

The Thomas Wayman Family, Pioneers on Middle Grave Creek and Waymans Ridge, West Virginia

Compiled and contributed by Linda Sulek December 5, 2017

The names of the earliest settlers of the Moundsville, West Virginia area are well known and documented; Tomlinson, Wetzel, Chapline, Woods, Zane, Purdy, Beeler, Cockayne and scores of others. Make an inquiry into their lives and you can find the accounts of their pioneer struggles. Perhaps a lesser known and somewhat later arrival was my 4th great grandfather Thomas Wayman, a settler along Middle Grave Creek who left his name on the landmark, Waymans Ridge.

Thomas Wayman (Jr) was born around 1763 in Anne Arundel County, Maryland and is known to be a great grandson of “planter” Leonard and wife Dorcas Abbot Wayman. Records document perhaps 4 different Thomas Waymans in Maryland and neighboring North Carolina during the early to mid-1700s. The naming practices of these Quakers left nothing helpful for us family historians now struggling with their redundant first names: Leonard, Edmund, John, Thomas, Hezekiah and William. In addition, no document or record to date has been produced proving the surname of his “beloved wife Sarah”.

The first mention of Thomas in Ohio County, Virginia is in 1800 where he appears on page 301 of the book “History of the Panhandle, West Virginia” by Newton, Nichols and Sprankle. Here he is a member of Reverend Joseph Doddridge’s early Episcopal congregation of West Liberty, (West) Virginia, once the county seat of Ohio County. When the county seat was moved to Wheeling a constant flow of residents moved with it including Thomas, Sarah, and their 7 children at the time.

Thomas Wayman made out his will January 6, 1826, naming five sons: Leonard, Zachariah, Samuel, John and William (my 3rd great grandfather) and his four daughters, all married by early 1825: Dorcas Welling, Mary Hughes, Harriet Smith and Mahala Bane. Later census records confirm Harriet and Mahala were born in Virginia 1800 and 1804 respectively. This narrows the probable year of the Wayman family in Ohio County, Virginia to approximately 1796-1800.

The first land deed recorded for Thomas is dated February 3rd, 1806, a triangle shaped 50-acre parcel on “the waters of (Middle) Grave Creek”. This had been part of a 4,070- acre land grant acquired by patent by Robert Woods, dated May 17, 1797. After plotting the metes and bounds description and taking into consideration early maps, census records and topography, this property’s western point begins at the junction of Middle Grave Creek and Tom’s Run, extending eastward between Tom’s Run and a small “hollow” near the far western segment of Campbell Hill Road. The first line of its legal description begins on the Ridge “at a walnut at the head of a hollow”. A second land deed dated August 21, 1809 begins at the very same hollow and partially adjoined the first property. This 100-acre tract was purchased from David Springer and included in the legal description is a “corner at a stake on Biddle’s line”. Later census records show a Biddle and a related Pierce family residing on the west bank of Middle Grave Creek so the placement of the Wayman properties can be estimated with a fair degree of accuracy. This 1809 property encompassed most of the hilltop of Wayman’s Ridge accessed by Campbell Hill Road west of and up to the old Francis Campbell property. A release deed March 1, 1813 acknowledges the full payment by Thomas to Robert Woods for these 150 acres. The following year Thomas split his 100-acre tract in half, selling the western portion to his son Zachariah in May of 1814 about two years after Zachariah’s marriage to Phebe Parshall. The remaining eastern 50-acre portion is identified in his will as being his residence, and mentions that his orchard was part of that property. He left these 50

acres to his widow Sarah, and upon her death directed it go to his son William. The original 1806 50-acre property was left to eldest son Leonard.

Thomas Wayman is found listed 1810 Federal census in "Elizabeth" (town), now Moundsville. As landowners, Thomas and Zachariah were taxed annually. In the 1815 the record states their residences were "18 miles south" (of the original Ohio County courthouse). This again corresponds to the junction of Middle Grave Creek and Toms Run. The last Federal census Thomas appears in is 1820, and in 1830 his widow Sarah is listed next to her son Zachariah. Although the date of the 1830 census was June 1, 1830, the census takers were to count everyone in the household as of the first Monday of August, 1830. The actual date was August 2 so it is reasonable to believe Sarah died sometime after that date.

There are at least 3 other transactions between the Waymans and other property owners on the Ridge. The Waymans apparently sold the western parcels on Wayman's Ridge and moved about one-mile east on the Ridge. Perhaps the terrain was less severe there and offered more grazing for a growing herd of sheep or cattle. The last property purchased was for 47 acres from W.H. Oldham and included a stake in Tom's Run and mentions this parcel adjoined Silas Price's property at the fork of Campbell Hill and Wayman Ridge Roads. The deed was concluded January 8, 1853 with a final payment of \$122.50 made by William's widow Amy. It is likely that William Wayman's residence and barn were on the east side of the hill at that fork.

For the next ten years, brothers Jesse and William Spencer Wayman and their Uncle Leonard farmed continually on Wayman's Ridge through the first years of the Civil War and up until 1863. Whether because of circumstances due to the war or the skyrocketing taxes on the land, the family made a decision to sell their farm and move near Amy's relatives in Illinois. Amy's daughter Elizabeth died of tuberculosis December 18th, 1863. Two months later the entire farm was advertised for sale in the Wheeling Intelligencer newspaper; "200 acres, 140 cleared; well-watered, with two residences and stables". The Wayman farm sold to Elzy and David Lutes on October 25th, 1864 after which time the Waymans left the Ridge, eventually settling in LaSalle County, Illinois.

My Wayman line continues from Thomas to his son William who was born in Maryland on December 29, 1795. He married Amy Bane on November 24, 1825. She was born September 21, 1802 in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, the daughter of Jesse Bane and Nancy Beeler Amy was a granddaughter of Col George Beeler of Fort Beeler fame. William died April 11, 1851 on Waymans Ridge. The location of his grave is unknown, but perhaps he, his parents and other Wayman family members rest in a secluded family plot on the Ridge or were interred in one of the cemeteries in town. No Waymans are buried in the cemetery of the Wayman Ridge Methodist Church.

Of William's children: firstborn Jesse married Martha Standiford in Ohio County, Virginia and after a farming in Ohio County, moved his family to Illinois, permanently settling at Long Point, near Dana, LaSalle County. He died in 1887 and is buried in Cornell, Illinois. Several of his living descendants still bear the Wayman name.

Ephraim Cromwell Wayman, my 2nd great grandfather, was born April 9, 1836. He must have said no to farming and yes to disciple making for he became a Methodist Minister, laboring in those days "with great zeal". According to the Wheeling Intelligencer, he orchestrated exuberant days-long outdoor revivals in the Moundsville area and held various appointments to churches in the region before being sent to more distant locations in West Virginia and beyond. Miss Abigail Fuller of Athens, Ohio caught his eye and became his wife on October 8th, 1861, six days after Ephraim enlisting with the 75th Ohio Volunteers. Ephraim served until March 24, 1862 at which time he

resigned his commission and went directly back to the pulpit in Wheeling. The archived Wheeling Intelligencer newspaper notes Ephraim Wayman was the minister who led opening prayers for the new State of West Virginia's legislative sessions in June and July of 1863. Ephraim moved his family to Illinois in 1874 and spent the remainder of his life preaching in the general region of north central Illinois never far from his mother and siblings. He died May 10th, 1894 and is buried in Ransom, Illinois. It was through a 1970 conversation with his daughter Abbie that my passion in her family and all things "Wayman and West Virginia" was born.

Manasseh Wayman, Ephraim's fraternal twin, also became a Methodist minister. Accepted into the Methodist Iowa Conference in the fall of 1858, he was soon ordained a deacon and served the Toolsborough Circuit there. He married Olive Maynard on August 19, 1861. Manasseh accepted the position as Chaplain with the 3rd Iowa Calvary in December of 1863. Unfortunately, he became seriously ill with dysentery while with Union troops in Memphis, Tennessee. While in critical condition he was rushed back home on furlough arriving to Mt Pleasant nearly unconscious and not recognizing his wife or year-old daughter. He died two days later on July 2, 1864. Tragically, his newborn son William was just two days old.

Melissa Wayman, born around 1842, never married and died at age 25. She rests in the Rutland Cemetery, Marshall County, Illinois.

Mary Wayman made the move to Illinois with her family, married first to a man named Lowry and secondly to a John Walker. She died around 1910 in Illinois.

The record for daughter Nancy is void of any information except her entry with the family in the 1850 Marshall County, West Virginia census.

William Spencer Wayman was born March 4, 1844. After moving to Illinois, he occasionally served as county assessor and farmed the 80 acres he purchased in 1867. His residence and farm were situated on Rt 2, about two miles west of Dana, Illinois. By 1884 he moved his family to Blue Rapids, Kansas and started his own cattle ranching business. His sister Emily Wayman was born August 7th, 1829 on Waymans Ridge as were all her siblings. She went west with her brother to Kansas and died near Blue Rapids in 1890, having never been married. William Spencer Wayman, wife Henrietta Ward and their 3 surviving daughters would move again to Emmett, Idaho in 1909. There he established a larger cattle operation and died on his ranch May 11, 1920.

Amy Wayman, the matriarch of the family and widow of William Wayman, died March 3, 1875. Her last known residence was at the home of her son Jesse near Dana, Illinois in LaSalle County. She was 73 years old and had been a member of the Methodist Church for over 50 years.

Leonard Wayman, died June 23rd, of 1875, no doubt while living with his nephew Jesse. He was 86 years old and is buried along with sister in law Amy, niece Melissa and two of William Spencer Wayman's young children in Rutland Cemetery, Marshall County, a few miles west of Dana, Illinois.

Thus, here ends the historical summary of a simple and ordinary pioneer of yesterday. For his part Ol' Tom worked that land on the Ridge for only a short time yet over 200 years later his name remains upon the place he called home. It still remains one of the most beautiful and special places on Earth.