

Fairfield Family Histories

(1700s-1982)

Acknowledgements:
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Walter Woodard Lewis

ORIGINAL
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James Carroll Lewis, above, and his brother John Quarles Lewis, served in the Civil War. James Lewis enlisted at Camp Lee April 28, 1862, and was paroled May 1, 1865, at Greensboro, N.C. He served in the 7th Florida Infantry, Co. D., Alachua Rebels, and fought with the Western Army and in the Battle of Atlanta.

The Legend of the Cotton Gin

Captain James Kincaid at one time was commander of a sailing vessel in the Caribbean. He brought back many unusual plants for his gardens and was said to be the first one to cultivate the tomato in this section.

Captain Kincaid had seen in the Caribbean the natives taking the coir off cocoanuts by an engine with saw teeth revolving between the wooden slats which kept the nuts from being injured. Captain Kincaid and another neighbor, William Watt, who kept a large number of sheep, tried to apply this idea of revolving saws between slats to pull the cockleburs from the wool. But it did not work. The wool became too tightly tangled in the many teeth. The cockleburs were too near the middle of the strand of wool rather than at the end.

Employed at that time on the Kincaid place was Hudgen Holmes of Bamberg and also, it is said that he employed Eli Whitney but soon discharged him. Holmes, with the aid of Kincaid, had been working on a machine; conceived the idea of applying the principle to pulling lint from the cotton seed, the cotton seed being at the end of the rivers. He made several sets of saws, with finer and finer teeth-points, sharper and sharper, more and

more curved, and teeth less thin and finally he had something-the idea upon which he got a caveat on March 14, 1776.

When Holmes made his invention there was no Patent Office in the United States. Prior to 1776 letters of patents to South Carolina would be issued from the British Registry.

Between 1776-1790 when the U.S. Patent Office was established the procedure was to submit drawings and specifications to the office-and if passed a five-year caveat would be issued. James Kincaid got such a caveat in the name of Hudgen Holmes (or Henry Ogden Holmes) on the 14th of March 1779. It was signed by George Washington and had a seal of the U.S. This was in the Exhibit of the Cotton States Exposition at New Orleans in 1881. Then it was in the Public Library in Charleston for many years but disappeared. Some years back people said they had seen it there.

When a definite patent for fifteen years was asked for before the caveat had expired it was found that Eli Whitney had identical plans and was given a patent March 14, 1794, the day Holmes' caveat expired!

Eli Whitney, from Connecticut and a graduate of Yale but not a mechanical genius, came to South Carolina seeking a job as a teacher. He was traveling to Savannah and found himself in the company of a wealthy widow, who invited him to her plantation. There he heard the neighboring planters express their longing for some mechanical device that would separate the cotton lint from the seed.

Whitney went to the Kincaid home while Captain Kincaid and Holmes were in Charleston in regard to the gin. Whitney took a key to Mrs. Kincaid and told her that Captain Kincaid had evidently given him the wrong key to the shop. Whitney disappeared, taking with him the drawings and patterns of Holmes' gin. Hurrying to Washington and back to New Haven with the aid of the wealthy widow, they claimed him as the inventor of the cotton gin.

When Holmes completed the gin it was first operated at the foot of the Kincaid gardens by water on Mill Creek. At that time this was a deep creek and cotton was shipped down it to Charleston. But Holmes never got credit for his invention. James Kincaid was marketing cotton for the English market. The difference between the upper and lower country planters was a necessity to work through two firms of factors-one in Columbia to receive the cotton and one in Charleston to handle the ultimate sale.

This is the way I know it from writings on the subject and the newspapers. True or false it remains to be seen, but it does give interest and romance to our county, Doesn't it?

Eugenia Kincaid McMaster, daughter of Eugenia Anderson and George Buchanan McMaster, great-great-great granddaughter of James Kincaid.

Thomas Walter Lewis Family

The first Lewis antecedent of Thomas Walter Lewis in Winnsboro of which there is a definite record was William Blivings Lewis. An English sea captain, William B. Lewis' ship plied between Charleston and Boston.

Coming inland from Charleston in 1796 "to explore," Capt. Lewis met the fair Mary Quirrell (Quarles) and married her. Mary's father, Joseph Quirrell (Quarles), was an upstanding citizen of the relatively new town. He owned property that had been deeded to him by John Winn as a town founder, shortly after Winnsboro was laid out and surveyed.

William B. Lewis died two years later, in his early twenties, and was buried in Winnsboro. His son, William, Jr., was born shortly after his death. Young William was a co-inheritor from his grandfather Joseph of Lot No. 41 on Congress (or Main) St. in Winnsboro, next to the lot on which the Bank of Fairfield now stands. Lot 42, on the corner of Congress and Washington, where the bank now is, had been left vacant on the town's plat and set aside for a church.

As a youth of 19, after his mother had remarried and was living in Chester County, William was apprenticed a Winnsboro shoemaker. William B. Lewis, afterward also moving to Chester County, was the progenitor of numerous Lewises, including his son, James Carroll Lewis, and grandson, Thomas Walter Lewis.

James C. Lewis served with the Confederate Army with the 7th Florida Infantry, Co. D. (Alachua Rebels) and fought with the Western Army and in the Battle of Atlanta. Moving to Fairfield County a few years after the death of his wife, Mary Jane Weir Lewis, and settling in the Greenbrier Community, James Lewis in 1912 opened the first of a succession of Lewis stores that passed down through the generations, ending with the death of his grandson, Lunceford Blaydes Lewis, in 1964. James Lewis also operated a store at the site of the home of another son, William "Wade" Hampton Lewis, dying at his son's house January 14, 1925.

Thomas Walter Lewis was the third son of James and Mary Jane Lewis. He had come to Fairfield as a young man, bringing with him his wife, Mary Ellen "Mollie" Street Lewis, whom he had married in Burlison, Tenn., and their two sons, Burr, born in Tennessee, and Lunceford, born at Woodward.

"Tom" Lewis participated fully in Fairfield life. He was especially interested in the legal profession and politics. He served as magistrate for the Greenbrier Magisterial District for a period of eighteen years. One of the county's most successful planters, he was at one time co-owner of the 1,080-acre Robertson Place (sometimes called the Doty Place), on the Winnsboro-Columbia Road. A great believer in higher education for young people, he sent his sons Walter and Van "Brick" Lewis, and

daughter, Julia, to the University of S.C. as daily commuters in the days when commuting between Winnsboro and Columbia was unheard of. Thomas Walter Lewis died in Winnsboro April 18, 1952; his wife Mollie preceding him in death, also at their home in Winnsboro, Feb. 12, 1945.

Walter Woodward Lewis, a son of "Tom" Lewis, was elected Fairfield Clerk of Court at age 23, and served a tenure of 32 years, including the duties of Register of Mesne Conveyance and Master. Later, he was appointed to the S.C. Tax Commission by Gov. Donald Russell and when the A.B.C. Commission was formed, Gov. Robert McNair named him Commissioner.

E.V. "Brick" Lewis, fourth son of Tom and Mollie Lewis, was a pioneer in Rural Electrification in Fairfield, afterward moving to Newberry to manage the electrical cooperative there. He died in Columbia in 1976 while manager of Central Electric Cooperative (a group of 15 statewide cooperatives). He was deemed "one of the nation's foremost authorities on rural electrification and transmission of electric power." He was an organizer and founding vice-president of Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC), Washington, D.C.

Crosby Lewis, son of "Brick" Lewis, who now lives with his family at Fairfield (the old Kincaid-Anderson Place), became a Richland County member of the State House of Representatives in his twenties, serving two terms.

Children of Thomas and Mary Ellen Lewis, all of whom grew up in Fairfield County, and their spouses were: E. Burr Lewis, who married Rebecca Smith Starnes; Lunceford B. Lewis m. Margaret Ashford of the Bethel Community and after her death, Marjorie Perry Robinson of Greenbrier; Julia Anne Lewis m. Calvin W. Robinson, Greenwood County; Walter W. Lewis m. Florrie Jane Bethea of Dillon; E.V. "Brick" Lewis m. Nell Crosby Brooks of the Bethel Community; and Mary Kathleen Lewis m. Eugene Blakely Sloan of Columbia and Clinton.

Children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of Thomas Walter and Mary Ellen Lewis now living in Fairfield County are: Mr. and Mrs. E. Burr Lewis and their daughter, Nancy Lewis Frazier, who married Locke Frazier, all of Winnsboro; Mr. and Mrs. Walter W. Lewis, Winnsboro; Mrs. Marjorie P. Lewis, of Greenbrier; Gladys Lewis Bass, her husband, Gary Bass, Jr., and their sons and wives, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Franklin Bass III, and Lt. Lunceford Lewis Bass, now on active duty with the U.S. Navy at Jacksonville, and Mrs. Bass, all of Winnsboro; and E. Crosby Lewis, his wife Cleo Brooks Lewis, and their sons, Ernest Crosby "Brickie" Lewis and Gage Lewis, of Fairfield, near Jenkinsville.



Thomas W. and Mary Ellen Lewis

Walter W. Lewis

Walter Woodward Lewis was a member of the fifth generation of Lewises in Fairfield County. The son of Thomas Walter Lewis and Mary Ellen Street Lewis of Burlison, Tenn., he was one of six children. His brothers were Edward Burr, Lunceford Blaydes and Ernest Van; the sisters were Julia Ann and Mary Kathleen.

On June 19, 1935, Walter married Florrie Jane Bethea, daughter of Archie McKay Bethea and Mary Lutie Bethea of Dillon. Three children were born of this union; Jane Bethea, Thomas Woodward and Ellen Street. Jane married John McNair Turner and they have two children, Jane Bethea and John McNair, Jr. Ellen is married to Richard Phillip Fletcher of McColl, and they have two children, Walter Richard and Thomas Shields. Thomas Woodward Lewis (deceased) never married.

Walter W. Lewis was born May 10, 1909, on a farm between Winnsboro and Rockton. He grew up on farms in the Greenbrier Community of Fairfield County; attended and graduated from Greenbrier High School and the University of South Carolina (1931), where he was a member of the Beta Gamma Chapter of the International Fraternity of Delta Sigma Pi. After graduation, he offered for the office of clerk of court of Fairfield and on November 4, 1932, was elected to that office as youngest clerk of court in the state. He assumed the duties of that office on January 3, 1933, and served continuously for 31 years and 11 months until he was appointed by Gov. Donald Russell to the State Tax Commission. Mr. Lewis had been elected without opposition for eight terms to the clerk's office and held it longer than any other person.

Mr. Lewis served on the Tax Commission until June of 1967, when he was appointed by Gov. Robert McNair as a commissioner of the newly created S.C. Alcoholic

Beverage Control Commission. He served on that commission six years, part of that time as chairman, until June 1973. He then joined McTeer Real Estate in Columbia; on December of 1975, he retired to his farm home at Adgers in Fairfield.

Walter Lewis was one of the organizers of the Fairfield County Historical Society, serving as its second president. In 1969, he organized Mid-County Rural Water System, to which he donated land for a tank and well site. He was the president for seven years. He was a member and officer of the Mount Zion Society and served as president of the S.C. Association of Clerks of Court, and Registers of Mesne Conveyances. He was chairman of the Fairfield Democratic Executive Committee from 1956 to 1967, and was a delegate to the national convention in Philadelphia in 1936. He held membership in the Columbia Rotary Club and Winnsboro Rotary Club. A life-long member of Greenbrier Methodist Church, he worshipped for the last fifty years of his life at First Methodist Church in Winnsboro, near his home, and taught men's Bible class. He was a lifetime member of the American Bible Society and was a Mason and Past Master of Winnsboro Masonic Lodge No. 11 of Ancient Free Masons. He was listed in Who's Who in American Politics in its first edition for 1967-68; and in Marquis' Who's Who in the South and Southwest for the years 1967-1974.

Mr. Lewis died suddenly on May 29, 1982.

Wade Hampton Lewis

The Lewis family came from Wales to Virginia around 1775. Wade Hampton Lewis, one of eight children of James Carol and Mary Jane Weir Lewis, was born in Chester County, South Carolina on June 20, 1876. After army duty in the Spanish American War, Hampton went to Tennessee to visit relatives. While there he married Lucy Ella Smith, daughter of Louis Monroe and Anthony Decatur Bledsoe Smith of Covington, Tennessee.

Returning to South Carolina, Hampton and Ella Lewis settled in Greenbrier Community in Fairfield County where he was a successful farmer, sawmill owner, and store merchant. They had three children—James Wilburn, Claude Elmore, and Decatur (Katie) Jane Lewis.

WILBURN married Martha Josephine Coleman of Ridgeway, and they had three daughters—Lucy Josephine, Betty Elaine, and Helen Jane. Wilburn is now deceased.

Lucy was first married to Richard Henry Thomas of Columbia and had two sons—Richard Henry, Jr. (Ricky) and James Myer (Jimmy). Jimmy lost his life in 1964 in the Vietnam War. Ricky married Carlie Ann Lyles of Greenbrier Community and three children were born to

them—Laura Ann, Lenoia Dawn, and James Quay Thomas. Lucy is now Mrs. Quay W. McMaster of Winnsboro.

Betty married Thomas Hamilton Davis, Jr. (T.H.) of Columbia (now of Sumter, S.C.) and they have two children—Martha Elaine and Thomas Hamilton Davis, III (Tee). Elaine married William Charles Harrington of Florence and they have a son, Coke Hamilton Harrington. Tee is married to Dianne Josephine Drakeford of Sumter and they have a son and daughter—Thomas Hamilton Davis, IV and Lauren Sutler Davis.

Helen married James Francis Wilkes of Lebanon Community, Winnsboro, and they have four children: Helen Diane who is married to Ronnie Goebel of Columbia and has two children—Ashley Wilkes and Kacy Diane Goebel; Barbara Ellen Wilkes, James Francis Wilkes, Jr., and Janet Kaye Wilkes.

CLAUDE married Frances Brooks of Bethel Community, Winnsboro and they had three children: Francis Elmore, James William (Jimmy), and Joseph Monroe (Joe). Jimmy and his parents died in a tragic automobile accident in December 1946.

Francis married Vivian Hilton of Jacksonville, Florida and two children were born to them—Sandra Michelle and Steven. Sandra is married to Bob Weaver of Weaverville, North Carolina and they have three children—Rob, Russ, and Lindsay Weaver. Steven Lewis died in March 1981.

Joe married Susan Kahn of Newport News, Virginia, and their two children are Melissa Woodington Lewis and Trapp Hampton Reid Lewis.

KATIE was married twice—first to Charles Henry Miller of Columbia, (deceased) and then to George Henry Summer of Peak, S.C. She and George had a son, George Wayne. George is now deceased. For forty-two years Katie owned and operated the same grocery store her father had originally started. Summer's Store is a county landmark, located in Greenbrier Community, and is still in operation although under new management. After retiring, Katie and Wayne moved first to Texas and then to Palm Bay, Florida where they now live.

Submitted by:
Josephine C. Lewis



Wade Hampton and Lucy Ella Smith Lewis
(Wedding picture)

The Lyles Family

The Lyles brothers, Ephraim, John, and Williamson came from Brunswick, Virginia, and settled on the Broad River. Ephraim came first, probably as early as 1734. He was killed by Indians or enemies, leaving a wife and seven or eight children. They were Aromanus, James, William, Ephraim Jr., Henry, and John. All were soldiers in the Revolution.

Aromanus (1748-1817) the oldest, married Rebecca Valentine. They had six sons and one daughter. They were Ephraim, John, James, William Valentine, Aromanus, Thomas, and Mary Rebecca. He had no children by other marriages.

James (1782-1852), third son of Aromanus, married his cousin, Drucilla Lyles Goree (1788-1838) daughter of Little Ephraim. Three children survived, Drucilla Valentine, Ephraim Francis, and John Rogers.

John Rogers Lyles (1823-1874) married Charlotte Edrington and Mary Ann Dawkins (1830-1906). Mary Ann was the daughter of Col. John Dawkins of Revolutionary War fame. Children of John Rogers and



John Rogers Lyles, son of James and
and Grandson of Aromanus. Captain in
Civil War