

Alexander Crews, Senior 1771 - 1850

Judge Folks Huxford stated in his initial biographical sketch of Alexander Crews in *Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia*, Volume II, "Alexander Crews was the forefather of most of the large Crews family of Wiregrass Georgia and Northern Florida." Alex is the ancestor to many Crews throughout this area however; recent research proves the Judge was not aware of the possible contributions of his brothers and cousins.

Alexander's story and that of most of the Crews clan that now reside in southern Georgia and northern Florida begins in South Carolina. We find records an older generation of Crews in what was then Craven County, SC and in the Colleton District acquiring land. The names of John Senior and John Junior, Samuel, and Joseph range from the 1760s to the 1780s are among this earlier generation. These Crews were acquiring land in South Carolina before Alexander's generation was born. These are likely the parents and uncles of Alexander's generation.

From 1800, we find records of Alexander, and his contemporaries; Joseph, Samuel, Micajah, and Edward Crews holding large tracts of land in the Colleton and/or the Charleston Districts from 1800 to 1809, though the listed Samuel and Joseph may still be the same from the previous generation. There was also a Benjamin Crews that held a large tract of land in the Beaufort district in 1807.

Mr. Huxford states, in POWG II, that Alexander "is the son of John Crews" and he may well be however, in my 25+ years of researching the Crews', I have yet to see any concrete evidence supporting this statement or that of other researchers claiming to know the sons and daughters of John Crews.

What we do know, now, is that Alexander Crews was born about 1771 (not 1755 as cited by other researchers and the Judge himself) likely in the Charleston/Colleton District of South Carolina (The Charleston District was created during 1769). This date is confirmed in the 1850 Wayne County Mortality Schedule.

The first records found for Alexander begins in 1800 with the acquisition of 213 acres of land on the Little Saltketchers (Salkehatchie) River in the Charleston District. This acquisition was followed with 753 acres on Deep Creek and the Little Saltketcher Swamp in the Colleton District, on January 26th, 1809. Later, during the same year, on August 25th, Alexander and, likely brother, Micajah (about 1765 - 1823) jointly acquire 1,000 acres on Black Creek off the Saltketchers River.

The following year, Alex was enumerated within the United States Census, 1810 in Colleton, South Carolina. During this period in South Carolina, Alexander was twice married. His first wife's name is unknown, though I have seen speculation that this first wife's name was Ivy DuBois, however, this has never been proven to the author's satisfaction. The result of this marriage was the following children:

William born 1794 in SC; married Sarah Bradley in 15 June 1820. Dates reflected in William's War of 1812 Pension Application.

Stephen born 1795 in SC; married first Nancy Bradley in South Carolina, 30 Nov 1815. Nancy passed away sometime during 1816. Stephen next married Elizabeth Larrisey about 1817 in Camden County, Georgia. These statements are verified within Elizabeth's Widow's Pension Application for Stephen's service in the War of 1812, though the 80+ year old Mrs. Crews did incorrectly state 1815 as her marriage date.

Alexander Jr born during 1802 in South Carolina, married Sarah Jones about 1826.

Sophia born about 1805 and married Max Whiddon about 1828 in Camden County, Georgia

(Note: The absence of John Crews born 1805, that has been identified by some as a son of Alexander, was excluded from this family compilation for several reasons. The first reason is John was identified by Folks Huxford as a son of a John Crews in his personal notes. Additional references state John's son was John III and grandson John was John IV. With his birth date being 1805 that date would conflict with the birth dates of daughter Sophia (1805) and that of Dempsey (1806). Finally, in the 1820 census for Camden County, there are 3 males enumerated in the Alexander Crews home, one age 10-15 and two younger than 10. Sons William, Stephen, and Alexander Junior are legal adults and are on their own. That would leave Dempsey as the one male 10-15, and brothers Samuel and Micajah in the 10 year or less range).

The final status of Alexander's first marriage is unknown at this time. However, we do know that Alexander remarries to Lucy DuBois, born about 1785 (1850 Camden County census lists her age as 65) in SC. Referencing back to the 1810 Colleton, SC census, one finds Dempsey Dubois and William Dubois living next door to one another. The DuBois' were also neighbors of John Johns Sr. and John Johns Jr as well as Roger, Edward, Joseph, Samuel, and Alexander Crews.

Closer examination of the dates leads this researcher to believe Dempsey DuBois is the father of both William and Alexander Crews' second wife, Lucy. This is made clearer by the naming of the couples first born, Dempsey Dubois Crews, after his maternal grandfather. The marriage to Lucy occurs sometime in 1805-06. The children of this union that were born in South Carolina begin with the aforementioned D.D. Crews:

Dempsey Dubois (1806-1892) married 1st Piety Collier, 2nd Molcy Hair

Samuel (1809-1865) and married Mary E. Johns.

Micajah (1810-1877) and married Emaliza Robinson in Camden County, Georgia in 1830

Lavinia (1815-?)

Sometime after the 1810 SC census was taken and before son Stephen's 1816 appearance in a Camden County Surveyor's Record, Alexander and family relocated to that Georgia county. The children of Alex and Lucy that were born in their new home in Camden are:

James (1819- about 1890) and married his first cousin Susan Crews, a daughter of Isham, and later two other, very young women.

Archibald born 1821 and married Lucretia Purdom. Date of death is unknown.

Bryant (1824-1868) married Nancy Jones.

Penelope* (1826-1893) married Irving Lockler, Sr.

* Note: Birth date is in doubt as a result of the 1820 and 1830 census (below).

Based on the findings within the 1820 Camden County Census, there are three unidentified female children residing in Alexander's home. There is one female age 10-14; which is Sophia. Then, there are four females under ten years of age. One of these girls is perhaps Lavinia, but she is said to have died before this census. These remaining three have never been identified to the best of my knowledge. One could speculate these girls are either Alexander and Lucy's, Stephen's from either or both marriages (William did not marry till 1820 and Alex Junior was just 18) or a combination of Alexander Senior and son Stephen. We may never know. We do know by the time the 1830 census rolls around, there are no females in the home other than Alexander's wife, Lucy. This could be an omission as "Pennie" would only be 4 years of age.

While in Camden County, Alexander was involved in the following transactions as recorded county records (book and page number appear first).

L 303: 20 February 1818. Mortgage of Negro slave. Alexander Crews, grantor, of Camden County, Georgia to John Bailey, grantee, of Camden County, Georgia. For in consideration of \$190.00 for slave Peggy. Signed by Alexander Crews.

Camden County Tax Digest 1819 - Alexander, residing in Capt Tullis' District, pays 1 poll tax and taxes on two Negroes for a total of \$12.00.

Camden County Tax Digest 1820 - Alexander, residing in Capt Tullis' District, pays 1 poll tax and taxes on two Negroes for a total of \$19.00. Alexander also appears on the Camden Tax Roll for 1822 but no details are given.

Camden County Inferior Court 7 Jan 1823 - Alexander sworn in for Jury duty.

L 414: 26 February 1828. Deed of Negro slave. William Cone, grantor to Alexander Crews. For in consideration of \$240.00 for slave girl Jose, about 10 years old. Signed by William Cone. Witnessed by William Crews and Joseph Crews. Recorded by Isaac Bailey on 10 April 1830.

M 054: 26 February 1828. Deed of Negro slave. Alexander Crews, grantor to William Cone, grantee. For in consideration of \$430.00 for slave Peg, about 26 years old. Signed by Alexander Crews. Witnessed by William Crews and Joseph Crews.

Judge Huxford stated in POWG Vol. II Alexander "served in Capt. Daniel N. Cone's company of Camden County militia in the Indian War during 1838". This is quite a feat for a man that would be approximately be 67 years of age at that time. The Judge mistook Alexander Senior for his son, Alexander Junior. The record shows Junior and his brother Bryant served together in this unit.

Alex joined Boney Bluff Primitive Baptist Church in Echols County, 12 Nov 1847 and was baptized the following Sunday.

The Alexander homestead was originally located in Camden, and later listed in Charlton, then Wayne counties. The Crews family did not move as this change of counties was a result of the constant re-drawing of Georgia county lines during this period.

Alexander's was listed as being ill for a period of 90 days before he passed away, in what is now Wayne county, during March of 1850 from "Dropsy" his age was listed as 79.

Lucy was still alive at the time of her husband's death and can be located in the Camden County Census of 1850 in the home of her son Bryant and his family. It is not known when she passed away but she cannot be located in any 1860 census records.

Referencing POWG II on the couple final resting place, "They were buried on a "buffalo" west of where Winokur is now, back of the Jim Hickox place..."

References:

Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia, Volume II.

South Carolina Archives Online - Miscellaneous Crews Land Records

Camden County, Georgia Tax Digests Bryan-Lang Historical Library

Camden County, Georgia Inferior Court Records Bryan-Lang Historical Library

Camden County Georgia Superior Court Records Bryan-Lang Historical Library

1810 United States Census, Colleton County, South Carolina.

1820 United States Census, Camden County, Georgia.

1830 United States Census, Camden County, Georgia.

1840 United States Census, Ware County, Georgia.

1850 Wayne County, Georgia Mortality Schedule

1850 United States Census, Camden County, Georgia

War of 1812 Pension File - William Crews

War of 1812 Widows Pension File - Elizabeth Crews

South Carolina Marriages 1755-1820; Paul Sarrett Jr, "USGENWEB," database, *usgwarchives.net* (<http://files.usgwarchives.net/sc/marriages/scm1755.txt> : accessed 19 Aug 2013), Marriage record of Stephen Crews and Nancy Bradley; *usgwarchives.net*.

Tampa Tribune, January 15, 1956, Interview with Rev Thomas Crews (grandson of subject).