

THE REAL FATHER OF ELISHA PIPKIN'S WIFE HANNAH

In December 1792, Elisha Pipkin died in Wayne Co., North Carolina, leaving his wife Hannah and their six minor children--Joseph, James, Elisha, Charles, Milly, and Ruth. For at least 50 years, it has been claimed that Hannah's maiden name was Cogdell, and virtually all family trees posted online today that include a father for her list Richard Cogdell. Available records and documents, however, indicate that this claim is almost certainly wrong.

Background

Much valuable genealogical information has been disseminated by the Pipkin Family Association newsletter, which was published from November 1963 through December 1996. As early as January 1964, the newsletter referred to "Elisha, who married Hannah Cogdell." And the November 1979 edition contained the following statements in a profile of Elisha Pipkin:

"He md Susannah Cogdell, the dau of Richard and the gr dau of George and Margaret (Bell) Cogdell. She was called Hannah and was born 27 Mar 1761. She had a son John Coor by a previous marriage...[Elisha] died prior to 10 April 1793 when John Westbrook was appointed guardian to his minor heirs."

It is true that Richard Cogdell, the son of George and Margaret Cogdell, had a daughter named Susannah. He named her in his 1785 Craven Co., NC will (probated June 1787), and there are online transcripts of Bible records that list his children, including a daughter Susannah born on 27 Mar 1761.

Problems With This Account

There are three principal flaws with this conventional wisdom:

- 1) There appears to be no evidence whatsoever to support the conclusion that Richard Cogdell's daughter Susannah and Elisha Pipkin's wife Hannah were the same person. Hannah is not a commonly-known nickname or natural derivative of Susannah, and there seems to be no evidence that Richard's daughter was ever called Hannah or that Elisha's wife was ever called Susannah.
- 2) Online transcripts of Bible records show that Richard Cogdell's daughter Susannah married Wright Stanley on 21 Sep 1779, and that Susannah and Wright Stanley had five children together between 1782 and 1791.

(See <http://files.usgwarchives.net/nc/craven/bibles/badgerbib.txt> and <http://ncgenweb.us/nc/craven/records/bible/cogdell-bibles>)

If these Bible records are correct, then Susannah could not possibly have been Elisha Pipkin's wife Hannah, as Elisha and Hannah had six minor children at the time of his death in December 1792.

3) There are documents and other records available that indicate a different father for Hannah, as described below.

Records and Documents Leading to the Identification of Hannah Pipkin's Father

In Wayne County Estate Records at the North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh, there is a folder for Elisha Pipkin (1793) containing numerous documents, including:

1) An undated petition for dower rights in which Hannah Pipkin states that Elisha Pipkin died intestate "sometime in the month of December in the year 1792," leaving six (unnamed) children, and that she was his lawful wife at the time of his death;

2) An estate administration bond dated 13 Jan 1793, that identifies Hannah Pipkin as the administratrix of the estate of Elisha Pipkin, deceased. John Westbrook and Willis Pipkin (Elisha's brother) signed the bond, as did Hannah (with her mark);

3) Three guardian bonds, each dated 10 Apr 1793, that identify John Westbrook as the guardian of Joseph and Elisha Pipkin, Charles and James Pipkin, and Milly and Ruth Pipkin, respectively;

4) Several records and receipts indicating that at least by 1 Feb 1801, Henry Coor (occasionally written Henry T. Coor) had been appointed guardian of the orphans of Elisha Pipkin, deceased, and specifically guardian of Elisha, Ruth, and Charles Pipkin.

Who were John Westbrook and Henry Coor, and why were they appointed as guardians of Elisha Pipkin's orphans? Pursuing answers to these questions is key, beginning with interpreting the following additional document in Elisha's Estate Records folder.

5) An order to the Wayne Co. sheriff, dated 22 Jan 1797, directing him to collect a sum from "Henry Coor & wife admrs of Elisha Pipkin decd" to satisfy damages awarded to another party by the county court.

Knowing that Hannah had previously been appointed administratrix of Elisha's estate, this last document suggests that at some point before January 1797, Henry Coor and Hannah Pipkin had married, thereby providing a plausible explanation of why Henry Coor would be granted guardianship of Hannah's minor children. He had become their stepfather. The marriage of Elisha Pipkin's widow Hannah to Henry Coor has not been widely recognized, if at all. The Pipkin Family Association 1979 newsletter cited above stated that Hannah had a son named John Coor, but claimed he was from a prior marriage. A better explanation is that John was the son of Henry and Hannah Coor. Recognizing that Hannah Pipkin had become Hannah Coor is crucial to identifying her father.

Before proceeding on the trail to that father, it is worth noting a court case involving the above parties. A lawsuit between "Joseph Pipkin and others vs. Roe and Henry Coor" was heard in the Wayne Co. Superior Court in its April 1811 term, then referred to the North Carolina Supreme Court, which ruled on the case in January 1813. (The referral to the NC Supreme Court was not an appeal by the losing party, but rather a request by Wayne Co. officials for an interpretation by the higher court of a statute relevant to the case.) There are only a few case documents in this Supreme Court file at the State Archives in Raleigh, and they unfortunately only contain date ranges rather than specific dates, but the documents do contain the following helpful information:

- "Elisha Pipkin died sometime subsequent to the 31st December 1784 and previously (sic) to the 1st January 1795 intestate seised (sic) of a tract of land containing the premises in dispute and leaving sons Joseph, Elisha, Charles and James Pipkin"

- "the said James Pipkin died after the year 1795 but previously (sic) to the year 1808 intestate and without issue leaving the aforesaid Joseph, Elisha & Charles his brothers of the whole blood and Milly and Ruth Pipkin who are his sisters of the whole blood and leaving a half brother on the side of his [unnamed] mother John Coor"

- "the widow of Elisha Pipkin had dower duly assigned her including the premises in dispute, and died after the said James Pipkin and prior to the commencement of this suit"

So Hannah had died prior to April 1811. The issue in dispute was whether James Pipkin's half brother John Coor was entitled to any portion of the land James had inherited from his father Elisha, and the NC Supreme Court ruled that he was not. For genealogical purposes, these records are valuable in that they establish that Elisha's six children all had the same mother, who was also the mother of John Coor. In addition, the fact that Henry Coor was the defendant in the suit suggests that John Coor was not an adult at the time, and is consistent with Henry Coor being his father.

Before leaving Henry Coor, it is also worth noting Wayne Co. census records. In 1800, Henry Coor's household had 4 boys and 3 girls under 10, 1 boy and 1 girl 10-15, 1 male 16-25, and 1 man and 1 woman 26-44. These numbers are consistent with Hannah and at least some of her children living there, perhaps with some of Henry's children from a prior marriage. In the 1810 census, Henry Coor's household had 1 adult man, no adult woman, and 2 boys and 1 girl 10-15. This is consistent with Hannah having died prior to that census. Thus, there is abundant evidence supporting the conclusion that Hannah Pipkin married Henry Coor after Elisha Pipkin's death.

But what about the earlier guardian, John Westbrook? Was he a relative or friend of the family? The following Wayne Co., NC deed records provide the answer, and quickly lead to the identity of Hannah's father.

-22 Oct 1794-- "I James Manly...for and in consideration of the natural love and affection I have and bear unto my beloved daughter Mary Westbrook...give (her)...one negro boy named London one negro girl named Anneca one negro man named Essex and at my

death a proportionable (sic) part of my persona[l] estate with the children I shall have at my death" (DB 5E, p.143)

-26 Nov (no year stated, but immediately subsequent to the above deed on the same page)--"I James Manly...for and in consideration of the natural love and affection I have and bear unto my son in law John Westbrook give (him)...a certain negro girl named Flora at or near 8 years old"

-8 Jan 1796--"I James Mandly...for and in consideration of the natural love and affection I have and bear to my beloved daughter Hanner Coor ...give (her)...one negro woman named Hagar..."(The deed also included gifts of cattle, sheep, horses, hogs, and many items from his personal estate, and was signed by both James and Mary Mandly, each with their mark.) (DB 5E, p. 320)

-17 Apr 1800--"I James Manley...for and in consideration of the natural love and affection I have and bear to my beloved daughter Hannah Coor ...lend [her]...one negro girl named Annokey...(and after her death) to my granddaughter Polly Coor" (DB 7, p. 86)

There it is. If one accepts the premise that Hannah Pipkin became Hannah Coor after Elisha Pipkin's death, then these deed records clearly show that she was the daughter of James Manley (variously spelled Manly, Mandley, and Mandly). They also provide an explanation why John Westbrook was appointed guardian of her children after her husband Elisha died. John Westbrook was her brother-in-law, the husband of her sister Mary (Manley) Westbrook.

Similar deed records also explicitly state that James Manley had sons named Aaron Manley and Furnifold Manley. And at least by 1792, he had a wife named Mary, though the wording of the deeds gives the impression that she may not have been the mother of these children. There were other Manleys in the Wayne Co. around the same time, including Henry, James Jr. and Elcany, but their relationship to James (Sr.) and his four known children is unclear. (Note-granddaughter Polly Coor mentioned in the deed record above was presumably a daughter of Hannah and Henry Coor who died before the death of James Pipkin, as she was not mentioned in the Supreme Court case.)

Pipkin and Manley Connections

There are several documented links between these families, including the following land survey records at the North Carolina State Archives (on microfilm):

-a survey done 6 May 1778 in Dobbs Co. for James Manley for 100 acres; the chain bearers were Elisha Pipkin and Henry Manley (Wayne Co. was created from Dobbs Co. in 1779) ;

-a survey done 3 May 1779 in Dobbs Co. for James Manley for 100 acres; the chain bearers were Elisha Pipkin and Joseph Pipkin (Elisha's father);

-a survey done 27 Feb 1788 in Wayne Co. for Joseph Pipkin for 249 acres that reads in part "beginning at a water oak in his own line...to a pine in James Manley's line;"

- a survey done 21 Mar 1797 in Wayne Co. for James Manley for 50 acres; the chain bearers were Henry Coar and Heton or Beton Mandley (the only known record of the latter person).

Two Wayne Co. deed records likewise show links:

-16 Dec 1783--Joseph Pipkin sold 200 acres of land to Charles Hines; witnesses were James Mandley and Aaron Manly (Hannah's father and brother, respectively) (DB 5E, p. 116);

-17 Apr 1800--on the same day that James Manley executed a deed of gift to his daughter Hannah Coor (see above), he also executed two deeds to his son Furnifold Manley; Henry Coor witnessed both of these deeds (DB 7, p. 85).

In addition, the 1800 census for Wayne Co. shows Henry Coor immediately adjacent to James Manley, Henry Manley, and Aron Manley.

Finally, Elisha Pipkin's Estate Records folder contains a receipt dated 6 Feb 1806 that says "recd of Henry Coor guardian to the orphans of Elisha Pipkin decd," signed by "Furniful Mandley."

Conclusion

The longstanding conventional wisdom that Elisha Pipkin's wife Hannah was the daughter of Richard Cogdell is contradicted by multiple lines of evidence and should be discarded. Her real father was James Manley.

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