

300 Years of Ancestral History

Ancestry Annals for Ann Ella (Henderson) Collier

**(Note: Ann Ella was named by her father, E.A. Henderson,
for her two grandmothers.)**

Table of Contents

- Section 1. Introduction to Ann Ella Henderson Collier's Ancestry Annals Book
- Section 2. Ancestral Lineage for Ann Ella Henderson Collier
- Section 3. "Alabama Hendersons" and their Churches
- Section 4. Generation 0 (Grandchildren) through Generation 6 (GGrandparents)
- Section 5. Generation 7 - GGGrandparents
- Section 6. Generation 8 - GGGGrandparents
- Section 7. Generation 9 - GGGGGrandparents

Foreword

1. Ann Ella's Ancestral Tree is intended to reflect that person's ancestral lineage with respect to Ann Ella (nee Henderson) Collier (1942-). As you can see in title of each family page, there is an indication of father/mother lineage from Ann Ella back through time to that set of grandparents. Also, any name highlighted in **YELLOW** throughout this book is one of Ann's grandparents.
2. Henderson Family Tree (as of Version 6.0) includes up to 10 generations - ranging from George and Ann's grandchildren back to her GGGGGGrandparents (e.g. 9.xxx) . The tree ID (e.g., 4.x) indicates that family is in the 4th generation - George and Ann are the 2nd generation (i.e. para 2.1).
3. George arbitrarily arranged husband first - followed by wife for each family when numbering marriages in the family tree. Thus, you will see numbering such as 6.1 would include Ann's lineage of "father/father/father/father" to define lineage from her back to her GGGrandfather William Franklin Henderson and his wife Agness R. Stephens.
4. Each paragraph describes a different family of Ann's ancestors (i.e., grandparents). George has a file for each ancestor family which includes information and records for each individual in her ancestry lineage. Note that there are often 100+ different individuals and/or families who have published family trees on Ancestry.com which involve the same individual - each tree maintains its own set of information. There are often factual differences between supposedly the same information - obviously someone has introduced an error. George has spent a lot of time comparing family trees and looking for those that are (likely) erroneous or inconsistent with analysis by other researchers.
5. Errors will always be a problem with genealogical research - George is certain there are some (hopefully not too many) errors in the book. If you encounter an error, suggest you note it for correction in a future edition and move on.
6. Finally, researching one's ancestral heritage is a pain-staking and complicated process - if you want to ensure that you have the correct identification. In order to identify ancestors from several generations back, George, by necessity, evolved the following multi-step process as follows:
 - a) There are numerous examples whereby 1st cousins have the names and birthdates which are nearly identical. In order to identify a *specific individual*, the researcher must use following items to differentiate a specific individual:
 - 1) Individual's full name
 - 2) Individual's year and location of birth
 - 3) Individual's year and location of death

- b) In order to identify a *family unit*, the researcher must know identity of grandparents and parents as well as each child and his/her spouse. The names and dates of birth must be compatible among family members. For example, there is no possibility that the child could have been born before his/her mother.
- c) In order to *associate individuals* with a family unit, the researcher must know WHERE these individuals were born, lived, and died. Given the state of travel prior to the 1900s, couples were almost always neighbors before they married.
- d) Prior to 1900, groups of families clustered together and (often) migrated together. The researcher can take advantage of this clustering to identify hard-to-identify individuals.
- e) Finally, George always performs a 'sanity check' by looking at ALL of the information related to a family and its members to make sure that everything looks compatible. This check often finds obvious errors which would not appear when one analyzes information only for an individual. For example, George has encountered a few cases where the researcher identified a child who was several years older than his mother!! Other cases require that a young woman must have emigrated to a different state before marriage - while her parents remained behind - an unlikely occurrence.

Interesting Research Findings

So far, George has uncovered several important relationships which had not previously been identified among the "Alabama Hendersons". These include:

- 1) Agness R. Stephens (spelling per her Tombstone) (1818-1876) (see para 6.1) was the daughter of Benjamin Waller Henderson (1797-1850) (see para 7.5 for detailed rationale of her lineage). With this identification, Benjamin was the GGrandfather for both of Ann's paternal grandparents - John Clifton Henderson and Lydia Ann Stephens.
- 2) Contrary to most Henderson family trees, the initial R in Agness R Stephens name denotes 'Robinson' - not 'Roebuck'. George's research (as well as that of Mr Jim Roebuck of Tuscaloosa) indicates that Henderson and Roebuck families did not begin inter-marriages until after 1900 - even though families had been living in close proximity in the Snoddy Community since before 1850. Agness' lineage does include both 'Agness' and 'Robinson' in five consecutive generations of her Stephens/Henderson lineage.
- 3) Ella Cleveland Fridelle's paternal grandparents (see 6.7) were Isaac Fridell (~1820 -) and Lucinda Marella Vaught (~1825-). The couple were married in Chattooga County, Georgia.
- 4) Both Ella Cleveland Fridelle and her sister Lola Elizabeth Fridelle graduated from Athens Female College (now Athens State University in Athens, AL) in 1902 with a degree in Mistress of English Literature (M.E.L.). The M.E.L. degree is essentially a BA degree in English with additional literature and foreign language requirements. Also, Ella majored in Instrumental Music and Lola majored in Vocal Music. Further, both women taught school in Birmingham area (probably Ensley) and were married in 1906 within 3 months of each other - both were married in Ensley, AL (suburb of Birmingham). It likely the two girls were living with their widowed Aunt Frances Bellah and Aunt Elizabeth Bellah there in Birmingham during this time period.
- 5) Of Ann Ella's 16 GGGrandparents, ten individuals emigrated to Greene County, AL in the 1820s. Four emigrated to Starkville, MS in the 1820s. Of the final two, one emigrated to Stevenson, AL and one to Abbeville, AL - also in the 1820s. George's analysis indicates that 29 (!) of Ann's grandparents are buried in Greene County, AL. In effect, within a few years all 16 of Ann's GGGrandparents emigrated from (mostly) South Carolina and settled within 200 miles of each other in Alabama and Mississippi.
- 6) Ella Cleveland Fridelle told Ann Ella that she was 'abandoned' by her widowed father who then moved to Texas and remarried. Records indicate that the four Fridelle children were placed with uncles and aunts after their mother's death. James Fridelle

(Ella's father) and Hugh Fridelle (oldest son) moved to Chattanooga, TN in order to get work. Both died in Chattanooga within a few months of each other in 1893 and both are buried in the Forest Hills Cemetery there in Chattanooga.

7) George had found circumstantial evidence that William Franklin Henderson and his two brothers (Samuel and David) contracted with a wealthy landowner (likely Benjamin Stephens) for 7 years of labor in return for 80 acres of land in Greene County, AL. He is searching for evidence that proves such indenture contracts were common. P.S. Cynthia, their sister, may also have signed a similar contract in 1828.

8) Most of Ann's ancestors were Irish (and a few Scottish) immigrants who congregated in four areas (i.e., Abbeville, Fairfield, and Spartanburg) of South Carolina and Wilkes County, GA in the years immediately prior to 1820. Apparently, members of these neighboring families emigrated in caravans (i.e., wagons plus rafts to float down Holston & Tennessee Rivers) to northern Alabama (and Starkville, Mississippi) in the 1820s - where they again settled as neighbors. Evidence suggests that 15 (of 16) of Ann's GGGrandparents made this trip from South Carolina about the same time.

9) Records seem to indicate that the "Alabama Hendersons" arrived in three waves from South Carolina as follows:

- * 1824 - Benjamin Stephens w/Agness R Stephens, Zachary & Dorothy (nee Stephens) Logan, William C Wardlaw family, and William Franklin Henderson emigrated to Greene County. Assumption is that William Franklin Henderson completed his 7-year indenture in December 1831 shortly before he purchased his 80-acre land patent in January 1832.

- * 1827 - Benjamin & Margaret (nee Wardlaw) Stephens as well as Thomas & Isabel (nee Legg) Drummond emigrated to Greene County as part of a caravan of Irish immigrants. Widow Henderson and her three children likely arrived with this group of immigrants - based on indication that sons Samuel and David completed their 7-year contract in September 1835 shortly before they both purchased 80-acre land patents and David was married.

- * 1830 - Edward & Nancy (nee Archibald) Mayes emigrated to Greene County.

10) Bethel Baptist Church (Ralph, AL) and its cemetery were relocated about 1880 from its original location (i.e., "down the hill") to its existing site - the original 3-acre site was abandoned to nature and is now heavily overgrown. Five (5) of Ann's grandparents

were buried in that old Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery - the acidic soil would have eroded their tombstones within a few decades.

11) George has obtained a copy of the minutes for Beulah Baptist Church which date back to 1833. George was simply amazed at the level of control which the church congregation was able to place on its individual members. In effect, the individual member behaved (e.g., no drinking or dancing) or the individual was expelled from the congregation. However, a thoughtful letter of "I'm Sorry" was usually good enough to get reinstated.

There are several significant 'mysteries' regarding the Alabama Hendersons which George is still working on as of Nov2016.

- 1) Who was the mother of Agness R Stephens? George believes she was a neighbor of the Henderson (as well as Stephens and Wardlaw families) in Donalds, SC just prior to 1820.
 - 2) We still need documentation to prove her Agness' name was spelled "Agness" and that her middle name was "Robinson" (i.e. not Roebuck).
 - 3) Who were the parents of William Franklin Henderson? Again, George believes they were neighbors of Stephens and Wardlaw families in Donalds, SC just prior to 1820.
 - 4) Where are members of the William C Wardlaw family buried? Was there a family cemetery on the "old homeplace" during the mid-1800s?
 - 5) Lineage of the Fridelle family is sparse and subject to misinterpretation.
 - 6) Circumstantial evidence suggest that at least four of Ann's ancestors including William Franklin Henderson and his two brothers (Cynthia might have signed such a contract as well) apparently signed a 7-year indentured contract with a wealthy landowner (e.g., Benjamin Stephens) in return for 80 acres of land in Greene County, Alabama. George is working to verify that such contracts were common among these Irish immigrants.
- 12) In the modern era, church weddings are still the norm. However, there was one note in the Beulah Baptist Church history compiled by its members for church's 150th anniversary which stated that church weddings were not part of the Church's history for at least 50 years. Ann remembers the stories about her grandfather (c1920s) being a Justice of the Peace who would often be asked to marry couples on his front porch.