

Letter from Anitra Fay on Linked In

Feb 13, 2019

Re: Williams Genealogy

Dear Ms. Austin,

Thank you, thank you, thank you for your book *The Georgia Frontier*, Vol. III. The work you put into the volume is remarkable. I wonder how many people understand the work involved. I appreciate the quantity of research in so many counties/parishes; the incredible work of cataloging the data in a way you could retrieve it; organization of the data appropriately by person and family line; and amazingly effective communication of your findings. Your book has been a huge find for me.

My maiden name is Williams. My Williams line became disconnected from ancestors following the Civil War when my great-grandfather William Silas Walker Williams left Tennessee for Arkansas as a young man, following his marriage in Mississippi. Silas and many of his descendants remained in Arkansas, which is where I live now, for a couple of generations. Silas had a younger brother named Leonard who remained in Tennessee. We did not know the area of Tennessee or names of Silas' parents.

A few years ago my brother took a Y-DNA test at Family Tree DNA. He has taken the Y-111 and the Big Y 500, in addition to Family Finder (autosomal testing). I took over the Williams research about two years ago, since my dad passed away and my mother decided it was time to pass the research torch. They were very good researchers, with success on several lines, but the Williams had always been a brick wall.

The short story is that because there are so many more records now available digitally online, I feel like we have had a breakthrough. I used primarily census records, wills, and probated estate papers to find the line I believe is ours. James L. Williams, born in NC, was married to Elizabeth (surname unknown). The couple had several children, including sons named Silas and Leonard. Lived in west Tennessee and were in the 1850 and 1860 census as a family. James' father appears to have been Jefferson Thomas Williams of Northampton County, NC who married Nancy Daughtry, also of Northampton County, and moved to Fayette County, TN by 1840. Their plantation was on the far western edge of Fayette County, just over the line from Shelby County. I was able to trace Jefferson Thomas (J. T.) to his father Capt. Thomas Williams who died in Northampton County abt 1817. Jefferson Thomas' brother Samuel Curle Williams also had moved to Western Tennessee, to Shelby County, but died leaving minor children, of whom Samuel's nephew James L. Williams was named guardian and his brother Jefferson Thomas

Williams was named administrator of the will. Jefferson Thomas Williams stipulated in 1869 that his son James had died, then J. T. died in 1870. He named in his will two nephews with the last name of Drake of Warren County, NC... a quick search found that they were sons of Rebecca M. Williams born in Northampton Co, NC, a sister of J. T. I was on my way to understanding who J. T.'s father was, trying to be sure to not confuse the Thomas Williams of the regions of Northampton/Bertie/Chowan NC and Southampton County, VA. when a Google search led me to your book!

So, Jefferson Thomas Williams is on in your book, page 342, confirming some of the pieces of his lineage I was finding... Thomas < Nathan < Thomas < John of Isle of Wight and Anne Whitley (p. 338).

I am still trying to confirm definitively that this is my line. One way is through traditional research to find more pieces that verify the James L. Williams (1830-after 1860) as the father of my great-grandfather AND is THE James Williams who was the son of Jefferson Thomas Williams, and record destruction and Civil War interruption are proving an obstacle. A second way is to find DNA evidence on each end of the timeline. I am searching for 4th to 6th (range) cousins who share James and Elizabeth as ancestors. I have found 2nd and 3rd cousins, including offspring of Leonard, but not beyond that I can identify. I also fervently am researching the distant lineage to understand how my brother, who did the Y-DNA testing, is related to our closest Y-DNA cousins. We appear to have a common Williams ancestor who lived about the same era as John Williams of Isle of Wight, or perhaps John's father or grandfather. We are all grouped in the Williams Surname Project in Williams Group 8. Many of the Williams Group 8 members have traced their lineage to Isle of Wight County, VA, and Northampton County, which also is a bit of confirmation that this is my family.

In your research, did you come across any evidence regarding the church affiliation of John Williams and Anne Whitley of Isle of Wight, Virginia? I thought that knowledge might be helpful to me in my further search of the many John Williams of Isle of Wight in the era.

Thank you so much!

Kind regards,  
Anitra S. Fay, Ph.D.  
anitra.fay.phd@gmail.com  
11347 Honeysuckle Road  
Ozark, AR 72949  
479-209-1924

TUESDAY

Jeannette Austin sent the following message at 11:49 AM

[View Jeannette's profile](#)

Jeannette Austin

Jeannette Austin 11:49 AM

I have not worked on this line for about twenty years! Good luck!

Jeannette

Anitra Fay sent the following message at 4:34 PM

[View Anitra's profile](#)

Anitra Fay

Anitra Fay 4:34 PM

Thank you! If you know or run across any Williams direct-line males from Isle of Wight, Southampton, VA; or Northampton, NC ancestry, please encourage them to take the Y-DNA, join the Williams surname group, and enable sharing, including for group administrators. Thanks!

Anitra