

RICHARD DOWELL
Dowell0708 R0762
13 November 2007

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

OBJECTIVES

- Seek to prove John Dowell (born about 1810) was the son of John Dowell and Sarah/Sally Dowell with the ultimate objective of documenting the lineage of John Dowell (1810) back to Peter Dowell (born 1714).

RESULTS

- Discovered that many of the neighbors of John and Phebe Dowell in Washington County, Indiana were from North Carolina, including at least one family specifically from Rowan County, North Carolina.
- Found evidence placing John Dowell, proposed father of the John Dowell born about 1810, in Lawrence County, Indiana in 1828, just three years before the ancestral John Dowell (1810) married Phebe Owens in neighboring Washington County.
- Found further proof that the John Dowell, husband of Sarah/Sally Dowell, and proposed father of the John Dowell born in 1810, was the son of John Dowell, Sr. who had an estate administered in 1825 in Iredell County, North Carolina.

FUTURE RESEARCH

1. Now that we know John and Sarah/Sally Dowell lived in Lawrence County, Indiana from at least 1828, search the records of that county for further information connecting them to the ancestral John Dowell (born about 1810).
2. Also focus on proving that the John Dowell, Sr. whose estate was administered in 1825 in Iredell County, North Carolina was the son of Peter Dowell and Elizabeth Owens.

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RESEARCH REPORT

Research for this period centered on documenting the ancestry of John Dowell (born about 1810), husband of Phebe Owens. Previous DNA studies participated in by the client have verified that John Dowell was a direct descendant of Peter Dowell (born 1714) and his wife Elizabeth Owens. The underlying question has been to document the lineage of John Dowell back to Peter Dowell and substantiate the identity of his parents. It has been hypothesized that John Dowell (1810) was the son of John and Sarah/ Sally Dowell who married in Rowan County, North Carolina in 1797.

The earliest documented evidence of John Dowell (1810) was his 1831 marriage to Phebe Owens in Washington County, Indiana. This begs the question as to what John Dowell was doing in Washington County, Indiana at that time. Usually individuals did not migrate the distance from North Carolina to Washington County, Indiana without a catalyst, like a family member in the area. At this time in Washington County there was no specific industry like canal building or some other specific economic reason to draw John Dowell there. Usually there are family members in an area who attract additional family members to move. If this familial connection could be identified, then a case could be built through that person to the parents of John Dowell.

Previous research has shown the John and Phebe Dowell family were residents of Jackson Township, Washington County, Indiana in the 1850 U.S. Census.¹ A careful study of the 1840 U.S. Census of Washington County failed to show an enumeration for John Dowell and his probable brother in law, Thomas Simpson. Steps were taken to read Jackson Township name by name to look for possible name corruptions. Using the digitized censuses on the Internet, all

¹ 1850 U.S. Census, <http://ancestry.com>: John Dowell household, Jackson Township, Washington County, Indiana, p. 299, dwelling 383, family 386. Document 1.

males in the county with the given names of John and Thomas were analyzed and neither man was noted. This study also spread to neighboring counties with the same negative result. The only explanation is that the households of John Dowell (1810) and Thomas Simpson were living with other families and were not considered heads of households at the time.

This was also the case in studying the 1830 U.S. Census of Washington County, Indiana. Analysis of names and households throughout the county and surrounding area did not lead to any clues that the Dowell family of Rowan and Iredell counties of North Carolina were in the area.

The earliest enumeration wherein John and Phebe Dowell were located was the aforementioned 1850 U.S. Census of Jackson Township, Washington County, Indiana. The page wherein the family was noted, as well as the neighbors on the following page showed numerous households who had birthplaces in North Carolina.² It would seem logical that one of these families had some influence or connection to John Dowell.

Note that there were several Miller families from North Carolina in the area including an elderly Adam Miller who lived in the household of Joel Smith. There were also Byerley and Giles families nearby, all natives of North Carolina. Studies of these families were conducted in the compiled family resources in *Ancestry World Tree*. Of the three families mentioned the search was successful in locating data on Adam Miller.³ It was interesting to note that Adam Miller, along with his wife Hannah Sheets, were documented as former residents of Rowan County, North Carolina. They moved with their children to Washington County, Indiana in 1824. Analysis of this data supplied by Jim Miller failed to show any specific familial connection to the Dowell family. Further studies were conducted in the marriages of North Carolina through the compilations in the *International Genealogical Index* in hopes that a Miller-Dowell marriage could be found, but no such union was noted.⁴

² 1850 U.S. Census, <http://ancestry.com>: John Dowell neighbors, Jackson Township, Washington County, Indiana, p. 300, John Dowell Neighbors. Document 2.

³ Jim Miller <millerja@rtocom.net>, "The Millers of Washington County Indiana," 2005-10-13, *Ancestry World Tree*, <http://www.ancestry.com/trees/awt/main.htm>, accessed November 2007. Document 7.

⁴ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *International Genealogical Index*, version 5.0, <http://www.familysearch.org>, accessed November 2007: Miller/Dowell marriages in North Carolina.

Studies were conducted in the deeds of Washington County, Indiana in the hope that transactions between John Dowell and others may give clues to family connections. One land sale was noted for John and Phebe Dowel. In 1839 John and Phebe Dowel sold 40 acres of land in Jackson Township to Andrew Miller, a son of the aforementioned Adam Miller.⁵ There was no indication of any familial relationship. It was interesting to note that there was no listing in the deed index of how this land was acquired by John Dowell.

The acquisition of cheap land was the driving force for many settlers who migrated long distances at this time period. Land was usually acquired inexpensively through Federal Land Offices where individuals could place a minimal deposit and begin to move ahead with their agricultural pursuits. Many times family groups and siblings went together to land offices to purchase land. For all of the federal lands east of the Mississippi River the Bureau of Land Management has organized and digitized the land patents of the land offices. This collection was carefully studied and it was found that John Dowell purchased two pieces of land through the Jeffersonville, Indiana land office. The first was forty acres acquired in 1837 and was the land sold to Andrew Miller in 1839.⁶ The other was a neighboring forty acres purchased in 1838.⁷ Since the goal was to locate other family members who could tie John Dowell to parents in North Carolina, a study was completed of all Dowell land acquisitions. It was unfortunate that John Dowell was the only person surnamed Dowell that purchased land in Washington County, Indiana.

Additional studies were conducted in published sources of Washington County, Indiana. One published resource that was not previously mentioned was the obituary index for the Washington County newspapers. A perusal of this resource did reveal an 1886 obituary for the alleged brother-in-law of John Dowell, Thomas Simpson.⁸ This newspaper clipping reviewed his service as an older man in the Union Army during the Civil War. He filed for a pension, but it

⁵ Washington County, Indiana County Recorder, *Deed Records, 1814-1897*, Family History Library microfilm 1306023: Deed Book P, p. 352. Document 4.

⁶ Indiana Bureau of Land Management, *Land Patents*, <http://glorerecords.blm.gov/patentsearch>, , accessed November 2007: John Dowel Patent, #6758, Washington County, 1837. Document 5.

⁷ Indiana Bureau of Land Management, *Land Patents*, <http://glorerecords.blm.gov/patentsearch>, , accessed November 2007: John Dowel Patent, #10220, Washington County, 1838. Document 6.

⁸ James E. Bolding, *OBITUARIES: Selected Newspapers of Washington County Indiana, Volume IV* (Salem, IN: Washington County Historical Society, 1992), Family History Library book 977.222 V4b. Document 3.

wasn't awarded to him until just after his death. Since he outlived his wife Margaret there would be no widow's pension that could have added some interesting data on the Dowell side of the family.

It has been hypothesized that John Dowell (1810) was the son of John and Sarah Dowell of Rowan and Iredell counties of North Carolina. John and Sarah Dowell have not been previously documented in those counties much past 1820. An extensive study was previously conducted in the deeds of Rowan County, North Carolina suggesting that John Dowell could have moved to Iredell County before 1820. Further studies were conducted in the deeds of Wilkes and Iredell counties of North Carolina.

The deeds of Wilkes County show one transaction recorded 1825 for John Dowell.⁹ The transaction was actually dated in 1816 for land that had been purchased by John Dowell in 1803.¹⁰ Note that the 1816 transaction was for John Dowell of Iredell County. So, just as the abstract deeds of Rowan County, which have been previously researched show, the ancestral Dowell family had moved to Iredell County by 1820. It should be noted that later Wilkes County deeds, dated 1838 and 1850 for a John Dowell were analyzed and they do not appear to be the ancestor.

The microfilmed deed index for Iredell County was studied along with the published deed abstracts. One transaction in the microfilmed deed index was noted for John Dowell selling land.¹¹ Note that in 1826 John Dowell assigned his entire inheritance left him by his father John Dowell, along with some additional personal property, to Samuel Clark. This was in lieu of Samuel Clark covering a debt that John Dowell owed to Theophilus Campbell by a court proceeding.¹²

⁹ Wilkes County North Carolina Register of Deeds, *Record of Deeds, 1788-1906*, Grantor Index, Family History Library microfilm 392915: Grantor Index. Document 14.

¹⁰ Wilkes County, North Carolina Register of Deeds, *Record of Deeds, 1788-1906*, Family History Library microfilm 020136: Deed Book L, p. 109. Document 15.

¹¹ Iredell County, North Carolina Register of Deeds, *Record of Deeds, 1788-1906*, Family History Library microfilm 548906: Grantor Index. Document 11.

¹² Iredell County, North Carolina Register of Deeds, *Record of Deeds, 1788-1906*, Family History Library microfilm 548884: Deed Book M, p. 400. Document 12.

In an attempt to locate the aforementioned probate for John Dowell, as noted in the 1826 deed, a search was completed in the probates of Rowan and Iredell counties. Published abstracts of probate and estate data for Rowan County, North Carolina failed to show any listing for John Dowell. Initial studies of Iredell County also failed to show John Dowell. This was due to the fact that most of the records available in Salt Lake City were records of wills. The 1826 deed for John Dowell mentioned Alexander Hall as an administrator of John Dowell, which suggests that John Dowell died intestate (without a will).

A fairly recent collection of loose estate papers as collected at the North Carolina State Archives was analyzed for Iredell County. Settling of estates, whether testate or intestate, usually generated a lot of paper work. This included bonds, inventories, sales, settlement statements, and receipts. All of these papers were to be saved and included in an estate file. In North Carolina many of these loose papers were lost or destroyed. What has been salvaged has been collected as part of the aforementioned collection and a search of this collection uncovered a four page estate sale document for John Dowell.¹³ This document, dated October 1825, included a list of individuals who purchased personal property that was owned by the deceased John Dowell. Since most people during this time period had little cash on hand when they died, a sale was conducted so the administrator had cash to settle the bills of the estate. Purchasing of items, such as personal household and farm wares, crops, and slaves were usually done by family members, since the family wanted to keep many items of the deceased with the family. The two main purchasers of the deceased belongings were John and James Dowell. It is unfortunate that the other estate papers did not survive. A settlement statement usually stated specific heirs, but it can be strongly assumed that John and James Dowell were sons of John Dowell.

Research was also conducted in the published abstracts of the Iredell County, North Carolina deeds and court records. The latest transaction for John Dowell was dated July 1826 wherein John and Sally Dowell mortgaged a Negro girl in lieu of another debt he owed.¹⁴ This deed was significant in that it strongly supported the idea that the John Dowell of Iredell County,

¹³ Iredell County, North Carolina Superior Court, *Estate Records, 1790-1970*, Family History Library microfilm 2231549. Document 16.

¹⁴ Russell C. Black, *Iredell County, North Carolina Deed Abstracts, Books L & M 1822-1827* (Statesville, NC: s.p., 1997), p. 79, Family History Library book 975.6793 R2b 1822-1827. Document 17.

who was undoubtedly badly in debt to the point that he mortgaged his inheritance from his father John Dowell, was the husband of Sally. This was undoubtedly the Sally Dowell who married John Dowell in Rowan County in 1797. The mention of John and Sally Dowell in July 1826 appeared to be the latest evidence that they were residing in Iredell County, since studies of the 1830 U.S. Census of Iredell County showed a James Dowell, but no listing of John Dowell. There was a John Dowell who appeared at a later date in Iredell County, between 1837 and 1840 in the tax lists and court records, but he appeared to be the son of James Dowell.¹⁵

One interesting fact to consider is that both John and Margaret Dowell, possible siblings, married in Washington County, Indiana about the same time. This would suggest that they arrived in Indiana together. There is the possibility that John Dowell, their father, died and that their mother remarried. The Dowell children could have been enumerated in 1830 in Washington County, Indiana in a stepfather's household and would be unrecognizable since the children's names were not listed. A study was conducted in Iredell County and Rowan County for marriages of Dowell females between 1824 and 1830. It was interesting to note that a Sarah Dowell married Phillip Howard 6 September 1824 in Rowan County.¹⁶ Studies of the 1830 U.S. Census for Phillip Howard showed that his household was made up of a male and female aged in the twenties. This would be too young to be the mother and stepfather of John Dowell (1810).

If it cannot be shown that John Dowell (1775) died in Iredell County then the question arises as to where John Dowell moved to between 1826 and 1830. A complete listing of the 1830 United States Census from Ancestry.com showed various John Dowell and McDowell entries.¹⁷ Of the John Dowell entries, the ones in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana seemed the ones best to check. A check of each failed to show an enumeration with the proper ages of males and females to match with the John Dowell of 1820 Iredell County.¹⁸

¹⁵ Jo White Linn, *Iredell County, North Carolina Earliest Extant Tax Lists 1800, 1815, 1837* (Statesville, NC: s.p., 1998), p. 131, Family History Library book 975.6793 R4L. Document 19.

¹⁶ The Generations Network, "North Carolina Marriage Collection, 1741-2004", *Ancestry*, <http://www.ancestry.com/>, subscription database, accessed November 2007: marriage of Phillip Howard to Sarah Dowell. Document 13.

¹⁷ 1830 U.S. Census, United States, <http://www.ancestry.com>: all John Dowell/ Mc Dowell households. Document 10.

¹⁸ 1820 U.S. Census, <http://www.ancestry.com>: John Dowell household, Iredell County, North Carolina, p. 234, line 28. Document 9.

The court records of Iredell County, North Carolina eventually gave an idea as to where John Dowell went. In August 1828 Alexander Hall, the administrator of John Dowell's estate, was still attempting to settle the estate and he undoubtedly was owed money by John Dowell (probably the same John Dowell, husband of Sally, who seemed to have disappeared from Iredell County after the summer of 1826). Alexander Hall wanted to collect this asset. In order to track down the money, Alexander Hall legally appointed Abraham Hawkins of Lawrence County, Indiana, his attorney, to collect the money.¹⁹ This is significant since Lawrence County neighbors Washington County on the northwest. This places the prospective father of John Dowell (1810) in the same area of Indiana just three years before the marriage to Phebe Owens.

A study of the 1830 U.S. Census of Lawrence County, Indiana seems to cloud the situation. A listing of a John F. Dowell was noted in Lawrence County in 1830.²⁰ This man was aged 20-30 and could not have been the John Dowell (1775). John F. Dowell was also located in the U.S. 1840 Census of Lagrange County, Indiana.²¹ Since the ancestral John Dowell and wife Phebe were never located in 1840 it could be assumed that they moved to Lagrange County and then moved back to Washington County. This does not seem to fit since the enumeration of the John F. Dowell of Lagrange County, as discussed in a previous research report, did not fit with the makeup of the ancestral Dowell family in 1850. Lawrence County, Indiana marriages did show that John Dowell married Patsey Ray in 1828.²² This confuses the issue since it appears that there are two different John Dowells in the same area who were about the same age, one the ancestor who married Phebe Owens and the other who moved on to Lagrange County with his wife Patsey Ray.

This research session has been successful in further clarifying the identity and possible residences of John Dowell (1775) and husband of Sally Dowell. It had been confusing as to why

¹⁹ Russell C. Black, *Iredell County, North Carolina Abstracts of the Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1815-1822, 1826-1834, 1839-1850* (Statesville, NC: s.p., 1999), pp. 71, 85, 140, 147-148, Family History Library book 975.6793 P2b 1815-1850. Document 18.

²⁰ 1830 U.S. Census, <http://ancestry.com>: John F. Dowell household, Lawrence County, Indiana, p. 272, line 8. Document 20.

²¹ 1840 U.S. Census, <http://ancestry.com>: John F. Dowell household, LaGrange County, Indiana, p. 232, line 25. Document 21.

²² The Generations Network, "Indiana Marriage Collection, 1800-1941", *Ancestry*, <http://www.ancestry.com/>, subscription database, accessed November 2007: marriage of John Dowell to Patsey Ray. Document 22.

John Dowell (1810) appeared in Washington County, Indiana along with a probable sister Margaret Dowell. Records of Iredell County, North Carolina show that John Dowell, Sr. (1740-1750) had an estate administered in October 1825. The John Dowell (1775) and husband of Sally Dowell admitted in a deed that he was the son of the John Dowell who had the 1825 estate. The administrator of the John Dowell estate, Alexander Hall, pursued John Dowell (1775) to Lawrence County, Indiana in 1828 to collect money. This places John Dowell (1775) in the same area as John Dowell (1810) who married 1831 in Washington County, Indiana. It appeared from the Iredell County, North Carolina deed and court records that John and Sally Dowell owed numerous people money and they probably thought it best to leave the area to start a new life. Southern Indiana was a logical place since many other people from Rowan and Iredell Counties, North Carolina moved there and the ability to acquire land at a cheap price was attractive.

Further research is needed in Lawrence County, Indiana in order to better document John and Sally Dowell's residence there. They might have stayed there a short time and moved on. If so, there could be clues in Lawrence County to locate them elsewhere. Hopefully, evidence gleaned from the records of Lawrence County, and perhaps other counties, can provide more solid evidence that the ancestral John Dowell was indeed the son of John and Sally Dowell. Additionally, we hope to find more solid proof in the future that John Dowell, Sr., whose estate was administered in 1825 in Iredell County, was indeed the John named as a son of Peter Dowell in his will, thus documenting the lineage of John Dowell (1810) back to Peter Dowell (1714). It has been an exciting research session on a difficult research problem and it we look forward to resolving the question of John Dowell's parentage.

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