

RESEARCH JOURNAL
of
WILLIAM and MARGARET BROWN
FAMILY HISTORY¹

Covering their ancestors, siblings, children and descendants²

Summer 2001, Vol. 2, No. 3
September 30, 2001

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Editor and Publisher

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1. **Thank You to our Contributor:** A special thanks to O. James Klein for contributing his research report on Thomas Stillwell.
2. **Your Research Projects:** We would like to share what research projects any one is doing on William and Margaret BROWN and their related lines, and maintain this information in this Journal and in the **Brown Library/Center** on the Internet at <http://www.brownhistory.org>. See Family Research Projects below. You, or any one you know, are invited to submit what research projects you are working on including how to contact you, so that we can better organize ourselves on research, and know how to contact each other. Please send your information to journaleditor@brownhistory.org. Thank you.

¹ Published quarterly: March 31; June 30; September 30; December 31. Free subscriptions are available on the Internet. Mailed subscriptions are available at \$5.00 per issue, prepaid. Send all inquiries, Internet subscription requests, information, articles and manuscripts according to Journal Policies to O. James Brown Klein, Editor and Publisher, at journaleditor@brownhistory.org . Sponsored by the **Klein Storrs Family Association**, O. James Brown Klein, President. Affiliated with the **William and Margaret Brown Family History Library and Center** on the Internet at <http://www.brownhistory.org> .

² William and Margaret BROWN lived in Rowan County, North Carolina in the mid-1700s, with most, if not all of their 9 children. William was of English and perhaps Scottish descent, and Margaret might be of Portuguese descent. We do not yet know who are their ancestors or siblings, and we only have verified who are their children, and some of their descendants through one of their children, James BROWN. Any one having *any* oral or written *clues* or evidence that verifies, clarifies or even *mentions* the *origins* of William and Margaret are requested to provide such information immediately to the journaleditor@brownhistory.org . Thank you.

³ O. James Brown Klein (Jim Klein) is a direct descendant of William and Margaret BROWN. They are his maternal third great grand father and grand mother. Jim is an attorney and business man living in Mesa, Arizona.

3. Thomas STILLWELL of Rowan County, North Carolina: Born ? ; Died 1773/1774.

**Thomas STILLWELL of Rowan County, North Carolina
Born: ? ; Died 1773/1774**

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Introduction

This research report explores facts gathered on Thomas STILLWELL who made his Will in Rowan County, North Carolina, on 6 July 1773⁴, which Will was probated in Rowan County 2 August 1774⁵. Thomas could have died any time after 6 July 1773, and before 2 August 1774. It is unknown when and where Thomas was born.

This Thomas STILLWELL (Senior) is the father of Thomas STILLWELL (Junior) who married Margaret “Peggy” BROWN, daughter of William and Margaret BROWN of Rowan County. Thomas STILLWELL (Junior) and Margaret “Peggy” BROWN are the parents of Thomas STILLWELL (III) who died in Johnston County, N.C., in December 1819, and whose estate is the subject of the Thomas STILLWELL (III) Estate Papers of Randolph County, N.C.⁶ It is in Thomas STILLWELL (III)’s Estate Papers that the clear links between the BROWN and STILLWELL families are identified.

It is hoped this article will shed further light on the origins of both the STILLWELL and BROWN families. Since some of this information is taken from abstracts, finding and analyzing the original documents is important to add clarifying facts.

Background: Chronological Facts of Thomas Stillwell

1761 is the year in which the first record appears of Thomas Stillwell (Senior) in Rowan County. That year he appears on a List in the court minutes abstract on 24 July 1761 where, along with others, he is mentioned as a “Constable to Summon Taxables to Give in Their Taxes” for

⁴ Salt Lake City Family History Library, Film #0019727, Rowan County, N.C., Wills 1743 – 1868, Vol. 21 SMI – STI.

⁵ Abstracts of The Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions Rowan County, North Carolina 1763 – 1774, Vol. II, by Jo White Linn (1979), p. 156. (Hereinafter: Rowan PQS Court Minute Abstracts 1763 – 1774).

⁶ North Carolina State Archives: Randolph County Estate Records; Series: Steel – Stout; Box: C.R. 081.508.134; Folder: STILLWELL, Thomas – 1819.

“District 2. (of) Captain Nation” where “Christopher Nation” was the appointed “Justice to Receive the Taxable Persons”.⁷

Footnote 1 on this List states that on “15 July 1757 Christopher Nation and his wife ... sold to Benjamin Cox ... 216 acres *on Polecat Creek* ... granted Nation by Granville 11 May 1757 (*italics added*).... Christopher Nation was a Captain in the Rowan County Colonial Militia and John Nation a Lieutenant.... John Nation was appointed Constable on 25 Sept. 1741 in Orange County, Virginia.”⁸

The next document found is the “1761 List of Tithables Taken by Me, Thos. Stilwell, Constable for the Year 1761”. This is very likely Thomas Stillwell’s Taxable List mentioned above because it is for the same year and lists on page 50, “Christopher Nation”, and on page 57 a “[torn (unknown)] Nation, & sons Jno. and Joseph [torn]”.⁹ The annotation about this List on page 57 reads: “The original tax list, available at the North Carolina State Archives, is important because it *covers an area of Rowan that became Guilford County in 1771, part of which became Randolph County in 1779*. There are no extant tax lists for Guilford County prior to 1815, and the first ten years of the Guilford County minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions were burned during the Revolutionary War (*italics added*).” On page 50, where the list is continued, the annotation on the List is: “*Southern Guilford & northern Randolph County area*” (*italics added*).¹⁰

Thomas’ 1761 Tax List appears to be only a partial list since he does not name himself. He does, however, name a “JNO. STILWELL”.

This John Stillwell appears later on the “1768 Rowan County Tax List of Wm Millikan”.¹¹ Thomas Stillwell, however, does not appear on the Millikan Tax List. Nevertheless, it is very important to note that a number of other probable relatives and friends of Thomas Stillwell do appear on the Millikan Tax List. See the discussion appearing below under **Analysis – Families – Friends**. John Stillwell appears on two earlier lists. First, he is on the 1759 Tax List of Rowan County.¹² Second, he is listed as a private on a 25 May 1759 Rowan County Militia List, which List shows Morgan Bryan, Captain, and Benjamin Merrell, Sargent, which militia men went to fight Indians.¹³

On 22 January 1762, the court ordered that “Joseph Osburn be Appointed Constable in the Room of Thomas Stillwell *for Polecat District* for the Ensuing Year (*italics added*).”¹⁴

On 9 January 1765, along with others, Thomas Stillwell is appointed a “Constable for 1765” in Rowan County “in Room of Saml Osborn”.¹⁵ This appears to be for the same *Polecat District*.

⁷ Abstracts of The Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions Rowan County, North Carolina 1753 – 1762, by Jo White Linn (1977), p. 133. (Hereinafter: Rowan PQS Court Minute Abstracts 1753 – 1762).

⁸ Rowan County, North Carolina Tax Lists 1757 – 1800, Annotated Transcriptions, by Jo White Linn, (1995), p. 58, note 1. (Hereinafter: Rowan Tax Lists 1757 – 1800).

⁹ Rowan Tax Lists, pp. 57 - 58, and 50. See also p. 96.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 93 – 97, at p. 96.

¹² Abstracts of Wills and Estate Records of Rowan County, North Carolina 1753 – 1805 and Tax Lists of 1759 and 1778, by Jo White Linn (1979), p. 117. (Hereinafter: Rowan Wills and Tax Lists Abstracts 1753 – 1805).

¹³ Rowan Tax Lists 1757 – 1800, p. 13.

¹⁴ Rowan PQS Court Minute Abstracts 1753 – 1762, p. 142.

¹⁵ Rowan PQS Court Minute Abstracts 1763 – 1774, p. 35.

Then on March 18, 1765, a publication appears in the court minutes abstract, which states: “To all to Whom these Presence may Cons Know ye that I Thomas Stillwell, Do Acknowledge my Self Wrong for Apersing Joseph Nation in so Publick a manner,” with the names of 6 witnesses given thereafter.¹⁶ “Aspersing”, according to Black’s Law Dictionary, may mean from: “criticism or censure” to “calumnious report”.¹⁷ On 11 July 1765, Abraham Hasket is appointed Constable in room of Thomas Stillwell *in Mr. Nation’s District (italics added)*.¹⁸ Note that this does not say *Polecat District*. It is uncertain whether Thomas was completely, or partially, replaced in doing his Constable duties, since we do not know whether Mr. Nation’s District is the entire Polecat District area to which Thomas was appointed a Constable. The next brief abstract entry, for 10 October 1765, shows a lawsuit of Thomas Stillwell vs. Gilbert Gibson, Case 7.7.0 pounds.¹⁹

On 16 January 1768, Thomas Stillwell, along with others, is again appointed a Constable in Rowan County “for John Anderson”.²⁰ On 19 July 1768, Thomas Stillwell is one of two “Securities” appearing for “Robert Walker to have License to Keep an Ordinary at his home in Rowan”.²¹

On 14 January 1769, Thomas Stillwell records his “mark” for “Hoggs & Cattle & c”.²² The next day, 15 January 1769, this entry is made: The King vs John Alexander. Recognizance. George Alexr & Thos Stillwell go on his bail for 500 pounds.”²³ On 15 November 1769, Thomas Stillwell is one of two “Securities” appearing as “Jacob Byars gets license to keep Ordinary in his home”.²⁴

On 6 July 1773, Thomas has his Will made and signs it, which Will shows, among other things, that he owned lands on the east and west sides of the Uwharrie River.²⁵ The Uwharrie River runs close to, and parallel with, the Rowan/Randolph County line.

And finally, on 2 August 1774, the “Will of Thomas Stillwell prvd by Wm Draper. Margaret Stillwell & John Linford [Ledford] qualify.”²⁶

Thomas and Margaret Stillwell are the only Stillwell’s mentioned in the abstracts of the Rowan County of the minutes for the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for either 1753 – 1762, or 1763 – 1774. John, Thomas, and David Stillwell are named in the Rowan County tax lists of 1757 – 1800.

Summary: Some important genealogical and historical facts from the above entries:

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁷ Black’s Law Dictionary, Revised Fourth Edition, (1968), p. 147.

¹⁸ Rowan PQS Court Minute Abstracts 1763 – 1774, p. 44.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

²⁵ Salt Lake City Family History Library, Film #0019727, Rowan County, N.C., Wills 1743 – 1868, Vol. 21 SMI – STI.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

- Thomas Stillwell (Senior) is found east of the Yadkin River, in eastern Rowan County, being appointed as a Constable of the Polecat District area in 1761. He must have lived in Rowan County earlier than 1761 to be known and trusted to be appointed a Constable.
- He was a Constable for at least three years: 1761, 1765 and 1768. He served as Constable for the Polecat District area during 1761 and 1765. He may also have served there for 1768, unless he moved to his land on the west side of the Uwharrie River before 1768. Polecat District would today include the southern Guilford County and northern Randolph County area.
- Thomas made his Will in Rowan County on 6 July 1773, and died sometime before 2 August 1774.
- At the time his Will was made, 1773, Thomas owned lands on the east and west sides of the Uwharrie River, which runs close to, and parallel with, the Rowan/Randolph County line.
- John Stillwell, was also in the same area as Thomas in eastern Rowan County, being identified there in 1759, and he was likely there earlier. He was probably related to Thomas, and might have been his brother. He and Thomas are the only 2 male Stillwell's reported in Rowan County during the 1759 – 1770.
- See the Note under **Analysis – Families** below about John Stillwell.

Background: Thomas Stillwell Will of 1773

As noted at the beginning, Thomas Stillwell made his Will in Rowan County, North Carolina, on July 6, 1773.²⁷ His Will was probated in Rowan County on August 2, 1774²⁸.

When did Thomas die? It is not known. In reality, he could have died any time after July 6, 1773, but before August 2, 1774. Some additional information that usually might be helpful in narrowing this time period may not be so here. Nevertheless, it is presented for consideration by the reader.

First, at the time his Will was written, 1773, Thomas owned lands on both the west and east sides of the Uwharrie River, which river is east of the Yadkin River. The Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions in Rowan County usually met in at the county seat, Salisbury, west of the Yakin River, on three of the four quarters of the year. The other quarter, it met in Lexington, east of the Yadkin River, as a matter of convenience to those living east of the Yadkin.²⁹ Second, however, the Act establishing these courts expired after the February 1773 court session, and was not renewed until 21 March 1774. There were no courts held during this period.³⁰ The first Rowan court met in May 1774. The next court met in August 1774 where Margaret Stillwell appears to prove the Will. Therefore, Thomas might have died any time between 6 July 1773, and 2 August 1774, if we assume that the May 1774 court was held in Salisbury and Margaret Stillwell did not attend it if he died before that date.

²⁷ Salt Lake City Family History Library, Film #0019727, Rowan County, N.C., Wills 1743 – 1868, Vol. 21 SMI – STI.

²⁸ Rowan PQS Court Minute Abstracts 1763 – 1774, p. 156.

²⁹ Interview with Jo White Lynn, 1 May 2000, Salisbury, N.C.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

The Original Thomas Stillwell Will of 1773³¹

“In the Name of god amen.

“I thomas Stillwell being in perfect mind and memory Do heareby make this my Last Will and testement I Desier that I may be Bured in a Christain maner and that my feuneral Charges Do not exeed Sixty pound

“first I do give and beqaiath unto my beloved wife margreat all my House hold goods and the Choice of one Hores and one Cow and the youce of the Land on the West Side of Uewwary Deuring her widow hood until my Son David Stillwell Comes to the age of twenty one years then the Saide David Stillwell is to have the half of the Saide Land if margrat Stillwell Should marry again then the Saide David Stillwell is to have all the Saide land on the west Side of Uewary in his one posestion and the Saide Stillwell is to have a young bay mare

“I do give and beqaiath unto my Son thomas Stillwell Jr[?] all that grant[?]of my Land Ling on the East Side of Uewwary and one black mare[,] and all the Rest of my moveable Estat to be Exposed to Sail and after all my Debts be payd[,] then the Remainder to be put out upon Interist until my Son David Comes of age and the Saide Land on the East Side of Uewwary to be Rented out until my Son thomas Comes of age and the mony put out to yuse until David Comes of age and I Desier that no Shariff may not have any Consasin[?] with it but my Executors may have the Desposial of it at thare own will[,] and after David Comes of age then the Remainder of my Estate to be Equally Divided between my wife[,] Elizabeth giles[,] mary Iseacs[,] Jemimah Jackson[,] phebe Sluder[,] thomas Stillwell and David Stillwell

“my will is that my wife margrat Stillwell and John Ledford Sr [or Sed] be my whole and So Executors and I do acknowlidg this to be my Last Will and testement

“whare unto I Set my hand and Seal this Day and yeare above menten July the Six one thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy three”

“Witness present

William Drapar Seal

Henry Ledford Seal

his X mark

Thomas Stilwell Seal”

Summary: Some Important genealogical and historical facts from the Thomas Stillwell Will are:

- His wife is Margaret (Margreat, or Margrat). We do not know her maiden name.
- Margaret was to have the land west of the Uwharrie (Uewwarry) River to live on, which land was probably 1) where their home was when Thomas died, and 2) was located in Rowan County. The land Thomas owned east of the Uwharrie River in 1773 would have been in Guilford County, which area became Randolph County in 1779. Since we know that Rowan/Guilford/Randolph County line was established in 1771, creating the eastern

³¹ Salt Lake City Family History Library, Film #0019727, Rowan County, N.C., Wills 1743 – 1868, Vol. 21 SMI – STI. There is an abstract of the Will, A:184 on pages 13 –14, of Rowan County North Carolina Will Abstracts, Vol. 1, 1753 – 1805, Abstracts of Books A – F, by Jo White Lynn, and indexed by Edith Montcalm Clark, published by Mrs. Stahle Linn, Jr. of Salisbury, N.C.

boundary of the Rowan County, and that Thomas' Will was proved in Rowan County in 1774, we can safely assume that Thomas' land on the west side of the Uwharrie River was located in Rowan County. Unfortunately, there are no extant deeds identifying the actual location of his lands to the "west" and "east" of the Uwharrie River.

- Thomas also owned land east of the Uwharrie River. It seems probable that Thomas used the Uwharrie River merely as an identifying point for his lands on the "west side of" and "east side of" it, rather than meaning that his two identified lands were directly adjacent to the River. He, his family and neighbors all knew where these lands were, so he did not have to be more specific than he was.
- His sons, David Stillwell and Thomas Stillwell (Junior), are under 21 years of age on 6 July 1773, which means that the eldest of the two could not have been born before July of 1752.
- David Stillwell may be the oldest because he is mentioned as being the first to reach 21 years.
- All of Thomas' four daughters were married as of 6 July 1773, so they were probably older than the two boys, David and Thomas (Junior).
- After disposing of his lands, Thomas gives the movables of his estate to his children in the likely order of their birth, except for David and Thomas (Junior):
 1. Elizabeth Giles
 2. Mary Isaacs
 3. Jemimah Jackson
 4. Phebe Sluder
 5. Thomas Stillwell
 6. David Stillwell

Note: While David is mentioned last, the author believes he was older than Thomas (Junior) because, as noted above, he is mentioned before Thomas (Junior) during the bequests of Thomas' lands.

- While he owned land, horses, cows and other "moveables", it does not appear that Thomas owned slaves.
- Thomas Stillwell (Senior) signed his name to the Will, although somewhat weakly. It is apparent from the other writing on the Will that he did not write it. He could write because he served a number of years as a Constable and wrote at least one tax list, all mentioned earlier.
- John Ledford (Sr.), his executor, and William Draper and Henry Ledford, his witness, were probably good friends and neighbors living some where near him.

Analysis

Locations:

"West Land". At his death in 1773/1774, Thomas Stillwell probably lived on his land west of the Uwharrie River, within the Rowan County line dividing Rowan from then Guilford County, created 1771, and subsequently Randolph County, created 1779. This is the land his wife retained to live on, and she proved his Will in Rowan County, at court session probably held in Lexington, 2 August 1774. This was the land also inherited by his son, David.

The Uwharrie River is east of the Rowan/Guilford/Randolph County line, and runs parallel to the line, north to south, ranging from about 1 to 5 miles from the county line, until it joins the Yadkin River.

The location of Thomas' "west land" in then Rowan County is confirmed by a number of subsequent references to Thomas' son David, who inherited the "west land". David Stillwell appears on the Rowan County tax lists in 1784, with 260 acres, and in 1794, with 650 acres, and on the 1790 U.S. Census for Rowan County.³² In 1822, the area where David lived became southern Davidson County.

"East Land". As mentioned above, Thomas' land on the "east side of the Uwharrie River" was located in what was then, 1773, Guilford County, and subsequently in, Randolph County, 1779. Earlier in his life, Thomas may have lived on this "east land", which he may have settled, purchased, or received as his inheritance. This was the land also inherited by his son, Thomas (Junior), who married Margaret "Peggy" BROWN.

This "east land" is closer to Polecat Creek. In 1761 and 1765, Thomas was the Constable for Polecat District, which included land owned by others on Polecat Creek. He may also have been Constable for this area in 1768.

Polecat Creek flows into Deep River, less than 4 miles east of CROSS ROADS, so named because it was the junction where four major colonial roads crossed: 1) the Indian Trading Path, an old Indian path which connected Virginia to the Carolinas; 2) the Salem to Fayetteville Road; 3) the Salem to Cross Creek Road; and 4) the Moore Road, connecting Anson to Guilford.³³

CROSS ROADS later became known as JOHNSTONVILLE, where the first court house for Randolph County was located from 1788 – 1793. From 1793 on, it became known as BROWN'S CROSSROADS.

The Uwharrie River is only 7 miles due west of CROSS ROADS, and it is 12 miles if you follow the Indian Trading Path. According to Hughes' Map of Randolph County, at some time, there were also at number of Indian villages along the Indian Trading Path between the CROSS ROADS and Painted Springs where the Path crossed the Rowan/Guilford/Randolph County line.³⁴ Painted Springs was an important Indian camp site along the Indian Trading Path, and a landmark for the Rowan/Guilford/Randolph County line.³⁵

We conclude that Thomas' "west land" and "east land" were very likely within 10 to 20 miles of each other. They must have been both of value and readily accessible to one another using the Indian Trading Path, or he would not have kept them.

The Indian Trading Path deserves much more attention in our future studies. It is also known as the East West Trading Path. Native American Indians used this path and lived near it many years before the white men came. It ran from the Carolinas into Virginia. In the

³² See Rowan Tax Lists 1757 – 1800, p. 236 (1784 List); *Ibid.*, p. 326 (1794 List).

³³ See Fred Hughes Map of Randolph County North Carolina, Historical Document No. II, The Custom House, Jamestown, N.C..

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ See G. P. Stout Historical Research Map of Randolph County, N.C. 1982, Map Index, pp. 2 and 7, Carolina Maps by Mail, Charlotte, N.C.

Rowan/Randolph County area, the Indian Trading Path ran from the northeast corner of Randolph County, through the CROSS ROADS, to Painted Springs, passing on near Jersey Baptist Church, then to the Trading Ford at the Yadkin River, then through Salisbury, and on to the southeast. East of the Yadkin River, the Stillwell's and Brown's owned land in close proximity to the Indian Trading Path.

Stillwell and Brown Lands

Thomas Stillwell (Junior) married Margaret "Peggy" Brown, whose father was William Brown. During 1772 – 1774, William Brown died in eastern Rowan County in 1772³⁶, and Thomas Stillwell in the same area in 1773/1774. The Rowan County lands that they respectively owned and lived on (Thomas' "west land"), were located east of the Yakin River, some where between Abbotts Creek and the Rowan/Guilford/Randolph County line (Painted Springs landmark). The direct distance between Abbotts Creek and Painted Springs is about 10 miles.

More particularly, their lands were what is now the "southern Davidson County area". That is the area spoken of in the Tax Lists identifying both Thomas Stillwell (Senior) and his son, David Stillwell. Unfortunately, we do not yet have any deeds to identify clearly the Stillwell lands. The deeds of land owned by William's sons, James and William, and his son-in-law, Joseph Elliott, were also located in the now "southern Davidson County area". Their deeds are on, or near, Flat Swamp Creek and Lick Creek, which are about 5 miles east of the Rowan/Guilford/Randolph County line (Painted Springs).³⁷

So the Stillwell's and Brown's lived within miles of each other in what is now the "southern Davidson County area".

Families:

Important insight into the family of Thomas Stillwell has come from the 1819 Randolph County Estate Papers of his grandson, Thomas Stillwell (III).³⁸ These Estate Papers show a legal contest between relatives from 1819 to 1825 over the estate of Thomas (III), including land and a number of Negro slaves in Johnston County. The plaintiffs are the Stillwell/Browns, and the defendants are the executors of the Thomas Stillwell (III) estate.

A detailed analysis of these Estate Papers will be presented in future research reports.

The Estate Papers clearly identify the following relationships:³⁹

³⁶ Rowan PQS Court Minute Abstracts 1763 – 1774, p. 137.

³⁷ For some of the deeds, see the surname Index of Abstracts of Deed Book 11 – 14 of Rowan County North Carolina 1786 – 1797, by James W. Klutz (1996).

³⁸ North Carolina State Archives: Randolph County Estate Records; Series: Steel – Stout; Box: C.R. 081.508.134; Folder: STILLWELL, Thomas – 1819. (Hereinafter NCSA, Stillwell, C.R. 081.508.134).

³⁹ NCSA, Stillwell, C.R. 081.508.134. Documents: 1) January 1822 Goss/David Stillwell Bill of Complaint; 2) April 1823 Seth Wade Deposition Oath; 3) April Striked 1823 Wade Bill of Complaint; 4) May 1823 Wade Bill of Complaint (to PR); 5) October 1823 Defendants Answer; 6) October 1823 Seth Wade Letter; 7) Questions and Stillwell-Brown Families Names Sheet.

- Thomas Stillwell (Junior) married Margaret “Peggy” BROWN, and they had an only son, Thomas Stillwell (III).
- Thomas (Junior) apparently died some time during the period of the Revolutionary War, 1775 – 1783, because Margaret “Peggy” Brown Stillwell moved with their son Thomas (III), who was reported between 3 and 5 years old, to Johnston County, “several years” before the Revolutionary War ended.
- Thomas Stillwell (Junior)’s father was Thomas Stillwell (Senior).
- “The names of the Stillwell Family” were listed as:
 - John Stillwell
 - Thomas
 - David
 - Mary
 - Phebe
 - Elizabeth
 - Jemimah
 - Note: David was living in Gibson County, Indiana, during these court proceedings in the early 1820’s.
 - Note: Mary is also referred to as Polly.
 - Note: This John Stillwell appears to be the oldest son and child of Thomas. If so, why was he not named in Thomas’ Will? Perhaps, being the oldest, he had already received his inheritance. This John Stillwell is not named by the plaintiffs. He is named by the defendants as being a son of Thomas Stillwell (Senior). John Stillwell is mentioned by the attorney representing the plaintiffs, Stillwell/Brown relatives, with the attorney saying he had “never heard that John Stillwell had any heir until our last court”. John Stillwell, a single man, is found on the 1790 U.S Census for Rowan County, listed one person away from David Stillwell.⁴⁰

Thomas Stillwell (Junior)’s siblings more clearly identified were:

- David Stillwell
- Elizabeth Stillwell Giles, married to Richard Giles
- Jemimah Stillwell Jackson, married to Robert Jackson
- Mary Isaacs is mentioned.
- Phebe Sluder is mentioned.
- Margaret “Peggy” BROWN’s father is listed as “old William BROWN”.
- Margaret BROWN’s siblings were listed as the “Names of old William Brown children”:
 - Constant
 - Hannah
 - Margaret
 - Susannah
 - Elizabeth Hendrix
 - William
 - Jno. [or “And.”]
 - James

⁴⁰ 1790 U.S. Census for Rowan County, N.C., p. 172.

- All of these people are listed in William BROWN's Rowan County Will of 19 February 1772.⁴¹

Marriage of Thomas Stillwell (Junior) and Margaret "Peggy" Brown

It is important to discuss the marriage of Thomas Stillwell (Junior) and Margaret "Peggy" Brown. While no direct marriage documents (marriage bonds, license, family bible, etc.) have yet been found, other documents evidence their marriage.

First, the Thomas Stillwell (III) Estate Papers include a number of statements by the Stillwell/Brown plaintiffs that Thomas Stillwell (Junior) and Margaret "Peggy" Brown were married.⁴² The executor defendants, however, state that Thomas Stillwell (III) was an illegitimate child of Margaret "Peggy" Brown.⁴³ Nevertheless, it is persuasive that not only are the Stillwell/Brown plaintiffs consistently together on this point, but that even if Thomas (III) might have been born illegitimately, his father was Thomas Stillwell (Junior), and he and Margaret "Peggy" Brown could have been subsequently married. Also persuasive is that this case is eventually settled with payments for the Stillwell/Brown plaintiffs' claims.⁴⁴

Second, the LDS Nauvoo Temple records of 1842/1843 show that Brown descendants did vicarious baptismal work for Peggy (Margaret) Stillwell.⁴⁵ Peggy would not have been called a Stillwell if she were not one. LDS Logan Temple records in June 1891 also show that Brown descendants did vicarious baptismal and endowment work for both Margaret Brown and Thomas Stillwell, as well as other Brown family relatives.⁴⁶ This indicates their understanding that Thomas and Margaret were, in fact, married.

Thomas Stillwell (Junior) and Margaret "Peggy" Brown were likely married after Thomas (Seniors)' Will was made in July 1773 because Thomas (Junior) is identified as under 21. This conclusion is also consistent with what we learn about the age of their son, Thomas (III), from his Estate Papers.

An point of interest is that Margaret "Peggy" Brown Stillwell apparently married a Roberts after moving to Johnston County with her son, Thomas (III).⁴⁷

Friends, Associates and Extended Relatives:

The 1819 Thomas Stillwell (III) Estate Papers name a number of friends or associates, and extended relatives, of the Stillwell and/or Brown families who were suppose to be living at that

⁴¹ North Carolina State Archives: Rowan County Wills, 1743 – 1900; Box: C.R. 085.801.4; Folder: BROWN, William – 1772. (Hereinafter NCSA, Brown, C.R. . 085.801.4).

⁴² NCSA, Stillwell, C.R. 081.508.134. Documents: 1) January 1822 Goss/David Stillwell Bill of Complaint; 2) April Striked 1823 Wade Bill of Complaint; and 3) May 1823 Wade Bill of Complaint (to PR).

⁴³ *Ibid.* Document: October 1823 Defendants Answer.

⁴⁴ Kinfolks of Johnston County – Vol. II, Deed Book T-2, #142 and # 143, page 68.

⁴⁵ Salt Lake City Family History Library, Film #485753, Nauvoo Temple Baptisms for Dead, Book C, p. 337.

⁴⁶ Salt Lake City Family History Library, Film #0177852, Logan Temple Baptisms for Dead, Book M, pp. 108,

111. See also Moroni Brown's Notebook of the Logan Temple work at Film #928,328, Item 2, 1976.

⁴⁷ NCSA, Stillwell, C.R. 081.508.134. Document: October 1823 Defendants Answer.

time to be called as witnesses in the case. An April 1823 document⁴⁸ lists these potential witnesses as:

Potential Witness for the Stillwell/Brown Families:

- Nathan Elliott, of Randolph County Related to Joseph Elliott?, husband - Hannah Brown
- James Brown, of Davidson County (created 1822) Brother to Margaret “Peggy” Brown
- David Cox, of Davidson County Estate Witness
- Thomas Serrat [Sarrat], of Davidson County Estate Witness
- William Grist, of Davidson County Estate Witness
- John Reed, of Davidson County Estate Witness
- David Reed, of Davidson County Estate Witness

- Brittain Roberts and wife, Ailse, of Johnston County Related to the Roberts whom Margaret “Peggy” Brown married in Johnston County after her marriage to Thomas (Junior)?
- Benjamin Stevens and wife, Aley, of Johnston County Estate Witnesses
- Joseph Ingram and wife, Nancy, of Johnston County Estate Witnesses

The “1768 Tax List of Wm Millikan (now in southern Guilford and north Randolph Co. areas of old Rowan County)”⁴⁹ lists all of the following family and friends of the Stillwell’s/Brown’s:

Probable Stillwell Relatives:

- John Stillwell Thomas (Senior)’s eldest son?
- Richard Giles Husband of Elizabeth Stillwell
- Robert Jackson Husband of Jemimah Stillwell
- Henry Sluder & son Mark Relatives of Phebe Stillwell Sluder?
- Elijah Isaacs ... son Saml Relatives of Mary Stillwell Isaacs?

Probable Stillwell Friends (Witness of Thomas’ Will, and in Thomas (III) Estate Lawsuit):

- John Ledford ... son John Co-executor of Thomas (Senior)’s Will
- William Draper Witness of Thomas (Senior)’s Will
- Thomas Serrat Estate Witness
- John Grist ... son William Grist Estate Witness
- John Reed Estate Witness
- Thos Cox, Solomon Cox & John Cox Surname of Estate Witness
- Andrew Ingram, Wm Ingram, John Ingram Surname of Estate Witness
- Joseph Wade Relative of the Estate Wade attorneys?

Possible Brown Relatives:

- James Brown Brother of William Brown?
- John Brown Brother of William Brown?
- John Elliott Relative of Joseph Elliott?

⁴⁸ NCSA, Stillwell, C.R. 081.508.134. Document: April 1823 Seth Wade Deposition Oath.

⁴⁹ Rowan Tax Lists 1757 – 1800, pp. 93-97.

- Jacob Elliott ... son Jacob Relative of Joseph Elliott?
- 2 John Williams Father of Mary (Polly) Williams Emmerson?
- Wm Winn Relative of John Winn?

The “1778 Rowan County Tax List of John Ford (Area of Rowan County that became Davidson County)”⁵⁰ lists all of the following family and friends of the Brown’s:

Probable Brown Relatives:

- William Brown Father of Margaret “Peggy” Brown
- Joseph Ellit Husband of Hannah Brown
- Hugh Davis, 2 John Davis Relative of Diana Davis who married William Brown (Jr.)

Possible Brown Friends:

- John Reed Estate Witness?
- William Giles Surname of Estate Witness
- Moses Cox, Israel Cox Surname of Estate Witness

The 1790 U.S. Census for Rowan County⁵¹ shows that three of the Thomas Stillwell (Senior) family and four of the Stillwell/Brown witnesses were then living in Rowan County. They likely moved west into Rowan from the Guilford/Randolph County area in which they lived in 1768. These are:

Stillwell Family:

- David Stilwell, 1 adult white male, 3 white males under 16, and 6 white females
- John Stilwell, 1 adult white male
- Richard Giles (husband of Elizabeth Stillwell), 1 adult white male, 1 white male under 16, and 2 white females

Stillwell/Brown Witnesses:

- David Cox, 2 adult white male, 1 white males under 16, and 1 white females, and 1 slave
- William Grist, 3 adult white male, 2 white males under 16, and 6 white females
- John Reed, 1 adult white male, 2 white males under 16, and 3 white females
- Thomas Sarrat, 3 adult white male, 2 white males under 16, and 5 white females
- James Brown, 1 adult white male, 3 white males under 16, and 6 white females

Conclusions

We do not yet know when Thomas Stillwell (Senior) came to eastern Rowan County, nor when and where he was born. We do know he was there some time before 1761 when he was serving as a Constable for the Polecat Creek – Cross Roads area. This area was within 15 miles of the subsequent Rowan/Guilford/Randolph County line, which line had Painted Springs on the Indian Trading Path as one of its landmarks.

⁵⁰ Rowan Tax Lists 1757 – 1800, pp. 76-78.

⁵¹ 1790 U.S. Census for Rowan County, N.C., pp. 172, 177.

Thomas was married to Margaret _____ Stillwell. They had four daughters and at least two sons, and possible a third: Elizabeth Stillwell Giles, Mary (Polly) Stillwell Isaacs, Jemimah Stillwell Jackson, Phebe Stillwell Sluder, David Stillwell, and Thomas Stillwell. A John Stillwell may have also been their son. Thomas made his Will on 6 July 1773 in Rowan County, and died some time before it was proved there 2 August 1774.

Thomas owned land on both the “east side” and “west side” of the Uwharrie River, all of which land was originally in Rowan County. In 1771, the “east land” became part of the Guilford/Randolph County area. The “west land” always remained in Rowan County until it became part of the “southern Davidson County area” in 1822. Thomas probably first acquired the “east land” and lived there until he migrated to the “west land”, where he was living when he made his Will, and died.

This east-to-west migration was a common process through-out North Carolina, and indeed, the United States. It is also seen in the movement of Stillwell family and friends mentioned in the documents analyzed in this report.

Thomas’ wife, Margaret, used the “west land” after his death. Then his son, David Stillwell, became heir to it when David reached 21 years. Thomas’ son, Thomas (Junior), inherited the “east land” in Guilford/Randolph County.

Thomas (Junior) married Margaret “Peggy” Brown, daughter of William and Margaret Brown of Rowan County, sometime after 1773. They had an only child, Thomas Stillwell (III), and probably stayed on the “east land” until Thomas Stillwell (Junior) died, which probably happened during the Revolutionary War, 1775 – 1783. Margaret “Peggy” Brown Stillwell took their son and moved to Johnston County several years before the Revolutionary War ended. Thomas (III) lived in Johnston County until his death in December 1819.

Thomas Stillwell and William Brown were Rowan County contemporaries, living near each other in what is now the “southern Davidson County area”. William died in 1772. Thomas died in 1773/1774. They and their families had to know each other, and lived relatively near each other, since Thomas (Junior), who was his youngest child, married, William’s youngest daughter, Margaret “Peggy” Brown.

A John Stillwell in 1759 appears in the same eastern Rowan County area occupied by Thomas Stillwell (Senior) in 1761, which was the Polecat Creek – Cross Roads area. John was probably related to Thomas and may have been his brother. Another John Stillwell, who may have been Thomas’ oldest son, appears as a single man in Rowan County in the 1790 U.S Census. This John Stillwell is likely the one mentioned as being a son of Thomas Stillwell (Senior) in the 1819-1825 Randolph County law suit involving the estate of Thomas Stillwell (III).

Document Data

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4. Family Research Ideas, Theories, and Projects

Please let all of us know what research ideas, theories, and research projects you are working on so that all family researchers can coordinate and share our information. We invite you to share your research projects and their status so that they may be published here. Please email your information to journaleditor@brownhistory.org. Thank you.

5. Next Journal Issue: Winter 2001 to be published December 31, 2001

We look forward to receiving your contributions for the Winter issue, which will be electronically published on the Internet on December 31, 2001. Thank you.