, 1 slave, \$.85 / \$.14 ¼

Ricketson, Joseph

Sherard, Joel

Witherington, William

Clifton's Dist.

DAUGHERTY, Danl.

202 1/2a pine land (Wilkinson) granted to Tilmon

Gainey, Reddick

HANCOCK, James

5 Lotts at Tattnall Court house,

287 1/2a on Altamaha (Tattnall)

_43 ¾a, _00a pine land (Tattnall) granted to EMBREE, Bird

202 ½ a pine land (Pulaski) granted to Hancock

Hysmith, Jas.

McEachen, John

217a Oak & Hickory (Telfair) granted to William LOTT

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

McFARLAND, Jno. B. 400a pine land (Tatnall) granted to Cooksey [sic]
100a pine land (Tatnall) granted to Watts
1 white, 7 blacks, \$2.87 ½ / \$.48

COMMENT:

Note that McFarland has bought the land of both Cooksey and Cooksey's proposed father-in-law, John Watts.

SELLARS, Saml., Agent for

Jno. Sellars 3 slaves

& Zilphy Sellars 1 slave

“ For the heirs

of Jno. Staton 997 a pine land (Tatnall) granted to Statan

COMMENT:

This Zilphy Sellars was née Zilphy Staton, daughter of John, under age 14 in 1806; her 1806 guardian had been Samuel Sellers whose bondsman was Ignatius Hall (Murray, 1:24). Hall, in 1806 but only 1806, was said to have a wife Zilphy. (Murray, 1:27). She is the only other Zilpha “Zilphy” I have found in the county amid reading the courthouse records page by page.

McElvy's Dist.

|BOYD, David 200a+ 100a pine land (Tatnall), gr. to BOYD 1 white, \$.53 ¾/.09

|BOYD, Bani 250a pine land (Tatnall), gr. to D. BOYD
1 white, \$.50/.08 ¼

|**DAUGHARTY, Jno.** 200a pine land (Tatnall), gr. to Sikes
1 white, \$.46 ¼ / \$.07 ¾

|**DAUGHARTY, Dempsy** 200a pine land (Tatnall), gr. to **Lott**; 1 white, 1 slave, \$.77 ½ / .12 ¾
McElvy, William land granted to WOOTEN and McElv]

McDonald, Bryan land granted to **Daugharty**

Parker, Elisha

Sikes, Dyre? land granted to Sikes & BOYD

Studstill, Thos. land granted to LOTT

COMMENT:

Jno. Daugharty, who married **Letitia Cooksey** ca. 1811, lived in the neighborhood of the Lotts, inlaws of Zilpha (Watts) Price Cooksey.

Bani Boyd is the man to whom Letitia Cooksey's illegitimate child was bound after she married Daugharty.

APRIL 1810

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court Minutes.

Inferior Court. **Jno. B. McFarland** is appointed overseer of road from **Daughterty's Ferry** on the Ohoopee, passing Alex^r McLeod to County Line. No Cookseys on the crew assigned to help him.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

William Eason is appointed overseer of road from **Daniel Daughterty's Ferry** on the Ohoopie to intersect with the Savannah Road at or near the plantation of Jno. McLellan.¹⁶⁴

COMMENT:

This appears to be the same John McFarland who was a former surveyor, a soon-to-be justice of the Inferior Court, and in October 1809 a man indebted to **William Cooksey**, with McLeod as his surety.

23 APRIL 1810

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Marriage.

Mary Cooksey is said to have married Robert Watson.¹⁶⁵

COMMENT:

- Given that William Cooksey of 1810 Tattnall is the only adult male Cooksey that has been placed in South Georgia in this era, odds favor a conclusion that this Mary Cooksey was his daughter.
- In 1811, "**Mary Watson**" and Zilpha's ex-husband **John Price** would both be called as witnesses in the Montgomery County suit, *State vs. John Daugherty*,¹⁶⁶ prosecuted against the man who had, about 1811, married **Letitia Cooksey** (discussed under 5 August 1811, below).

CA. 1811

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA¹⁶⁷

Legal suit.

"Clerk's Inventory, Record of Office Papers"

p. 4, lines 16-17

"The State vs. **John Dougherty** assault Writ & bond

The State vs. **John Daugherty** Assault Indt."

p. 5, lines 7-10

"The State vs. John Munroe, Malcom Munroe, Peter Munroe, Donald McIntosh, Murdock McIntosh, Charles McKinnon, Archd. Morrison, Malcolm J. William (Securities Alex McLean, **Wm. Cooksey**), Bond."

¹⁶⁴ Tattnall Co., Ga., "Inferior Court Sitting for Ordinary Purposes, 1805–1839"; FHL microfilm 206,434, item 2; unpaginated, unindexed; all pages scanned for relevant names.

¹⁶⁵ "Georgia Marriages to 1850," database, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com : accessed 1 June 2009), Robert Watson–Mary Cooksey marriage, Montgomery County; citing "Dodd, Jordan, *Georgia Marriages to 1850* (database on-line), Provo, UT, USA."

¹⁶⁶ Montgomery Co., Ga., "Clerk's Inventory, Record of Office Papers abt. 1810," section: "State Papers in the Clerk's Office in the Superior Court of Montgomery Co., pp. 11–12, a list of witnesses in the case "State vs. John Daugherty."

¹⁶⁷ Montgomery Co., Ga., "Clerk's Inventory of Office Papers, abt. 1810," in "Court Records & Deeds, Miscellaneous Dates [Loose Papers]"; FHL microfilm 0,159,033.

p. 6, line 18

“The State vs. Peter Monroe, Malcom Monroe, Joel Smith & James Wiliams, Murder.”

COMMENT:

The Monroe murder trial was carried over to September 1811, at which time “a jury of inquest was summoned on the body of John Munroe – Murder.” No further details and no further reference to William Cooksey or Alex McLean.¹⁶⁸

1811

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Miscellaneous.

“State Papers in the Clerks Office ... Sept. the 2nd 1811”¹⁶⁹

p. 10, lines 22-25; p. 11, lines 1–3

“State vs. Joseph Phillips, John Bush witness

Mary Watson, attendance at Court

William Yarborough attendance at Court

James Miller attendance at Court

John Price, attendance at court

Thomas T? Priestwood, attendance at court

William Cooper? Attendance at court”

p. 11, lines 12-18

“Clerks Fees” [a simple list of names]

John Price – Oath

William Nelson’s -- Oath

[skip 3]

Thos. Flournoy vs. Jesse Moore fi fa

Edwd. Blackshear vs. Jesse Moore fi fa

Binum’s Bond

Thomas Walkers – Oath

Mary Watson’s attendance at Court

Peter Munroe vs. Stith Parnum & Thos. Rains

COMMENT:

Nothing further is known of Mary Watson or Robert Watson. As clues to pursue:

- Baldwin County: On 13 and 27 April 1819, the Milledgeville *Georgia Journal* (p. 1) posted a notice of “letter remaining in the post office” at Milledgeville on **1 April 1819**, including **Mary Watson** and **Robert T. Watson**.
- Baldwin County: On 18 January 1825, the Milledgeville *Southern Recorder* (p. 1) posted a notice of “letters remaining in the post office” at Milledgeville on **24 December 1824**. Included on the list was “**Robert Watson 2, Samuel Watson.**”

¹⁶⁸ “State Papers in the Clerks Office ... Sept. the 2nd 1811,” p. 7, lines 24-29, *ibid*.

¹⁶⁹ “State Papers in the Clerks Office ... Sept. the 2nd 1811,” line and page numbers as shown above.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

- Jones County: On 7 February 1829, the Milledgeville *Southern Recorder* (p. 1) posted a notice of “letters remaining in the courthouse” at Clinton, **Jones County**, Georgia, on **1 January 1829**, which included the following **Mary Watts, Robert Watson**.
- Walton County: On 28 July 1831 and 4 August, the *Southern Recorder* (p. 4) posted a list of letters remaining in the post office” at Monroe, Walton County, Ga., on **30 June 1831**. Included was **Mary Watson**.
- Muscogee County: On 2 May 1833, the *Georgia Journal* (p. 2) posted a “List of Stockholders in the Insurance Bank of Columbus, 1st April 1823. Included was **Mary Watson, 50 shares** and **James C. Watson, 250 shares**. (Shares held by the 21 shareholders ranged from 50–400.) “J. C. Watson” was the bank president.

1810

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land Grant.

State Land Office issued patent for 400 acres to **William Cooksey**, Montgomery County.¹⁷⁰

COMMENT:

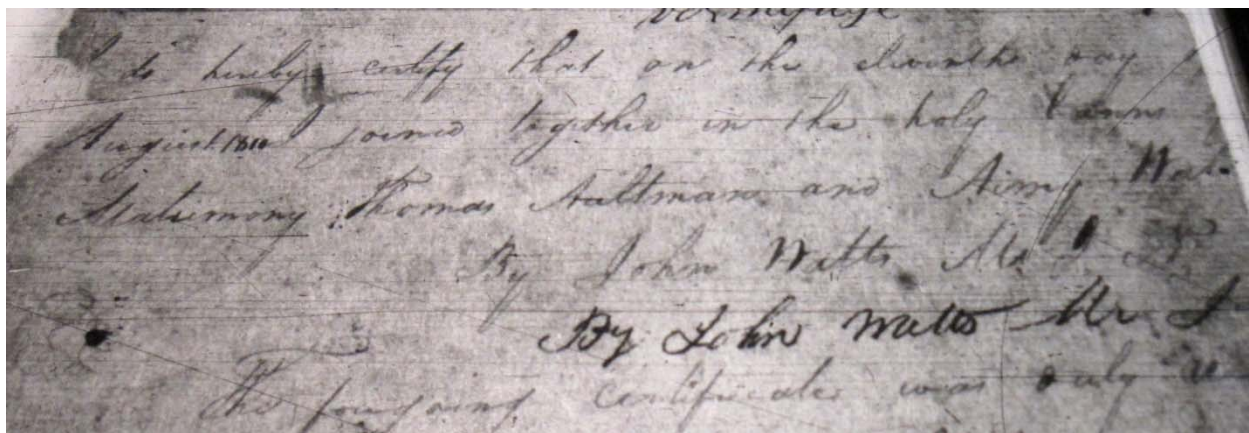
A search of Montgomery County records for this period has turned up nothing on William or this land. It is likely that the land lay in Montgomery at the time the warrant was issued and the survey made but had fallen into Laurens by the time the patent was actually issued.

11 August 1810

? COUNTY, GEORGIA

Marriage.

Rev. John Watts performed the marriage ceremony for his daughter “Aimy Wats” to marry Thomas Aultman. The return, which does not state the county in which the marriage occurred, was filed 14 months later in Telfair County.¹⁷¹



¹⁷⁰ Georgia State Land Office, Grants Book H-5, page 90, 400 acres, 1810.

¹⁷¹ Telfair Co., Ga., “Marriage Book A, 1810-1858,” p. 1. Family tradition among descendants holds that Amy had borne a son Willis prior to marrying Aultman. If true, the circumstances of her tardily recorded marriage, performed by her father, somewhat parallels the circumstances of Zilpha’s quasi-marriage to John Cooksey, that was accepted by the Watts. For the tradition, see Wynema McGrew, *Watts is My Line* (Hattiesburg, Miss.: Privately printed, 2010), 23.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)
Wife 1: Unknown
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

1810–11

LAURENS & TELFAIR COUNTIES, GEORGIA¹⁷²

Map of Georgia Counties.



20 SEPTEMBER 1810

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

20 September 1810 (drawn)

13 March 1816 (recorded)

Murdoch **McLeod** to **John Cooksey**, sale for \$60, land in 18th district of Wilkinson, now Laurens County, known on the plan of said district by No. 193. Witnesses: Willis Cason, J.P.; Asa Pipkin; **Wm. Cooksey, his mark**.¹⁷³

26 OCTOBER 1810

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA¹⁷⁴

Land (Deed).

26 October 1810 (drawn)

25 September 1819 (proved by Alexander Gordon)

20 Sep 1820 (recorded)

Daniel Dougherty to Alexander **McLeod**, both of Tattnall, sale for \$387.50, 429 acres in Tattnall on West side of Great Ohoopée river; on all other sides vacant at time of survey. Granted by Gov. Edward Telfair to Thomas McDonald, conveyed by McDonald to Benjamin Warner, by Warner to Stephen **Bowen**, and by Bowen to Dougherty. /signed/ Daniel Dougherty (seal). Witnesses: Alexander Gordon, James Sadler (x), and **J. B. McFarland**.

¹⁷² William Thorndale and William Dollarhide, *Georgia 1790–1820* (Bountiful, UT: American Genealogical Lending Library, n.d.), 1810 map.

¹⁷³ Laurens Co., Ga., "Deed Book E" [1815-1818], p. 78; FHL microfilm 394,594.

¹⁷⁴ Tattnall Co., Ga., "Deed Record A,B,C,D," pp. 234–35 [Old Book C].

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

COMMENTS:

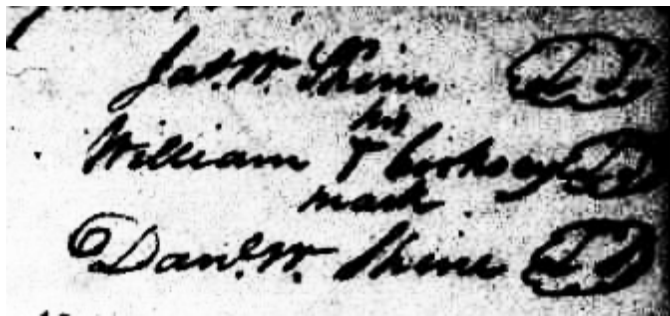
- October 1809: Alexander McLeod served as surety for John B. McFarland, when McF became indebted to William Cooksey.
- April 1810. McFarland was appointed overseer of road from “Daughterly’s Ferry on the Ohoopee, passing Alexr McLeod to County line.”
- Daniel Dougherty appears to be the brother or son of the old justice of the peace who married Letitia Cooksey about 1811.

3 DECEMBER 1810

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Probate.

\$10,000 bond of **James W. Shine**, administrator of the goods of William McCall, deceased, with sureties **William Cooksey** and **Daniel W. Shine**. Both Shines signed. William X’d.¹⁷⁵

A photograph of a document showing three handwritten signatures in cursive ink. The first signature is 'James W. Shine' with a circular mark to its right. The second signature is 'William Cooksey' with a circular mark to its right. The third signature is 'Daniel W. Shine' with a circular mark to its right. The word 'made' is written in smaller text between the second and third signatures.

(Cooksey’s mark, 1810, Laurens Co. Book A, Adms & Guardian Bonds, pp.23-24)

COMMENTS:

When a man cosigned for someone else, that someone was a close connection. Men almost never obligated themselves to pay someone else’s bills and legal fees without a serious sense of obligation to that person. Typical kinships in these cases included brothers-in-law, fathers-in-law, and sons-in-law.

Shine is not indexed in this volume. I found this entry by visigually scanning the volume page-by-page. The only entry for McCall in the index is this one page. Shine had been appointed McCall’s administrator on 3 December 1810. On 16 March 1814, the *Georgia Journal*’s legal notices advertised the sale of “all the negroes belonging to the estate of William M’Call [by] James W. Shine, Admr.”

On 16 February 1799, **William McCall** was **Tax Collector of Montgomery County** (Deed Book E:88), having succeeded Arthur **Lott** in that post.¹⁷⁶ The Lotts and their in-laws, the

¹⁷⁵ Laurens Co., Ga., “Book A, Administrators and Guardian Bonds [1809–1823],” pp. 23–24; FHL microfilm 414,388. This volume contains a small index book covering Books A & B, but names only the deceased or (sometimes) children needing guardians. It does not include any other individuals mentioned in each record. I read all letters of the alphabet, first and last names; skimmed all pages of the book for signatures of bondsmen, appraisers, witnesses, etc. ; and scanned all lists that included debtors, etc. The inventories are not all in chronological order; 1813 can be found after 1822 and 1817 after 1821. Therefore I covered the entire book to minimize the possibility of a useful document being missed.

¹⁷⁶ Montgomery Co., Ga., Deed Book E, pp. 85 (Lott) and 88 (McCall).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Watts, later migrated to Covington County, Mississippi, as did William Cooksey, and are enumerated as neighbors on the 1820 census.

William's association with McCall and Shine in this capacity, even though he could not read or write, implies he was very well-placed in the social fabric of this frontier— another bit of evidence supporting the hypothesis that he was nephew to the colonial assemblyman, Isaac Young Jr., whose sister Sarah had married Savannah's William Cooksey I about 1737–38.

TO DO:

- Add the Shines and McCall to my work list.

1811-15

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax List.¹⁷⁷

No longer taxed:

COOKSEY: William and John
LOTT: All but Mark (Capt. Bell's Dist.)

Present:

BOYD Bani and Davie (Capt. McElvy's Dist.)
DAUGHARTY Jno. and Daniel (Capt. Clifford's Dist., 1811-13; Capt. McElvy's Dist. 1814-15)
HALL Ignatius (Capt. Bell's Dist.)
HANCOCK James (Capt. Clifford's Dist.)
McFARLAND Jno. (Capt. Clifford's Dist.)
Charged with land of "Cuxey" (400 acres) and Watts (100a)

COMMENT:

The Cooksey, Watts, and Lotts have now relocated in Laurens and Telfair. All three families are found in both counties. Letitia Cooksey makes one further appearance in Tattnall as wife of John Daugharty. Mary and Robert Watson have not been found in Tattnall after their marriage.

21 JANUARY 1811

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Probate.

Inventory, estate of **William McCaul**, taken by Joseph Denson, Elisha Farnell, and William Yarbrough. McCall owned one slave woman with two children (value: \$700), 5 horses, 15 head of cattle, 2 beds, a cotton wheel & cards, a table, 3 chairs, a truck, and a small assortment of household

¹⁷⁷ Tattnall Co., Ga., "Tax Digest, 1802-1823"; FHL microfilm 0,206,455. The 1813 list is filmed out of place. It is presented as the first digest in the new county, but it is identifiable as 1813 by the tax data for the Cooksey property sold to McFarland, by the district names, by the information on Bani Boyd, and by the elimination of other years for which registers are clearly identified. The 1814 roll was similarly mislabeled 1804, when the loose rolls were assembled and bound.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

and farm items. He also held notes on Wm McCaicle, Jesse Fulgham, Joseph Cooper, and Sarah Taylor totaling about \$600. No real estate. \$1718.89 ½ total value.¹⁷⁸

5 AUGUST 1811

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court Minutes.

Inferior Court. “At this time an application of **Bani Boid [Boyd]** for leave to take an Illegitimate child of **Lettice Cooksey, now Lettice Daugherty** and to maintain and support the same. It is ordered that the said Boid do take the said **Child, Henry Cooksey** & shall keep & support him.”¹⁷⁹

COMMENTS:

Re Letitia:

Three factors suggest that Lettice is a daughter of William Cooksey.

1. William is the only male Cooksey found in South Georgia who was of age to have fathered her, with the possible exception of John who can't be placed anywhere before January 1809.
2. Leticia aka “Lettice” and “Letty” Cooksey is a name given by William's son John Cooksey and wife Zilpha (Watts) Price to a child born about 1809–10. Ostensibly, the 1809–10 Leticia was named for her father's sister.
3. Daugherty is last on record in April 1816. (Murray 1:79) After his death, Letitia Dougherty is found living in Laurens County, to which William and John Cooksey had relocated ca. 1810.
4. See discussion presented below under “Henry.”

The fact that Letitia is now married and is agreeing to bind out her child suggests that her new husband is not willing to support the child and does not want him in their household.

Under bastardy laws of the era, an illegitimate child who did not have parental support could be taken from the mother and bound out to earn his or her own keep. However, those to whom children were bound were typically respectable members of the community—family men, whose wives would help raise the children—or members of the father's family. The first possibility does not appear to be the case with Banijah “Bani” Boyd. On 27 February 1810 he married Nancy Bowen (whose family appears *many* times in the court records charged with almost every offense possible). On 24 September 1816, Bani filed for divorce saying that Nancy had left him and had committed adultery. When a summons was issued to Nancy, she was not to be found in the county. Less than a month later, on 23 March

¹⁷⁸ Laurens Co., Ga., “Book A, Administrators and Guardian Bonds [1809–1823],” pp. 23–24; FHL microfilm 414,388. This volume contains a small index book covering Books A & B, but names only the deceased or (sometimes) children needing guardians. It does not include any other individuals mentioned in each record. I read all letters of the alphabet, first and last names; skimmed all pages of the book for signatures of bondsmen, appraisers, witnesses, etc. ; and scanned all lists that included debtors, etc. The inventories are not all in chronological order; 1813 can be found after 1822 and 1817 after 1821. Therefore I covered the entire book to minimize the possibility of a useful document being missed.

¹⁷⁹ Tattnall Co., Ga., “Inferior Court Sitting for Ordinary Purposes, 1805–1839”; Family History Library microfilm 206,434, item 2. Unpaginated, unindexed; all pages scanned for relevant names.

A curiously conflicting version of this record has been published: “COOKERY, Henry, illegitimate, Lettice Daugharty to take charge and maintain 8/5/1811, Tattnall, MIC [Minutes of Inferior Court].” See Jeanette Holland Austin, *Georgia Intestate Records* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1986), 68. The text and handwriting of the original record, consulted above, do not support Austin's abstract.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

1816, Bani was accused of “stealing a daughter of Andrew Bird’s, contrary to the will of her father.”¹⁸⁰

Re Henry, the child:

- No age is stated in the record. However, the locally generated registration list for the 1805 land lottery (created between the spring of 1803 and spring of 1804), listed the following trio of names consecutively:

William Cooksey, 2 draws

Henry Duke, 1 draw

Letty Duke, 1 draw

- No adult Dukes have been found in the county. The pair appear to be a fatherless child and his “widowed” mother. While this apprenticeship record calls Henry “illegitimate,” as already seen with Zilpha, single mothers in her community did present themselves as “widows” for the purposes of qualifying for the land lottery.
- The “orphan” Henry of 1805 would be at least 6 years old at the time he was bound out to Bani Boyd.

Re Dougherty:

- The record books previously abstracted in this project have not been searched for Dougherty, given that the name was not previously known. After this record was found, the surname has been included in subsequent research.
- The 1819 Laurens County land lottery registration records “Lattice Daughtery” and “Heirs of John Daughtery.” Only one John Daughterty seems to exist in this period, and he appears regularly in these minutes. On 7 October 1807, for example, he was prosecuted in the superior court on a charge of assault and battery. In May 1812, as “**John Daughtery, Esq.**, an acting magistrate for our county,” he was presented to the Superior Court in May 1812 “for denying the Scriptures to be the word of God.” This charge and the known facts for Letitia’s child suggest that her husband was strong willed, opinionated, and forceful. His position in the county also suggests that he was an older man.

11 SEPTEMBER 1811

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Newspaper Item.

Legal notice. “Sheriff’s sales. Will be sold, on the first Tuesday in October next at the court-house in Laurens County. One Lot of Land, No. 201, lying in the 22d district of Wilkinson, now Laurens County, levied on as the property of **Duncan McNair**, to satisfy sundry executions in favor of **William Cooksey**.¹⁸¹

COMMENT:

No trace of a lawsuit by Cooksey against McNair has been found by reading the surviving court minutes of Laurens.

¹⁸⁰ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers, 1801–1845*, vol. 1 (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005), 79–80, 83, 89, 102.

¹⁸¹ Tad Evans, *Georgia Newspaper Clippings: Laurens County Extracts, 1810–1892* (Savannah: Privately printed, 1998), 5, citing *Georgia Journal*, published at Milledgeville.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Laurens County, which was created by legislative act in December 1807, was carved from Washington, Montgomery, and Wilkinson Counties. Wilkinson had been created from the Creek Cession of 1803.

Wilkinson County is a 'burned' county, whose court records do not begin until 1855. Some probate records exist as early as 1820.

7 OCTOBER 1811

TELFAIR COUNTY, GEORGIA

Marriage.

Rev. John Watts filed a marriage return, stating that he had performed the ceremony for Thomas Aultman and [his daughter] 'Aimy Wats' on 11 August 1810. He did not say where the marriage was performed. Nor did he explicitly say that Aimy was his daughter.

COMMENT:

This document is the first record placing Zilpha's proposed father in Telfair County.

Two other related marriages would occur in Telfair:

- 25 Aug. 1814 Daniel Lott and Cacey (indexed as "Lucy") Peterson
- 13 Aug. 1816 Abraham Lott and Zilphy Wiggins
(daughter of Barsheba/Barbara Watts, also a daughter of Rev. John)

25 DECEMBER 1811

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Miscellaneous.

"{Receipt} Received of John McFarland 1,500 weight of good merchantable seed cotton at my machine for **William Cooksey, Senr.** [signed] M. McIntosh."¹⁸²

COMMENTS:

- The reference to William as William Cooksey, *Senr.* implies the presence in the county of a younger man of the same name, who may or may not have been his son. No specific kinship needed to exist in order to be called *Junr.*, under the customs of the time. Mississippi descendants allege that William had a son William Elston Cooksey, who appears on the 1820 census of Greene County, Mississippi, as a head of household, aged 26–45. No evidence of the kinship has been offered; and little concrete information has been assembled for this younger William. His 1820 neighborhood does offer two potential links back to the Montgomery-Tattnall-Laurens County area and both should be pursued: J
 - John and Kenneth **McLeod**. As shown under April 1810 above, McLeods resided in William Cooksey's Tattnall neighborhood. As shown under 20 September 1810 above, John Cooksey of Laurens County, with William Cooksey as witness, bought land from one Murdock McLeod.

¹⁸² Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 57.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

- Randal **Pierson**. John Price, husband of Zilpha, had a sister who married a Pierson/Pearson, given name unknown, according to a deed of gift made to the both of them in 1796.¹⁸³
- My earlier analysis of the due dates for the 4 notes would have McFarland owing \$30.00 on or before 2 January 1812, plus \$53.33 for 1810 and 1811—a total of \$83.33 at this point. The 1500 pounds of seed cotton credited to Cooksey on 25 December 1811 would, at the prices stipulated in the note, be worth \$45.

4 MAY 1812

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA¹⁸⁴

Probate.

“Ordered that Elisha Watson be and he is hereby appointed Guardian of the persons and Estates of Noah Price & Martha Price orphans of **John Price** deceased on his giving bond with [end of entry].

COMMENT:

Martha and John were still minors in July 1820 and had not appeared before the court, as minors over 14, to choose a guardian. This implies that the children were born after 1806.

This John Price, who also had a son Elvah Price, said to be a minor over age 14 in 1812, died owning land in Washington County—implying that he was the same John Price of Washington County who had been married to Zilpha.

For John of Laurens and John of Washington to be the same, it would seem that (a) he was a widower with a small child (Elvah) at the time he married Zilpha; and (b) he remarried after he and Zilpha parted. The ages of the children do fall within those time frames; but the evidence of his identity is far from conclusive.

For more on the settlement of this estate, See E. S. Mills, “Zilpha & William Cooksey and Associates: Laurens County, Georgia” 5 November 2010.

TO DO:

I stopped reading these court minutes at the end of 1820, by which time William Cooksey and Zilpha were in Mississippi. I need to continue to determine when Martha and Noah Price came of age.

MAY-JULY 1812

MONTGOMERY & TATTNALL COUNTIES, GEORGIA

Tax list.

“Direct Tax: By virtue of an act of Congress, passed the 16th of March, 1802, entitled ‘An act to lay and collect a Direct Tax within the United States;’ will be sold at public sale, at the time and places

¹⁸³ Montgomery Co., Ga., Deed Book E&F: 37–38.

¹⁸⁴ Laurens Co., Ga., Inferior Court Minutes, 1808-1833; FHL microfilm 410,879.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

hereinafter mentioned, by the Collectors respectively, so much of the following estates as will satisfy the taxes due thereon, together with the legal costs and charges, unless said taxes and charges are paid previous to the time of sale to the Collectors, respectively, or other persons authorized by them to receive the same, or at my office in Savannah : where transcripts of said taxes are lodged, and are open to the free inspection of all persons concerned.

“The sales will take place as follows, viz: At Augusta, by George Watkins, esq. on Tuesday the 2nd February; at Columbia court-house, by Yancy Sanders, esq. on Tuesday the 2d March; at Louisville, by Samuel Clark, esq. on Tuesday the 2d February; & **at Montgomery court-house, by Abner Davis, on Tuesday the 6th April next ensuing**; of which all concerned are requested to take due notice. [Signed] Robert Habersham, Acting Supervisor, **5th May 1812**. . . .

“Montgomery and Tatnal Counties. Eighth Collection District. Second Division. . . . **William Cooksey \$.49.**”¹⁸⁵

COMMENT:

This Montgomery-Tattnall list contains 111 names, covering landowners with surnames A-M only; the list was then said “to be continued.” The list was reprinted on 22 July 1812. However, the interim issue, that would have published the N-Z list, does not appear to have survived. The amount that Cooksey owed was about average. About two dozen men owed a dollar or more. At the extremes:

- Four men owed \$10–\$11, including Ignatius Few and Ludwick Lard (apparent brother of Archibald & Robert Lard, neighbors of Cookseys in Lawrence, Rankin, and Newton Counties, Mississippi).¹⁸⁶
- Nathan, Luke, and Mark Lott owed only 19¢, 9¢, and 21¢—suggesting that they were less well-off than William.

30 JUNE 1812

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Miscellaneous.

“{*Petition*} **William Cooksey** says John B. McFarland owes him \$83.33 on a note dated 1809.”¹⁸⁷

COMMENT:

By the time Cooksey took McFarland to court, three of the four notes of 1809 were due, totaling \$83.33. By the time the case was settled in 1815, the last of the four notes had come due, making a total of \$106.66 that McFarland owed, minus any payments. Murray's abstract of the 1812 document implies that nothing had been paid toward the \$83.33. However, if one subtracts the \$45 value of the seed cotton left at McIntosh's gin from the total \$106.66, the difference is \$61.66—roughly the amount (\$60.44) that the jury awarded Cooksey in April 1815.

¹⁸⁵ (Milledgeville) *Georgia Journal*, 12 August 1812, p. 4; digital image (<http://Milledgeville.galileo.usg.edu> : accessed 15 August 2010).

¹⁸⁶ Robert Laird, *Laird Family Details* (<http://www.rlaird.net/lairdfam.htm> : accessed 4 July 2010).

¹⁸⁷ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 60.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

7 OCTOBER 1812

TELFAIR COUNTY, GEORGIA

Military service.

William E. Cooksey, presumed son of William, enlisted in the War of 1812, in Telfair County, as a substitute for William Hatten who had been drafted. He served until 17 April 1813.¹⁸⁸

COMMENT:

A sketch of Telfair in the *New Georgia Encyclopedia* provides the following overview of Telfair activities in this conflict:

“During the [War of 1812](#) (1812-15), General David Blackshear built Fort Clark near Jacksonville. Elsewhere in Telfair County, he built Fort Adams and Fort McIntosh. Action during the Creek Wars was seen by Telfair County men in 1818, when thirty-four Telfair militia members fought with sixty Creek Indians in the last battle between Creeks and whites in the area. The conflict, which took place in nearby Wilcox County, is known as the Battle of Breakfast Branch.¹⁸⁹

5 NOVEMBER 1812

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Probate.

Proceedings opened for the estate of **John Price** [apparently, but not conclusively, the same John Price who was former husband of Zilpha], with Jonathan Sawyer and John G. Underwood, administrators.¹⁹⁰

Price died leaving property and three minors, for whom guardians were appointed—not to take physical custody, but to govern their property until they reached adulthood. In May 1812, Elisha **Watson** was named guardian of the property of the minors *Noah* and *Martha Price*. John Adams was named guardian for *Elveh Price*. John B. Bennett and Henry Culpepper were securities. Watson was reappointed in May 1816. Probate continued through July 1820, when guardian Watson was released from his guardianship because of questions about his “mental stability”; and July 1821, when George G. Gaines (security for the estate administrators Jonathan Sawyer and John G. Underwood), sought release from his security, alleging mismanagement by the administrators.

¹⁸⁸ See William E.’s pension and bounty-land files, as follows:

- William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson’s Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), pension no. S.C. 19,478, Case Files of Pension and Bounty-Land Applications Based on Service in the War of 1812; Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- William E. Cookey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson’s Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), bounty land warrant file 8488, 80 acres (Act of 1850); Military Bounty Land Warrants; Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Record Group 49; National Archives, Washington, D.C.
- William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson’s Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), bounty land warrant file 38,812, 80 acres (Act of 1855); Military Bounty Land Warrants; Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Record Group 49; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

¹⁸⁹ Elizabeth B. Cooksey (“of Savannah”), “Telfair County,” *The New Georgia Encyclopedia* (<http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?d=h-2397>). This Ms. Cooksey, a retired librarian from the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography in Savannah and now a private researcher in Savannah, also wrote the Georgia Encyclopedia sketches of Banks, Effingham, Oglethorpe, Raburn, Tattnall, and Treutlen Counties. She is a graduate of Cuesta College, San Luis Obispo, California. Whether her (or her husband’s) Cookseys are from this Georgia line or another line is not known.

¹⁹⁰ Jeanette Holland Austin, *Georgia Intestate Records* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1986), 257.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Among the property sold in November 1812 was “150 acres on the Oconee River in **former Montgomery County, now Laurens**; \$600 ... adjoining William Whitehead.”¹⁹¹

COMMENT:

At least 3 factors support the hypothesis that this John Price is Zilpha’s former husband.

- The land left by John Price of Laurens was formerly in Montgomery County, where John and Zilphia had lived on family land in the late 1790s.¹⁹²
- The Watson connection also exists in both counties. The last record found for John Price in Montgomery County is a court appearance in which he and “Mary Watson” (apparently Mary Cooksey, recent wife of Robert Watson) jointly appeared to testify.¹⁹³
- The fact that Watson was the guardian of the minors’ inheritance suggests that he was likely a brother or other relative of John Price’s last wife.
- No other John Price has been placed in the area and all known records for him create a continuous chain of evidence that ends with his death shortly before November 1811.¹⁹⁴

The fact that John Price’s heirs, or at least some of them, were still minors in July 1821 is compatible with the conclusion that this is the same John Price who initiated divorce proceedings against Zilphia in 1799.

Zilpha’s two sons, both born after John’s initial filing for divorce are not named as heirs.

30 DECEMBER 1812

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Miscellaneous:

"{Note} This day I received of John B. MacFarland at my machine {cotton gin} for **William Cooksey, Senr. of Laurens County**, 2,778 wt. of good merchantable seed cotton. William Ellis. Witness: M. McIntosh."¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ Allen Thomas, *Laurens County, Georgia, Records, 1807–1832* (Roswell, Ga.: W. H. Wolfe Associates, 1991), 618–19.

¹⁹² Montgomery Co., Ga., Deed Book E-F: 37–38, 186–88.

¹⁹³ Montgomery Co., Ga., “Clerk’s Inventory, Record of Office Papers abt. 1810,” section: “State Papers in the Clerk’s Office in the Superior Court of Montgomery Co., pp. 11–12, a list of witnesses in the case “State vs. John Daugherty.”

¹⁹⁴ See, for example, the following:

- May 1803–March 1804, he registered from Montgomery for the 1805 land lottery.
- 1 February 1806, as “John Price, Montgomery,” he bought two fractional lots that had not been awarded in the 1805 lottery: (1) 180 acres located in Wilkinson Co., Dist. 1, Lot 27; and (2) 203.5 acres in Wayne Co., Dist. 3, Lot 35. See Paul K. Graham, *1805 Land Lottery: Fortunate Drawers and Grantees* (Decatur, Ga.: The Genealogy Co., 2004), 138, 152.
- 8 Mar 1806: he served on jury in Montgomery County.
- 19 January 1808, he purchased land from the Montgomery Co. deputy sheriff.
- 5 September 1809 he recorded that deed in Montgomery.
- 1809–11, he was sued in several court cases by merchants and creditors in Montgomery County (Samuel Mordecai, John Troutman, Virgil H. Vivian), and filed a suit of his own against “Beaty & W. Wynne.” See “Montgomery Co. Clerk’s Inventory, Record of Office Papers abt. 1810”; FHL microfilm 159,033.
- Amid these suits, he moved across the county line into Laurens County, buying “150 acres on the Oconee River in former Montgomery County, now Laurens,” recorded 13 November 1811 (after his death). See Allen Thomas, *Laurens County, Georgia, Records, 1807–1832* (Roswell, Ga.: W. H. Wolfe Associates, 1991), 619.
- 2 September 1811, in his last appearance on record, he and Mary (Cooksey) Watson testified in the state prosecution of Letitia (Cooksey) Daugherty’s new husband John in Montgomery Co. See “State Papers in the Clerk’s Office in the Superior Court of Montgomery Co., Sept. the 2nd 1811”; FHL microfilm 159,033.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

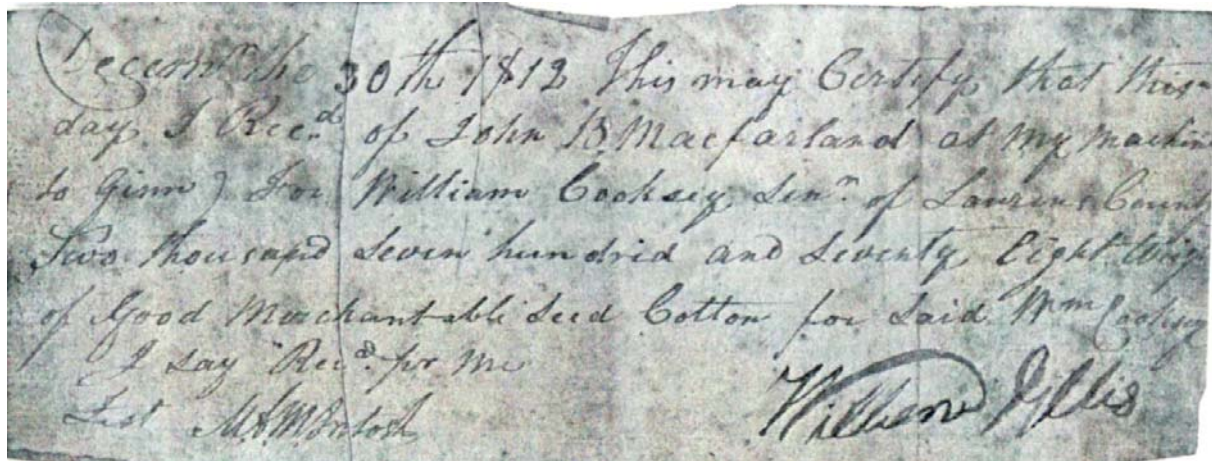
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

COMMENTS:

This installment of 2,778 lbs. of cotton should be worth \$93. This sum does not appear to be factored into the judgment of 13 April 1815—or the subsequent judgment in October 1818.

Note, again, the use of the identifier William Cooksey, *Senr.* The only two uses of this designation for him occurred when McFarland deposited cotton on his behalf at the McIntosh-Ellis gin—an occurrence that took place when William Cooksey was not present.

On 18 February 2014, genealogist Hank Burnham, a descendant of William Ellis, provided the following image copies of this document:



December 30th 1813 This may Certify that this day I Rec^d of John B Macfarland at my making to him for William Cooksey, Sen^r of Lawrence County Two thousand seven hundred and Seventy Eight lbs of Good Merchantable Seed Cotton for said Wm Cooksey I say Rec^d for me
Wm Ellis
J. B. Macfarland



paper paper
Rec to

¹⁹⁵ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 63.

OCTOBER 1813
LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Tax return.

“Four fold tax” remitted [by] **William Cooksey**.¹⁹⁶

COMMENT:

Four-fold taxes were assessed upon those who had failed to file a return of property for the tax year in question, by legislative act passed in the November–December 1812 term.¹⁹⁷ This penalty apparently harks back to (a) the 1812 published notice of non-payment of taxes on his land in Tattnall County; and (b) his suit against John B. McFarland over 4 notes McFarland had given him in 1809—apparently to buy his land.

For Cooksey to pay the tax on the land, under the circumstances involved, speaks well for his character though not his business acumen.

TO DO:

- **Work Laurens County tax returns, 1808–ca.1830. (Follow through as far as necessary until all known family members have left the region.) Search should include:**
 - **Bell (Letitia and new husband of 1821, Zachariah Bell)**
 - **Boyd (Henry, son of Letitia, raised by Bani Boyd)**
 - **Cooksey**
 - **Daugherty**
 - **Price, John**
 - **Watson, Robert**
 - **Watts**

13 APRIL 1815
TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Legal Suit.

William Cooksey vs. John B. McFarland. Loose papers. "It is considered that the plaintiff recover against the defendant the sum of \$60.44 and for his costs."¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ Allen Thomas, comp. & ed., *Laurens County, Georgia, Legal Records, 1807–1832* (Roswell, Ga.: W. H. Wolfe Associates, 1991), 175.

¹⁹⁷ Specifically, the law read: “That the receivers of returns of taxable property shall, in the manner and at the times pointed out by the aforesaid act, receive the returns of taxable property of all persons liable to pay a tax, until the 1st day of May, 1813, and shall immediately thereafter proceed to assess four-fold tax on the property of all such persons as shall then have neglected or refused to have made return of their taxable property.” See *Acts of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, Passed at Milledgeville, At an Annual Session, in November and December, 1812* (Milledgeville: S. & F. Grantland, 1812), 105–6; OCR edition, *Galileo: Georgia Legislative Documents* (<http://neptune3.galib.uga.edu> : accessed 29 December 2010).

¹⁹⁸ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 60.

12–13 APRIL 1815
TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Legal Suit.

Wm. Cooksey v. John B. McFarland. Record book entry.

(April 12) “We find for the plaintiff sixty dollars forty four cents with costs of suit. Jones Temple, foreman.” Jonathan **Watson** also served on jury.

(April 13)

“The defendant Jno. B. McFarland came forward, paid costs, and John McArthur offering himself security for the stay of execution in terms of the act of the general assembly in such cases, made & approved. Execution staid appropriately. [Signed] J. B. McFarland [an especially good signature]; John McArthur.”¹⁹⁹

1 DECEMBER 1815
TELFAIR COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

Reubin Watts to Duncan Graham, both of Telfair County. Sale of lot in “Wilkinson now Telfair County, eighth District,” Lot 184 containing 202.5 acres. Witnesses: Angus Morrison, **William E. Cooksey.**”

(28 August 1816)

Deed is proved by affidavit of Angus Morrison, alone, before Duncan McRae, J.P.²⁰⁰

COMMENT:

Both Reubin Watts and William E. Cooksey may have left for Mississippi by this time.

13 MARCH 1816
LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

The 20 Septemer 1810 deed by which John Cooksey bought Lot 193, Wilkinson (now Laurens) County from Murdoch McLeod, was finally recorded on 13 March 1816.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Tattnall Co., Ga., “Superior Court Minutes, 1805–23”; FHL microfilm 206,463, item 2. Rarely paginated, unindexed; scanned every page for items of interest.

²⁰⁰ Telfair County, Ga., Deed Record and Mortgages, Book D, 1813–1816 [typescript]; FHL microfilm 327,631; copy supplied by Wynema McGrew.

²⁰¹ Laurens Co., Ga., “Deed Book E” [1815–1818] p. 78; FHL microfilm 394,594.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)
Wife 1: Unknown
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

16 APRIL 1817
LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court minutes.

Petit jurors for *next* term: **No. 33: John Cooksey**²⁰²

COMMENT:

When the court convened next on 13–14 October, it adjourned without business. *On 12 January 1818, it reconvened; 12 individuals were sworn in on the petit jury. Only the chosen 12 were named. Cooksey was not included.* On 14 January, a “special jury” was named for several cases. *John again was not included.*

1 JANUARY 1818
LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

1 January 1818 (drawn)

3 January 1818 (attested by Peter Thomas before Samuel Carson, J.P.)

23 March 1821 (recorded)

Thomas Davis to **William Cooksey**, both of Laurens County, sale for \$400, 100 acres in the 22nd district of Wilkinson County, at the time of survey, now Laurens County, on NE side of Rocky Creek, being part of Lot 197. /signed/ Thomas Davis. Witnesses: Thos. Duke, Peter Thomas.²⁰³

COMMENTS:

*What was Cooksey's motivation for this purchase? As shown below, under date of 6 January, he sold this land just 5 days later. Typically a quick turnaround of land represented speculation on which a profit was made. If property was bought on speculation, it was typically held until it *could* turn a profit. To buy a tract and sell it 5 days later for the same amount was highly unusual, unless the purchase was made for a relative or close friend who could not attend to the purchase himself.*

3 [4?] JANUARY 1818
LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

3 January 1818 (drawn)

24 March 1821 (recorded)

William Cooksey to Drury Roberts, both of Laurens County, sale for \$300 a tract of 202.5 acres, land lot 83, 17th Dist., Wilkinson County at the time of survey, now Laurens County, Lot No. 83. /signed/ “William Cooksey {Seal}” [sic]. Witnesses: Peter Thomas, Saml. Carson, J.P. ²⁰⁴

COMMENTS:

²⁰² Laurens Co., Ga., Superior Court Minutes, 1816–1903, p. 30; FHL microfilm 410,051.

²⁰³ Laurens Co., Ga., “Deed Book G,” 22–24; FHL microfilm 394,594.

²⁰⁴ Laurens Co., Ga., “Deed Book G,” 38; FHL microfilm 394,594.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

The attribution of a seal to William appears to be a clerical error.

The purchase of this land was not found in the county's master index to deeds, and the individual deed volumes do not have their own indexes. **I have not read all the prior volumes in search of this purchase.**

Wilkinson Co. deed records do not survive. No Cooksey acquired this as a lottery draw. **If the lottery list becomes available as an online database, it should be searched for the land description to see who won the land.**

William's use of two different JPs, just three days apart, was highly unusual in rural counties. Typically, individuals went to the JPs assigned to their own neighborhood. One explanation might be that William lived equidistant from two neighborhood JPs, but even in this situation, men typically had a preferred JP. Another explanation might be that he used the specific JP preferred by each seller.

6 JANUARY 1818
LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

6 January 1818 (drawn)

23 March 1821 (recorded)

William Cooksey to Thomas Collier, both of Laurens County, sale for \$400, 100 acres, lot 197, 22nd district (same tract as purchased on 1 January, above). /signed/ William Cooksey, his mark. Witnesses: Matthew Tucker, Wm. Hathorn, J.P.²⁰⁵

COMMENT:

William in the 1810–20 period is clearly functioning as an investor rather than buying land to farm. Aside from this transaction, he appears to employ a “buy and hold” strategy: purchasing raw, unimproved land and holding it until he can make a profit rather than buying already improved land that could be rented out for a steady income. This implies that he had discretionary funds that could be “tied up.”

TO DO:

- **Track Thomas Collier to determine whether a kinship or other connection exists.**

14 JANUARY 1818
LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Court Minutes.

Superior Court: “Thomas Cobb, indorsee for the use of **Hardy Griffin** vs. **William Cooksey**. “Case settled at Plffs. costs.” No details for the case.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Laurens Co., Ga., “Deed Book G,” 24–25; FHL microfilm 394,594.

²⁰⁶ Laurens Co., Ga., Superior Court Minutes, 1816–1903, p. 49; FHL microfilm 410,051.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

COMMENT:

This is the last reference found to William Cooksey in Laurens County. At this point, he should still be in possession of the 400-acre grant patented in 1810—unless (as appears to be the case) the sale of this property was the basis for his long-running suit against John B. McFarland. No actual record of the land's disposition has been found in Laurens, Tattnall, or Montgomery.

In 1819, **Capt. Hardy Griffin** drew up a list of Revolutionary War Soldiers in his militia district who were eligible for the 1821 land lottery. Included was **Latic [Cooksey] Daughtery** and one **John Cooksey**, who was clearly a different man. See bounty-land notes below.

18 MARCH 1818

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Deed).

18 March 1818 (drawn)

26 December 1818 (attested by Joel Dorsey before Isaac Benton, J.P.)

6 March 1823 (recorded)

John Cooksey to Ambrose Perry, both of Laurens, sale for \$360, tract of land [acreage not stated] in 18th District of Wilkinson County, now Laurens, Lot No. 193. /signed/ "**John Cooksey** {Seal}."

Witnesses: Lewis Joiner, Joel Dorsey.²⁰⁷

COMMENT:

This sale should have left John landless. It is likely that he had died or moved from the county by 26 December 1818, given that the sale was proved by a witness, rather than attested by John himself.

13 APRIL 1818

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA²⁰⁸

Court minutes.

52 names drawn for petit jury at next term of court, including: **No. 26: John Cooksey.**

COMMENT:

At the next term of court, 12 October 1818, two petit juries of 12 men each were drawn from the 52 names. John Cooksey was not one of them. On 15 October, names were drawn for the next term of court. No Cookseys are included.

²⁰⁷ Laurens Co., Ga., "Deeds and Mortgages, Book H, 1823–1826" [FHL target wording], p. 23; FHL microfilm 410,051.

²⁰⁸ Laurens Co., Ga., Superior Court Minutes, B: 65, 68-69 (13 April 1818); and 71-73, 76, 87 (15 October 1818).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

JANUARY–MAY 1818

GEORGIA > COVINGTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Analysis.

The first half of 1818 marks the move of William to Mississippi. John's 18 March 1818 sale implies that he and Zilpha were preparing to move also. However, John's absence on the pre-July 1818 census of Lawrence County, Mississippi, below—a census that includes his father and the Watts-Lott clan—and the fact that William's household does not include other family members who fit the profile of John and Zilpha's family, suggests that John and Zilpha may not have migrated at the same time as William, in that year 1818.

No record, after John's land sale of 18 March 1818, places either John or William in Georgia. William's suit was subsequently relaunched against McFarland, but was prosecuted by his attorney, in his absence. That absence may well account for why the October 1818 jury ruled against him, when prior juries had sided with him.

14 DECEMBER 1818

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA²⁰⁹

Power of Attorney.

William Neel of Laurens “am about going to the Western Country & am therefore desirous of appointing a person and of giving him or them whom I may appoint sufficient powers and authorities to do & execute every act, deed, matter & thing whatsoever” He appoints Daniel Odum Neil & Levy Glass.

COMMENT:

No William Neel is found on the 1820 census of Mississippi. One **William Naul** is in Lawrence County, as a close neighbor to McCulloughs and Herrings (Herrons).

1818

LAWRENCE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI²¹⁰

Census.

Undated, but apparently drawn before 5 July 1818, the date of the birth of the 2nd living daughter of William Cooksey, Jr.²¹¹

unnumbered end of p. 8, beginning at line 19

Watts, Thomas [son of John Watts and wife Judith, who appear 4 lines later]

²⁰⁹ Laurens Co., Ga., Deeds of Trust or Gifts, B: 5-6

²¹⁰ 1818 State Census, Lawrence County, Mississippi, unnumbered p. 9, William Cooksey [Jr.] and [Senr.]; digital image, “Mississippi State and Territorial Census Collection, 1792–1866,” *Ancestry.Com* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 12 September 2010), citing Mississippi State and Territorial Censuses, 1792–1866, microfilm collection V229, roll 2, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson.

²¹¹ Affidavits of Barbara (Cooksey) Copeland, born 3 March 1817, and Massa Ann (Cooksey) Allen, born 5 July 1818, eldest two children of pension applicant Flora Cooksey, widow of William; in William E. Cooksey (Pvt., Capt. Atkinson's Co., Georgia Militia, War of 1812), pension no. S.C. 19,478, Case Files of Pension and Bounty-Land Applications Based on Service in the War of 1812; Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Watts, Reuben [son of John Watts and wife Judith; married Patsy Lee]
Lott, Abraham [son-in-law of John Watts and wife Judith]
Wiggins, Jesse [son-in-law of John Watts and wife Judith, m. Barbara/Bathsheba Watts]
unnumbered p. 9
Watts, John [RW soldier, from Montgomery & Tattnall Cos., Georgia]
McAll Hugh [Wm. Cooksey was surety for adm. of one William McCall estate, 1810]
Lee, Stephen [father or brother of Patty who married Reuben Watts]
Parker, Aron [Kelly Parks thinks he married Mark Rayborn's sister Tabitha]
Rayborn, Mark [son-in-law of John Watts and wife Judith, m. Rhody Watts]
Altman, Thomas [son-in-law of John Watts and wife Judith, m. Amy Watts]
Hornsby, Reuben [son of Catherine Watts, g-son of John Watts and wife Judith]
McFarson, David [father- or brother-in-law of William Cooksey (Jr.) below]
Cooksey, William 1 male 21+ [William E.] 1 female 21+ [nee Flora McPherson, m. 1816]
1 female -21 [Barbara, b. 3 March 1817]
Cooksey, William, Sen. 1 male 21+ [William] 1 female 21+ [??????]
1 male -21 [??????]
Webb, William [married Mary Watts, 8 August 1809 Tattnall]²¹²
Webb, William, Sen.
Ship, John
Head, William
Williamson, Frances
Riley, Jesse
Faber? William
Miles? William
Scarborough, Peter
Coulter, Charles
Lane, Joseph
Gordon? John

COMMENT:

The other occupants of William's household do not fit the family situation known for him— unless, perhaps, the family included (a) his daughter Mary, who married Robert Watson in 1810 and appeared in a John Price court case in 1811 as “Mary Watson,” and (b) a possible son of Mary. Nothing has been found after 1811 for either Mary or Robert;

22 JUNE 1818

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Legal Suit.

"{*Petition*} **William Cooksey** says John McFarland owes him \$83.33 1/3 on notes dated 18 October 1809.²¹³

²¹² “Georgia Marriages, 1699–1944,” database, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com : accessed 1 July 2009).

²¹³ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 95. Murray does not identify the court in which the case was prosecuted.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

OCTOBER 1818

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Legal Suit.

Cooksey vs. McFarland. "We find for the defendant with costs of suit so say we all. Jno. T. Sharpe, Foreman."²¹⁴

OCTOBER 1818

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Legal Suit

Superior Court Minutes: "Appearance Docket . . . 4 (Saffold) **William Cooksey** vs. John Macfarland (Shly) / case / ans. [?] filed, cont. by def. M.T. 1819, Verdict pro dft. A. T. 1820."²¹⁵

COMMENT:

- One William Saffold was a chain carrier, with "J. Watts," for the survey of Cooksey's 125 acres in 1791.²¹⁶
- Saffold should be the attorney who represented William Cooksey. Shly would be the attorney who represented MacFarland. William, who had moved out to Mississippi by this time, apparently left Saffold in charge of prosecuting the case.
- It is likely that William (and perhaps his 'son John') left Laurens County in mid-1818, leaving an attorney to prosecute William's suit against McFarland. That is the point at which the judgments (which had all previously been in his favor) turned against him.
- Despite McFarland's prominence in the county, William had won all judgments from 1812 through 1817. In April 1818, the court stalled and continued the case. In October 1818, the jury made its first ruling for McFarland. When William (or his attorney) appealed, the final judgment rendered in April 1820, below, was for McFarland. He, McFarland, was still a local citizen and a force to be reckoned with. Cooksey was not.

MID-FEBRUARY 1819

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA?

Analysis.

Zilpha (whose last child by John Cooksey was born 7 June 1816²¹⁷), conceived her son James William Cooksey in mid-February 1819, extrapolating from the birth date (November 16 [18?] 1819) he gave for himself in the Bible he created after he married in 1843.²¹⁸

²¹⁴ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, 1801–1845: 95. Murray does not identify the court in which the case was prosecuted.

²¹⁵ Gordon Anthony Thompson, transcriber, *The Tattnall County, Georgia, Superior Court Records, 1805–1832* (Baltimore: Gateway Press for the R. J. Taylor Jr. Foundation, 2005), 149.

²¹⁶ Georgia Surveyor General, Land Plat Book CC:475 (Washington County); Department of Archives and History, Atlanta

²¹⁷ *FindAGrave* (www.findagrave.com : 9 February 2008), for "Catherine Gill," memorial page 20553746), tombstone image submitted by Kathy James, 20 July 2007, shows inscription "Catherine Gill | b. June 7 1816 | Died September 13 1863."

²¹⁸ James W. Cooksey Bible pages, image copies supplied August 2008 by Kelly Parks (2112 Hawkins Road, Pattison, MS 39144), to whom J. L. Cooksey, apparent owner of the Bible (location unknown) supplied a copy after 1996.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Most Cooksey accounts, following the unpublished research of J. L. Cooksey, assert that James William was the son of Zilpha by John Cooksey. However, the evidence (including James William's Bible) suggests that he was the son of William, rather than John. That evidence will be developed at the end of this set of notes.

16 MARCH 1819

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Legal Suit.

"{Summons} Daniel Highsmith, you are commanded to appear at court on the fourth Thursday in March to testify for the case, **William Cooksey vs. J. B. MacFarland**. James Perry, Clk."²¹⁹

1819

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Lottery).

Registration list for 1820 lottery.²²⁰

COMMENTS:

Legislation authorizing the 1820 lottery was passed in December 1818. The list covers those living there in Laurens in 1819 who were eligible for the 1821 lottery. Its arrangement is semi-alphabetical by first letter of surname, arranged by militia district. The number after each individual is the number of draws to which they were eligible under the Georgia law that authorized this lottery.

The list has no key stating the rules of eligibility. In reading the entries, I note the following:

- Orphan, singular or plural 1 draw
- Widow 1 draw
- Most men 2 draws [men with families]
- Men marked "Revolutionary" 4 draws [only 2 such men]

Registrants from Captain Hardy Griffin's District:

"Cooksey, John (Revolutionary W)	4 "
Daugharty, John, orphans of	1
Durou, Thomas	1 consecutive entries
Daugharty, Latice (Widow)	1

Henry [Lettice's son]: I did not find any orphan male with forename *Henry* on Griffin's list

Regarding Capt. Hardy Griffin:

Griffin, whose district (neighborhood) included John Cooksey and Letitia (Cooksey) Daughterty, had recently prosecuted a suit against William Cooksey. See notes of 14 January 1818, above.

²¹⁹ Sabina J. Murray, *Tattnall County, Georgia, Loose Papers: 1801–1845*, 2 vols. (Homerville, Ga.: Huxford Genealogical Society, 2005–7), vol. 1, *1801–1845*: 102. Murray does not identify the court in which the case was prosecuted.

²²⁰ Laurens Co., Ga., Court of Ordinary, "Eligibles to [draw lots in] Land lottery 1819"; FHL microfilm 417,021.

Regarding John:

The identification of this John Cooksey as a Revolutionary War soldier presents an identification problem to resolve.

- John's entitlement as a Revolutionary soldier is very clearly and unambiguously stated on the original roll of registrants in Laurens.
- This John Cooksey, to be a soldier in a war that ended in 1782, should have been born before 1767.
- *If* he were indeed William's son, then William would have fathered him at 20 or so. That is within the realm of likelihood.
- *If*, however, this John Cooksey, R.W. soldier, were William's son, then a second major problem exists. No John Cooksey of this age can be accounted for in any Georgia county prior to 1809 when William's presumed son made his first appearance on a jury list and took out a license to marry Zilpha. Twenty-seven years is an inordinately long time for a grown man to avoid taxation, jury service, militia duty, and other public activities of record.
- No Revolutionary War service has been found for any John Cooksey in the state of Georgia.
- No purchase of land has been found in Laurens for this John Cooksey.

Despite the 'coincidence' of him settling in the same militia district of the same county as William and his alleged son John, several factors suggest that this Revolutionary War soldier was an entirely different John. As subsequently shown in this set of research notes:

- This John Cooksey "Revolutionary W" of Laurens, 1819–20, drew land in Walton County.
- This John Cooksey settled in Walton County (later Newton) where he is enumerated on the 1830 census. He was then aged 70–79. Sharing his household is a female 50–59, and a male 20–29. Also in the county is a young Robert Cooksey, 15–19, with a female 15–19; apparent newlyweds with no children. Both Cooksey households were slaveowners.²²¹ (By 1840, this John Cooksey is no longer enumerated and the two younger males, Robert Cooksey and W. W. Cooksey are neighbors.)²²²
- On 3 April 1831, this John Cooksey of Walton took a new wife, Mary Tomerson.²²³ Presumably, she is not the female 50–59 who lived in his household on the undated 1830 census (although that is possible if the 1830 census was not completed before mid-1831).

²²¹ In 1830, this John Cooksey was enumerated in Walton County, aged 70–79, with a female 50–59, a young male 10–29, and 2 slaves; see 1830 U.S. census, Walton Co., Ga., p. 156, line 14; NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 21.

²²¹ S. Emmett Lucas Jr., *The 1832 Gold Lottery of Georgia, Containing a List of the Fortunate Drawers in Said Lottery* (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1988), 108. This Robert Cooksey was also enumerated in Walton County in 1830, though he was 22 pages removed from John Cooksey. Robert was aged 15–19, with a female 15–19, 3 slaves; see 1830 U.S. census, p. 134, line 23. In 1850, this Robert Cooksey's age is said to be 39, placing his birth about 1810–11; this age diminishes the possibility that his father John was the same John who attempted marriage to Zilpha in January 1809 and bought land in Laurens in 1811 with William Cooksey as his witness. See 1850 U.S. census, Walton Co., Ga., 88th Division, p. 34 (penned), dwell./family 239; NA microfilm publication M432, roll 86.

²²² 1840 U.S. census, Walton Co., Ga., p. 52; National Archives microfilm publication M704, roll 109.

²²³ "Georgia Marriages to 1850," database, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 1 June 2009), Cooksey-Tomerson marriage, Montgomery County; citing "Hunting For Bears, comp.," *Georgia Marriages, 1699-1944* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004."

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

- In 1832 John Cooksey, Revolutionary Soldier, registered for the 1832 land lottery from adjacent Newton County (which had been cut from Walton). As “John Cooksey, Revolutionary War veteran” of M’Cullers District, Newton County, he drew land in Cherokee County (lot 259, dist. 10, sect. 3; granted 6 May 1834.”²²⁴

APRIL 1820

TATTNALL COUNTY, GEORGIA

Legal Suit.

Superior Court minutes. “**William Cooksey vs.** John Macfarland / Case / Jury No. 2 returned their verdict. We find for the defendant with cost of suit. So say we all. Jno. T. Sharpe forman.”²²⁵

1 SEPTEMBER—2 DECEMBER 1820

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Lottery).

Cooksey, John: Griffin’s Militia District. Drew Lot 224, sect. 3, Walton County.

Daugharty, John, Orphans: [Not included as a lucky drawer]

Daugharty, Latice: [Not included as a lucky drawer]²²⁶

COMMENTS:

This published list, originally created by the Georgia Land Office, identifies various drawers as “R.S.” (for Revolutionary Soldier) and “Soldier.” Neither notation appears for John Cooksey. Although the published statewide list for the whole lottery omits Latice, she does appear as a lucky draw in a newspaper account of draws for the second week in October.

17 OCTOBER 1820

LAURENS COUNTY, GEORGIA

Land (Lottery).

“Fortunate drawers in the Land Lottery. Including the names of all who drew prizes from the 7th to the 12th of September, contained in pamphlet sheet No. 2. . . . **Lettice Daugherty.**”²²⁷

COMMENT:

On 3 October 1821 “**Mrs. Lettice Daugherty**” married **Zachariah Bell** in a ceremony performed by George W. Welch, Justice of Inferior Court.²²⁸

²²⁴ Alex M. Hitz, Surveyor-General Department, *Authentic List of All Land Lottery Grants Made to Veterans of the Revolutionary War by the State of Georgia*, 2d ed. (Atlanta: Secretary of State, 1966), 20. Also James F. Smith, *The Cherokee Land Lottery, Containing a Numerical List of the Names of the Fortunate Drawers in Said Lottery* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1838), 233. In 1830, this John Cooksey was enumerated in Walton County, aged 70–79, with a female 50–59, a young male 10–29, and 2 slaves; see 1830 U.S. census, p. 156, line 14; NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 21.

²²⁵ Gordon Anthony Thompson, transcriber, *The Tattnall County, Georgia, Superior Court Records, 1805–1832* (Baltimore: Gateway Press for the R. J. Taylor Jr. Foundation), 149.

²²⁶ Silas Emmett Lucas Jr., *The Third or 1820 Land Lottery of Georgia* (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1986), 72.

²²⁷ Tad Evans, *Georgia Newspaper Clippings: Laurens County Extracts, 1810–1892* (Savannah: Privately printed, 1998), 50, citing *Southern Recorder*, published at Milledgeville.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)
Wife 1: Unknown
Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

LATE 1820
COVINGTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Census.²²⁹

Cooksey, William

1 male 45—	[William]
1 male 10–16	[John, b. 1806–7, to Zilpha]
2 males 0–9	[Samuel Alexander, b. 7 Oct 1811 to John & Zilpha] [James William b. 16 November 1819 to William or John & Zilpha]
1 female 26–44	[Zilpha]
2 females 10–16	[Nancy, b. 1804, to Zilpha; married ca. 1828, John Parks] ²³⁰ [Lettice, b. c1809 to John & Zilpha, m. Raburn 1829]
2 females 0–9	[Zilpha, b. 1812–14 to John & Zilpha, m. Thomas Sessums, 1829] [Katherine, b. 1816, to John & Zilpha, m. David Gill]

COMMENTS:

Neighbors (p. 17)—

James RAIBURN, John Ship, Esq., Richard Walsh, Dawson Walters, Jason PARKER [*skip 20 houses*], then:

Mary Leggett	[Widow Benjamin, née Mary Watts, daughter of John Watts Sr. and Judith] ²³¹
Norvell Robertson	[Reverend, of Washington and Warren Counties, Georgia; his daughter Rhoda married James Easterling, whose sister married Reuben Watts, son of John Watts Sr. and Judith] ²³²
Reuben Watts	[son of John Watts Sr. and Judith; he married Katherine Easterling]
Abram Lott	[married Zilpha Wiggins, daughter of Jesse Wiggins and Barbara/Barsheba Watts, the daughter of John Watts Sr. and Judith]
Absolom Lott	[father of Abram Lott, above, and Philip Lott and Elizabeth Lott Watts, below]
Jesse Wiggins	[husband of Barbara/Barsheba Watts, daughter of John Watts Sr. and Judith]

²²⁸ Allen Thomas, *Laurens County, Georgia, Records, 1807–1832* (Roswell, Ga.: W. H. Wolfe Associates, 1991), 196.

²²⁹ 1820 U.S. Census, Covington Co., Miss., p. 17 (stamped), line 42; National Archives microfilm publication M33, roll 58.

²³⁰ Dr. Harold Graham, "The Odyssey of John Parks," *Newton County, Mississippi, Historical and Genealogical Society* (http://www.nchgs.org/html/odyssey_of_john_parks.html : accessed 5 May 2010) states that Parks had settled in Covington County and taken a new wife, Nancy Cooksey, by 1818. However, I have not been able to find a Parks family on the 1820 census of Covington, and the ages of John and Nancy's children suggest that the unrecorded marriage more likely occurred about 1828.

²³¹ [Anonymous], *Genealogy of the Cummins: Family Database Informations* (<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~cumminsofscgen/Genealogy%20of%20the%20Cummins/src3.htm> : accessed 25 June 2009), for Source Reference NIO-2795 through NIO-2864, citing entries from the Bible of Mary and Benjamin's son Andrew Jackson Leggett; while the compiler is unidentified, person no. 1 in this genealogy is a still-living person named John Daniel Simonson. Numerous sources assert that Judith's maiden name was Rawls; however, they offer no evidence for that identity.

²³² Norvell Robertson Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, *Norvell Robertson* (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~msnrddar/NorvellRobertson.html> : accessed 8 March 2010).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Philip Lott [married Mary Wiggins, daughter of Jesse Wiggins and Barsheba/Barbara Watts]
Thomas Watts, Esq. [married Elizabeth Lott, daughter of Absalom, above]
James Nelson [a single man, no land, possibly overseer for Thomas Watts, Esq.]
William Cooksey
Stephen Dumfries
William Webb [married Mary Watts, 7 August 1809, Tattnall Co. (Marriage Book 1, p. 2)]
Jeremiah Scarbrough
James Tate
Peter Coulter
Francis Williamson
Daniel McIntyre
William Miles

Zilpha's son Cader Price appears on p. 21, living adjacent to his alleged father-in-law Joseph Price. A second male in the same age bracket (16–26) appears in Cader's home; logically, that would be his brother Reuben Price. The **John Watts** household is 8 houses beyond Cader.

1822

COVINGTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Church minutes.

Delegates to the Pearl River Baptist Association (constituted 6 November 1820 at Fair River Church, Lawrence County, Mississippi), included:

Reuben Watts and John Graham of Pentecost Church, Covington, Mississippi

Norvell Robertson and Stephen Lee of Providence Church, Marion, Mississippi²³³

1822

COVINGTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Petition.

“To the Honourable the General Assembly of the State of Mississippi to convene at the House of Town of Jackson on the fourth Monday in December 1822. The Petition of the Undersigned Citizens of Covington County Respectfully Sheweth That Your petitioners labour under intolerable grievances: For, that whereas, the said county of Covington is of the most inconvenient and unreasonable extent—comprehending within its extended boundaries an expanse of country amply sufficient for two constitutional counties We believe that the area designated by the constitution is, generally, the most eligible extent for a county:—But that your petitioners should be necessitated to suffer the many inconveniences resulting from a residence in a county the enlarged boundaries of which includes a tract of country of more than double that extent is a burthen to which we cannot submit with silence. —It is a duty we owe to ourselves to present our grievances before you. We sensibly feel those grievances. And a removal of them would be of unspeakable advantage to the

²³³ “Minutes of the Pearl River Baptist Association,” pp. 4–9; Kay Rhett, transcriber, *History of Half Moon Bluff Baptist Church, 1812-1830, Washington, St. Tammany, and Tangipahoa Parishes, Louisiana* (<http://files.usgwarchives.net/la/sttammany/churches/halfmoon.txt> : accessed 2 July 2010); citing Zuma Findlason Magee and Dixie Sylvest Moss, *History of Half Moon Bluff Baptist Church, 1811-1830* (Franklinton, La.: N.P., 1978).

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

county. We petition not for the sake of private interest, but for the general good of the County. All parts of the County most cordially concur in the measure. It is not the selfish request of a few interested individuals. It is the prayer of a county which is severely suffering innumerable disadvantages and hardships arising from the extensive dimensions of our County.

“We therefore pray your Honourable Body to remove our grievances by passing a Law to divide or said county and form a new County of a part thereof. And we your Petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray. /Signed/ Norvell Robertson Junr., Norvell Robertson, Sen. [etc.]

SECTION 2

[skip 9]

Reubin Watts

[skip 22]

William Coocey²³⁴

COMMENT:

- The signature is not a mark. However, William clearly did not sign his own name. He is last in a series of nine names penned by the same hand: Francis Searle, Thomas Page Senr., A. Stewart, Thomas Page Junr., Henry Page, Willis Page, Jacob Page, William Weeb, William Coocey.
- The William Webb who appears immediately before him is likely the William Webb who married Mary Watts back in Tattnall and moved out to Mississippi in the family migration.

TO DO:

- **Tax rolls at State Archives for Covington & Jones Counties.**

8 SEPTEMBER 1828—25 JUNE 1829
COVINGTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Pension Application²³⁵

IMAGE 1

[File jacket]

“1278”

“Cuksey/Cucksey, William R20354”

IMAGE 2

“1278”

²³⁴ “Citizens of Covington County, Request to Divide County, circa December 1822”; folder 13, box 6812, series 2370, Petitions, 1817–1908; Record Group 47, Legislative Papers; Mississippi Department of Archives and History. (A transcription, with some variances, is published as “**Jones County**, Mississippi, 1822 Petition,” *Mississippi Genealogical Exchange* 21 [Spring 1975]: 21–22.

²³⁵ William Cuksey/Cucksey (Pvt., Shadrack Wright’s Co., 1st Regt., Ga. Cont’l. Line), pension application 1278 (and widow’s application R20354); digital images, *Footnote.com* (<http://www.footnote.com> : downloaded 30 August 2008), 2nd image in digital file; imaged from *Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files*, microfilm publication M804 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, [n.d.], roll number not cited at *Footnote.com*. The widow’s application that has been linked to William’s file is erroneously connected, as discussed under image 5.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

“For the purpose of obtaining the benefits of the act, entitled ‘An Act for the relief of Certain Surviving Officers and Soldiers of the Army of the Revolution’ approved on the 15th day of may 1828, I **William Cuksey** of the County of Covington in the State of Mississippi do hereby declare that I enlisted in the continental line of the army of the Revolution for and during the war and continued in its Service until its termination at which period I was a private in Shadrack Wright’s Company in the first Regiment of the Georgia line. I Cannot declare that I afterwards received Certificates for the reward of eighty dollars, to which I was entitled under a resolve of Congress, passed the 15th day of May 1778. I was entitled to those certificates. And I further declare that I was not on the 15th day of May 1828 ON THE PENSION LIST OF THE United States. Witness my hand this **Eighth day of September in the Year Eighteen hundred and twenty Eight.** [Signed] William Cuksey (X his mark).”

IMAGE 3

“Before me **John Rawls**, Justice of the peace in the County of Covington in the State of Mississippi, personally appeared this day Joseph Carter and Ezekiel Reed of the Said County who did severally make oath that William Cuksey by whom the foregoing declaration was Subscribed is generally reputed and believed to have been a Soldier in the Army of the Revolution in manner as therein Stated. Witness my hand this 31st day of October in the year 1828. John Rawls, J.P.”

“I Morgan McAfee, Clerk of the Court of the County of Covington in the State of Mississippi do hereby Certify that John Rawls before whom the foregoing affidavits were sworn was at the time a justice of the peace and and [*sic*] duly empowered to administer oaths. In Testimony whereof I have herein to set my hand and affixed the Seal of the Said Court this 31st day of October in the Year 1828. Morgan McAfee, Clk.”

IMAGE 4

[A pre-printed card]

Rejected

Ex'r OLD WAR

File No. 20354

Acts of July 14, 1862 [1802?] , and March 8, 1873.

William Cuksey, Pri.

Capt. Dwight [*sic*], Ga. Line, Revy. War

Died at [left blank]

Rejected.

Evidence insufficient, Act 1828

_____, 187_ _____

IMAGE 5

[backside of card]

“W^m Cuksey—Pvt.

Georgia line

Evidence insufficient Oct. 1828

Miss.

Ex^d one old Book & Rej.

Ex^d Inval. Wid-- & other old book

No Record

L[?]DS. Nov 4/ 80

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

COMMENTS:

Two incongruencies appear on this pre-printed card, which was created by Pension Office long after William's death, as evidenced by the dates pre-printed on it.

- The cited acts are not relevant to Cooksey, who died long before the dates of those acts. They would apply only if a widow or orphan had petitioned for a pension. Cooksey's youngest child came of age in 1842. And he is not known to have left a surviving widow. Rather, the family story is that he spent his last years living with his former daughter-in-law, Zilpha [—?—] Price. It is a matter of record that he had a daughter Elizabeth, born to the two of them in 1821 (see Elizabeth's death certificate, extracted below). Zilpha died 24 June 1857, according to the Bible of her son James William Cooksey.
- The wrong captain is also cited; i.e., *Dwight*, not *Shadrach Wright*.

Conclusions:

- A widow of another William Cooksey applied and her application was erroneously linked by the Pension office to this soldier.
- The number 20354 is that widow's number. William's original file should be No. 1278.

IMAGE 6

[Appears to be a mailing envelope]

"H/ Asbury for

W^m Cucksey 1278 [this number is written in a different hand and ink]

Rec^d 17 July 1829

191 [written in the same pen and ink as "1278"]

Free

Treasury Department

Washington City, D.C."

IMAGE 7

"Williamsburg Mi 25th June 1829.

Sir.

A communication from your department relative to my Claims as a revolutionary soldier bearing date the 23rd May last reached me to day. in which Communication I am informed that my Claim is not Envalorated [?] or supported by any thing found in the public Records &c. Yet I am told my claim is open to the reception of further Testimony and if I request it, to aid me in the Substantiation of My Claim You will cause to be prepared and Transmitted to me a list taken from the papers which have been received at the department of the names and residence of Such officers of the line and Regiment to which I represent myself to have belonged, as are known to be now living. A speedy Compliance with this proffered draft will perhaps be instrumental in soothing and sustaining the declining years of a war worn Soldier of the Revolution. Sir, very respectfully,
William Cucksey by Hanson Alsbury his Atto."

IMAGE 8

[a mailing envelope]

"Rec^d. Nov 25 [1828]

Williamsburgh Mi

31st Octr 1828

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Revolutionary Claims
[To:] Honl. Richard Rush
Secretary Treasury
Washington City, D.C.
Mail”

IMAGE 9

“The enclosed papers exhibiting the Claims of **William Cucksey** are respectfully submitted to the Treasury department. **Mr. Cucksey** is an illiterate man and doubts whether his name is correctly written---The records in this department will probably be Satisfactory to Show that he is entitled to his Claim. Respectfully, Hanson Alsbury.

[To:] Hon. Richard Rush, S.T.

IMAGE 10

“Before me **John Rawls** a justice of the peace in the County of Covington and the State of Mississippi, personally appeared this day Hanson Alsbury the attorney named in the foregoing power of attorney and made oath that the same was not given him by reason of any transfer or of any attachment, levy or Seizure, by any legal process whatever of the pay therein authorized to be received by that the said pay is intended to enure wholly to the personal benefit of the person by whom the said power was executed. Witness my hand this 8th day of September in the year 1828. John Rawls, J.P.

“I Morgan McAfee, Clerk of the Court of the County of Covington in the State of Mississippi do hereby certify that John Rawls before whom the foregoing affidavits were sworn was at the time a justice of the peace and duly empowered to administer oaths. In Testimony whereof I have hereunto Set my hand and affixed the seal of the Said Court this 31st day of October in the year 1828. Morgan McAfee, Clk.”

IMAGES 11–12

“Know all men by these presents that I **William Cuksey** of the County of Covington in the State of Mississippi do hereby Constitute and appoint Hanson Alsbury my true and lawful attorney with a power of Substitution, for me and in my name to receive from the United States the amount of pay now due me under the act entitled ‘An Act for the relief of Certain surviving officers and Soldiers of the revolution[.]’ approved 12th May 1828 as a private in the first Regiment of the Georgia line of the Army of the Revolution. Witness my hand and seal this 8th day of September in the year 1828. **William Cuksey** X his mark. Sealed and delivered in the presence of [*no names shown*].”

“Before me John Rawls a justice of the peace in the County of Covington in the State of Mississippi, personally appeared this day **William Cuksey** whose name is subscribed to the foregoing power of attorney and acknowledged the Same to be his act and deed, and also declared [*image 12*] that the Same was not given by reason of any transfer or of any attachment, levy, or seizure, by any legal process whatever of the pay therein authorized to be received, but that the said pay is intended to enure wholly to his personal benefit. Witness my hand this 8th day of September in the year 1828. John Rawls, J.P.”

“I Morgan McAfee Clerk of the Court of the County of Covington in the State of Mississippi do hereby Certify that John Rawls before whom the foregoing power of attorney was acknowledged is a justice

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

of the peace. In Testimony whereof I have hereunto Set my hand and affixed the seal of the Said Court this 31st day of October in the year 1828. Morgan McAfee Clk.”

IMAGE 13

[A preprinted form, with penned data added]

“1278

REVOLUTIONARY CLAIMS.

Under the act, entitled ‘An act for the relief of certain surviving Officers and Soldiers of the Army of the Revolution,’ approved 15th May, 1828.

“TREASURY DEPARTMENT

29 Nov 1828

“The annexed paper, relating to the claim of *William Cuksey* under the abovementioned act, is respectfully referred to the Secretary of War, with a request that he will be pleased to cause me to be informed whether it appears, by any records in the War Department, that the claimant has received, or is entitled to receive, the bounty in land granted by Congress for service in the Continental Line of the Army of the Revolution.

R. Rush

The Hon. the Secretary of War

War Department

Bounty land office

The records of this office do not show that William Cuksey of the Georgia line has received or is entitled to bounty land of the United States. It should be also stated that in this office there are no regular returns of the privates of Georgia.

Robert Taylor

2 Decr. 1828

COMMENT:

Re William’s Death:

The James William Cooksey Bible, created after James William’s marriage in 1843, recollects William Cooksey’s death date as “March the 28, 1828.”

That recollection is clearly off by a year. William Cooksey could not have employed an attorney and gone before a J.P. on 8 September 1828 if he were already dead; and the sequence of records created in this application make it clear that the September 1828 was the period in which he created his petition.

If it is assumed that James William Cooksey erred only in writing the year (i.e., March 28, 1829 rather than March 28, 1828), then two of the pension documents were created after William’s death. The nature of those documents make that entirely possible.

- The first of the two was created in Washington, D.C., in May 1829, by an official who would not have known that William was dead.
- The second of the two was created by the attorney in Covington County, who may not yet have been informed of William’s death—particularly if William died without property and without probate.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Re William's Origin:

The spelling of William's surname in this document, as well as earlier records spelled his name as Cucksie and Coxy, rather than the common Cooksey sound, imply that he spoke his name with an accent not common to others of his place in time. These spellings have not been seen within the "Cooksey" family that settled Maryland in the 1600s and spread out across the lower south. This, too, supports an hypothesis that he was more likely the son of William I of Savannah, the immigrant from Worcester.

LATE 1830

RANKIN COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Census.²³⁶

Cooksey, Zilpha

1 male 20–29 **[John, b. 1806–7]**

1 male 10–14 **[Samuel Alexander, b. 7 Oct 1811 to John & Zilpha]**

1 males 5–9 **[James William b. 1819 to William or John & Zilpha]**

1 female 40–49 **[Zilpha]**

1 female 10–14 **[Katherine, b. 1816, to John & Zilpha, m. Gill]**

1 female 5–9 **[Elizabeth, born 17 July 1820/21; married Shadrack Odom]**

COMMENT:

The census is semi-alphabetized by first letter of surname, thereby destroying neighborhood order.

TO DO:

- [Rankin County tax rolls at State Archives](#)

LATE 1840

NEWTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Census.²³⁷

p. 141

line 1 Johnston, Joseph [30-40, cousin of Eveline Odom Cooksey & Cynthia Odom Cooksey]

line 2 Parks, John [m. Nancy Cooksey (b. 1804-6), ca. 1828, Covington County]

line 3 **Cooksey, John** [m. Eveline Odom, ca. 1838, Newton County]

line 4 Johnson, J.A. [30-40, cousin of Eveline Odom Cooksey & Cynthia Odom Cooksey]

p. 142

line 13 Cooksey, Samuel [m. Cynthia Ann Odom ca. 1838, Newton County]

²³⁶ 1830 U.S. Census, Rankin County, Mississippi, p. 130 (penned), line 1, Zilpha Cooksey; National Archives microfilm publication M19, roll 71.

²³⁷ 1840 U.S. census, Newton Co., Miss., p. 141, lines 1–2, and p. 142, lines 13–15, Zilpha Cooksey; National Archives microfilm publication M704, roll 142.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

line 14 **Cooksey, Zilpha**

1 male 20–29

1 female 50–59

[James William b. 1819 to William or John & Zilpha]

[Zilpha]

line 15 Sessums, Thomas

[married Zilpha Cooksey Jr., 24 September 1829, Rankin Co.]

1847–1850

NEWTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Church records.

“Pickney Baptist Church was organized on September 25, 1838, with Rev. Goss as pastor, according to records of the Mt. Pisgah Baptist Association. No church minutes exist for the first nine years of its existence. ... Pinckney Baptist Church was reconstituted in 1847 with the rev. Nathaniel L. Clarke presiding other the church until a permanent pastor could be found. . . .

“According to the late Odell Loper, church clerk, the church met initially in the private home of a member near the present location of Stratton. Church members made so much noise in their meetings that a private homeowner objected and the church was moved to a public building in the town of Pinckney and near the present location of Stamper’s Mill Pond. . . . Apparently the following minutes are in reference to this incident:

“December 4, 1847 Appointed Brothers Lewis Jenkins, Gill & Odom [two sons-in-law of **Zilpha**] to ascertain whether the church could occupy the present house any longer.

“January 7, 1848 Committee to wait on Mr. Raibon [a third son-in-law of **Zilpha** and kinsman of Zilpha’s sister Rhoda Watts Raborn] with regard to the future occupancy of the present place of worship, reported it could not be used any longer by the church. On motion for the future to meet in one of the houses of East Pinckney.

“The first burying ground was located near their second place of worship. Apparently no permanent grave markers were ever set and the location has been long abandoned.

“Somewhat later, the original protester again objected to the location of the church and the church was moved to its present location, approximately one mile northwest of the early town of Pinckney and adjacent to Highway 489. This town, which flourished briefly before the Civil War, later came to be known as Stamper. A post office once existed at Stamper, but today the lone remnant of the town is the millpond.

“The original Pinckney Church Minutes for Books A cover the period from 1847—1871, with approximately 110 pages and with many pages missing or out of order. From the minutes, we present membership lists for the certain years[,] along with other notes of interest. Spellings are used as in the original. . . .

1847:

Males: Lewis Jenkins, **John Cooksey**, H. Lasley, **Shadrack Odom**, James Nickols, H. I. Hill, **Thomas Sessums** [son-in-law of **Zilpha**], Henry H. Johnson, Jacob Rowel, Owen Pinson, Henry Walton, William C. Sessums, **John Cooksey** [*sic*], Francis Austin, Amariah Land, Harrison Johnson. *Females:* Sarah Jenkins, Alice Speer, Margaret Smith, Mary Walton, Susan Lashley, Sidney Nickols, Martha Hill, Caroline Smith, Mary Martin, **Elizabeth Odom** [Zilpha’s daughter], Fany Rowel, Elizabeth

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

Johnson [wife of Henry?], Rachel Coran, Lucinda Pinson, Jemima Johnson, Elizabeth Spear, Martha Ann Smith, Lavina Land.

1848:

Lewis Jenkins, **John Cooksey**, H. I. Hill, **Thomas Sessums**, Harrison Johnson, **Shadrack Odom**, Jesse Miller, Benjamin Martin, **David Gill** [son-in-law of **Zilpha**], Elen Price, Sarah Miller, Sar[a]h Jenkins, Elizabeth Johnson, Caroline Smith, Martha Ann Smith, Mary Martin, Henry J. Johnson, **Zilpha Sessums**, Mary Martin, **Catherine Gill**, Delaney Barfoot [apparent daughter of Miles Barfoot], Fanny Gill, Jacob Rowell, Henry Gill, Owen Pinson, Henry Walton, Amariah Land, Lavina Johnson, **Rheuben Price** [son of **Zilpha**], Isaac Gorham, Lewis M. Patterson, Leah Martin, **Elizabeth Odom**, Martha Miller, Margaret Smith, Rachel Coran, Mary Walton, Lucinda Pinson, **Zilpha Cooksey**, *Rosannah Hutto*, Clark [*sic*], Elisabeth Gorhan, Elizabeth Martin, Fanny Rowell.

COMMENT:

Samuel Odom, whose mother is unknown [first wife of Shadrack] gave the name “Rose Anna” to his fourth daughter. Hutto descendants appear among my autosomal DNA matches. However, this family was also neighbors of the Jeffcoats in South Carolina, so they may relate through the Jeffcoat line.

1850:

Lewis Jenkins, **Shadrach Odom**, **Thomas Cessoms**, **William C. Cessom**, **Lettice Rabun** [daughter of **Zilpha**], Harrison Johnson, **David Gill**, James J. Jones, Phanuel Gill, dead, James Miller, Tamsy Clark, Delaney Gill,* Sarah Miller, B. B. Martin, Emaline Germany, Sarah Jenkins, Mary Jane Martin, **Zilpha Cooksey**, **Catherin Gill**, Mary Ann Jackson, Henry Walton, Leah Graham, Ann Johnson, Caroline Smith, Elizabeth Smith, **Hannah Price** [daughter-in-law of **Zilpha**], Elin Price, Matilda Bedgood, Caroline Miller, S__y Cohran [*sic*], **John Cooksey**, Henry Gill, Henry Johnson, Jacob Rowell, Lewis M. Paterson, Elizabeth Parks, John Ishee, William Kenedy, Owin Pinson, Jesse Miller, Isaac Cohran, Hugh Smith, Elizabeth Jackson, Martha Ann Smith, Elizabeth Cohran, Mary Martin, Mary Walton, **Elizabeth Odom**, **Zilpha Cessoms**, **Eveline** [Odom] **Cooksey**, James B. Bedgood, Lucinda Pinson, Margaret Davis, Malinda Ishee, Nancy Davis, Lavina Johnson, Sarah Ann Kenedy, Luiza Smith, Fanny Rowell.”²³⁸

COMMENT:

Note the 1848 membership entry for “Delaney Barfoot” and the 1850 membership entry for “Delaney Gill.” The rareness of the name in this society suggests that this female married in the interval. (Newton County courthouse records, which would document such a marriage, have been destroyed.)

1850

NEWTON COUNTY

Census.²³⁹

²³⁸ Harold Graham, “Pinckney Baptist Church: The Early years (1838–1862),” *Newton County, Mississippi Historical and Genealogical Society* (http://www.nchgs.org/html/Pinckney_baptist_church.html : accessed 9 July 2010).

²³⁹ 1850 U.S. census, National Archives microfilm publication M432.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

COMMENT:

Zilpha has not been found in Newton or elsewhere. Ditto for her son John Cooksey and his family. Apparently, a portion of the 1850 census is missing.

CA. 1843-62

NEWTON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Family Bible.

James William Cooksey, son of Zilpha, married 11 May 1843 in Newton County and began keeping a family bible.²⁴⁰

Births, Column 3:

James W Cooksey was bornd November the 16 [18?] 1819

Elizabeth Cooksey was bornd August the 9 1823 [*nee Miller, wife of James William*]

Wattes Cooksey was bornd March the 24 1845 [*first son of James William & Elizabeth*]

Deaths, Column 1:

William Cooksey departed this life March the 28, 1828 [*should be 1829*]²⁴¹

Elizabeth Cooksey died May the 3 1857 [*nee Miller; first wife of James William Cooksey*]

Judy Lizbeth Cooksey died August the 12 ad 1857 [*daughter of James William & Elizabeth*]

Zilphia Cooksey died June the 24 1857

Deaths, Column 2, 6th entry:

Watts Cooksey died this the 12th of July AD 1862 [*son of James W.*]

COMMENTS:

Current researchers who rely on the writings of the late J. L. Cooksey of Austin (died 2003), assert that James William was the son of Zilpha by "John C. Cooksey." If so, then James William exhibited an immensely peculiar behavior in the creation of his family Bible record. Consider these points:

- The first entry in the Bible is the death of William Cooksey.
- James William also recorded the deaths of his presumed mother Zilpha, the deaths of his first-wife's parents, the deaths of other more-distant family members (Miles Barfoot and James and Huldah Raiborn, whose exact kinship is not yet proved), *but he did not record, at all, the death of his reputed father, "John C. Cooksey."* Nor is the name John represented among the sons of James William.
- A year after James William's birth, Zilpha bore one last child, Elizabeth Cooksey, later the wife of Shadrack Odom. Elizabeth's death certificate identifies her as the child of "*William Cooksey and Jilphy Price.*" ("Mrs. Elizabeth Odam," death certificate (1917), state file no. 24406, Mississippi State Bureau of Vital Statistics, Jackson.) This stated

²⁴⁰ James W. Cooksey Bible pages, image copies supplied August 2008 by Kelly Parks (2112 Hawkins Road, Pattison, MS 39144), to whom J. L. Cooksey, apparent owner of the Bible (location unknown) supplied a copy after 1996.

²⁴¹ James W. was only nine years old when William died. When James W. married and began his Bible record, nearly a quarter-century later, he obviously 'misremembered' the year of William's death. Given that William drafted his petition for a pension on *8 September 1828*, and pursued it at least through early 1829, he could hardly have died on 28 March 1828.

William Cooksey II (ca. 1745–1829)

Wife 1: Unknown

Wife 2: Zilpha (Watts) Price

- paternity is compatible with a tradition that Zilpha, after John's death, "lived with" his father William.
- A three-year gap exists between James William's birth (November 1819) and the sibling who is immediately older than him (1816)—a break that suggests a change in Zilpha's marital situation.
 - The last known record of John Cooksey in Georgia is dated April 1818.

All points considered, there is justification to question whether James William's father was actually William, rather than John, as alleged.

SHARING POLICY

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Elizabeth Shown Mills, "William Cooksey (ca. 1745–1829): A Working File Updated 24 February 2014," p. ____.

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