

Rev. Nicholas Roberts
1747 - Nov. 1843

The first record we have of Rev. Nicholas Roberts is when he received a land grant on the south west branch of Little River in Camden District on April 3, 1786. It is unproved as to who his parents were or where he was born but it is possible that he lived in the area before he actually received the land grant. Possible brothers of Rev. Nicholas are Archibald and Lewis. Archibald received a land grant on Sandy River of Camden District on Feb. 6, 1786 and Lewis, a revolutionary soldier, lived near Archibald in 1789. Archibald's farm was located in what was later to become Chester Dist. and Rev. Nicholas's was located in what was later to become Fairfield Dist. although they were located very near each other on opposite sides of the county line. Because of the timing of the land grants and the close proximity of the two farms, practically every researcher believes that the three men were brothers.

A possible father of Rev. Nicholas could be William Roberts who died in Chester Dist. in 1789. Lewis applied to be executor of the deceased William's estate which would seem to indicate that they were close relatives. At this point we do not know exactly who this William was or his relationship to Rev. Nicholas, Archibald, and Lewis.

Many researchers have believed that Rev. Nicholas Roberts was married to Cicily Floyd, the daughter of Reuben Floyd, because of a reference found in Bill No. 85, dated 1836 and recorded in Chester County Court Records. At the beginning of Bill No. 85, one of the plaintiffs is listed as Cicily Floyd, wife of Nicholas Roberts. This is a quite lengthy document and in order to understand what is happening anyone would have to read the entire document. Also there is a Bill No. 84, which seems to have been numbered wrong because it is a later document and is not on the Index list, which also deals with this case. When you read the entire documents contained in Bill 84 and 85 you find that there are major problems for Cicily Floyd to have been married to Rev. Nicholas Roberts. Also when you compare all known facts about Rev. Nicholas Roberts and the Floyd family you find even more problems.

When you compare the census records from 1790 to 1830 you find that Reuben Floyd would have been no more than 15 years older than his presumed grandsons, the sons of Rev. Nicholas Roberts. This would make Cicily younger than her supposed sons. The problems are solved when we look at the known facts concerning Nicholas Roberts (2), the grandson of Rev. Nicholas Roberts.

Reuben Floyd's will was dated Jan. 27, 1824, and does not indicate that any of his daughters were married at that time. Bill No. 85 states that Reuben's daughter Cicily is married to Nicholas Roberts. When you look at Bill No. 84 you find that by Oct. 10, 1836, Reuben's daughter Mary is married to Nicholas Roberts and there is no further mention of his daughter Cicily. Mary could not be the Mary Rogers that Married Rev. Nicholas in 1836 because the ages do not fit and also Mary Floyd was not married in 1824. Also Mary Rogers had daughters who were more than 12 years old when she married Rev. Nicholas. In Bill No. 84 you also find a minor child named Cicily but she is the minor child of William B., a son of Reuben Floyd who has died by Oct. 10, 1836. This minor Cicily Floyd later married Barty Pannell before the court case was completely settled.

Nicholas Roberts (2), the grandson of Rev. Nicholas Roberts, was the one who was married to both Cicily and Mary Floyd. Nicholas (2) and Cicily's first child was born in 1834 and was named Reuben F. Their second child was born in 1836 and was named Jesse. It appears that Cicily probably died during or shortly after the birth of Jesse because by Oct. 10, 1836, Nicholas (2) is married to Mary, Cicily's sister.

Since Cicily Floyd was married to Nicholas Roberts (2) we still do not know the name of Rev. Nicholas Roberts first wife. It appears that Rev. Nicholas may have had another wife between his first wife and Mary Rogers. On the 1830 census a woman is listed as living in the household who is too old to be one of his daughters. If this is a second wife then she apparently died before 1835. Mary Rogers, Rev. Nicholas's last wife, moved to Mississippi with her two daughters and their families in the late 1850's. Her daughter Martha A. married William Tollison and Mary Roberts was living with them in Pontotoc Co., Ms. in 1860. Her other daughter Nancy married R.N. Carter and Mary was living with them in Tippah Co., Ms. in 1850. They all lived near the Roberts and Wages families that were descendants of Rev. Nicholas Roberts. Although Martha A. and Nancy lived in different counties both were near the county line and in 1870 this area became Union Co., Ms.

We know the year in which Rev. Nicholas married Mary Rogers from the records of Rev. Ephriam Fant and also we know his age from an article that was printed on Oct. 4, 1836 in the Cheraw Gazette - "Married on the 1st ult. by Rev. E. Fant, the Rev. Nicholas Roberts, pastor Red Hill Church, aged 89 years to Mrs. Mary Rogers, all of Fairfield Dist." We also know that he was a Baptist Minister for 55 years from the minutes of the Bethel Baptist Assoc., S.C., in their record of Sept., 1844, - "mourns loss of Elder Nicholas Roberts who was a minister for 55 years." This would mean that he was ordained as a minister in 1788, two years after his land grant in Fairfield Co. In the Feb. 8, 1844 issue of the SOUTH CAROLINA TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE we find, "Died at his residence in Fairfield Dist. in Nov. 1843, after a lingering illness, Elder Nicholas Roberts, aged about 95 years, and pastor of the Beaver Creek Church upwards of 32 years."

From the above information we know that Rev. Nicholas Roberts was a minister for 9 years before Beaver Creek Baptist Church was established and he pastored the church for more than 32 years. It appears that the name of the church was originally Red Hill or Hill's Church and the name was changed before 1844. When you look at Mills 1825 Atlas you find a church located at approximately the site of the original Beaver Creek Church which is listed as Hill's meeting house. It also appears that Rev. Ephriam Fant was performing the duties as pastor by 1833, since his marriage records begin in that year. From the records that we have, it appears that Rev. Nicholas Roberts was probably the first pastor of Beaver Creek Baptist Church.

I have been searching for the location of the farm of Rev. Nicholas which was granted to him in 1786. By looking at several maps, Mills Atlas of 1825, an 1870 map, and modern U.S. Geological Survey maps as well as several deeds and historical works, I believe that I have located the approximate site of his farm. I believe that his farm was located on Fairfield County Road 90 at or near the site of the present Mt. Olive Church. This location is approximately 3 miles southeast of the present Beaver Creek Baptist Church. From one of his deeds we know that there was an old cemetery located on his property

near his north property line. A cemetery survey of Fairfield Co. that I believe was undertaken in the 1930's, lists a Roberts Cemetery across the road and a little east of the Mt. Olive Church. At the time of the survey only two graves had markers and they were for two girls that died in the 1840's and 1850's. The survey said that there were several unmarked graves located at this site. We also know that Rev. Nicholas's property was located on the main road from Chester to Lyles Ferry and the old road running south beside the Mt. Olive Church is part of the old Lyles Ferry Road which was also part of the old original Great Virginia Wagon Road. From deeds we that Wiley Coleman bought the farm on the south side of Rev. Nicholas' farm and Wiley Coleman is buried about one half mile south of Mt. Olive Church beside the Old Lyles Ferry road. We do not know for sure where Rev. Nicholas is buried but I believe he is buried in the Roberts Cemetery near Mt. Olive Church.

From census records and deeds we know that Rev. Nicholas had at least four sons and four daughters as well as his two stepdaughters Martha A. and Nancy Rogers. His sons were William, John, Lewis (my family line), and Benjamin. At the present time we have been unable to prove the names of his daughters but at least one married a Wages and probably another also married a Wages. Because of a deed executed in 1834 by Rev. Nicholas, I believe that James Wages is a son-in-law of his. In a deed executed by Nicholas Roberts (2) in 1855 we find listed that William Wages & wife and Elihue Wages & wife are listed as heirs of Rev. Nicholas Roberts. Because of the ages it is evident that William and Elihue are grandsons of Rev. Nicholas. Elihue and Sally Wages are buried at Bethlehem Methodist Church on the Chester side of the county line. Also Rev. Nicholas' oldest son William still has descendants who live only a short distance east of Beaver Creek Baptist Church.

Most of the descendants of Rev. Nicholas as well as the descendants of his neighbors moved to Pontotoc and Tippah Co.'s Ms. in the 1840's and 1850's. The area into which they migrated is mostly located in present day Union Co., Ms. Many of Rev. Nicholas's neighbors who migrated to this area are the Pannells, Wages, Youngs, McKewons, Grubbs, Doves and Crosbys.

At the present time there is a lot that we do not know about Rev. Nicholas Roberts but hopefully in the near future we will be able to fill in the missing information.