

The Daltons of Beech Creek, Hawkins County, Tennessee

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The first thing a researcher needs to sort out in regards to the Daltons of Hawkins County is an understanding of the geography of the county. This is because there are two major groups of Daltons in Hawkins County in two different locations. One group - the earlier to arrive -- was on Beech Creek in the east and south of the county. This article is about that group whose first generation by age appears to be Timothy, Sr., Lewis, James, and possibly Fanny.

The other group who apparently arrived around 1800 went primarily to Grainger County, near the Grainger/Hawkins County line; some of them living at times in Hawkins County. In addition, there may have been other Daltons who passed through the county. The history of Samuel Dalton of Mayo's family tells us, for example, that Madison Dalton died in Hawkins County in 1827. We do not know which Dalton group he was living with, if either of the large clusters. And a James S. Dalton, born in Virginia in 1794, married to a Mary with children Washington, Jane, William, and Jonathan, appeared for the first time in the Hawkins County census in 1850, living apart from both the known groups.

The second thing that researchers in Hawkins County must deal with is the paucity of records before the Civil War and particularly before 1830. No census survives earlier than 1830. Early court records (with limited exception) were destroyed during the Civil War. Early deeds and wills were also destroyed, although they were reconstructed as best they could be from loose records. So records before 1830 are scarce and perhaps unreliable.

BEECH CREEK SETTLEMENT

With those observations in mind, we turn to the Daltons of Beech Creek. Between 1790 and 1860 at least three separate migrations brought Daltons to Hawkins County. Although Daltons lived on Beech Creek for many generations down through our

current era, the dominant pattern during the early 1800s was for the Daltons to renew their migratory journey, leaving Beech Creek for the West.

TIMOTHY, SR.

Timothy was the first of a number of Daltons who migrated into the Beech Creek Valley during this era. [1] He arrived on Horse Creek in Sullivan County, Tennessee, before 1796 (Sullivan County tax lists, 1796, 1797). We cannot document from where or when he came to Tennessee, but he most likely left Pittsylvania County, Virginia, for Tennessee in 1788, since a Timothy his age was listed in the 1787 tax lists in that county for the last time. [2] Nor do we know if other Daltons accompanied him to Horse Creek, but if they did they left no tax or deed records that we have today.

We suspect that the migration party included John Goad, his wife Margaret, and perhaps other Goads. [3] Another family that was associated with the Daltons in Pittsylvania and migrated to Hawkins is the family of John Bernard. The Bernards of the next generation, including Zadock and Reuben, were to become one of the Daltons most closely associated families in Hawkins County. In addition, Bryant Ward Nowlin, Stephen Senter and Edward Wade also migrated about the same time to the Sullivan/Hawkins area. These families, also closely allied with the Daltons in Pittsylvania County, soon moved on. There were other Pittsylvania County families that made up the close-knit community of the Beech Creek valley including Mullins and Morrisons. Although from Pittsylvania County, we are not certain that they associated with the Daltons before the migration. Some of these families may have come to Beech Creek with Timothy, others may have preceded or followed, associated in the stream of letters that pulled early Americans from one location to another.

Timothy was in the 1796 and 1797 tax lists for Sullivan County, living on Horse Creek, just across a low divide from Beech Creek. In 1804 Timothy bought a tract of land across a low divide from Horse Creek, on Beech Creek in Hawkins County, paying \$500 for 300 acres (Hawkins County Deeds 4:109). Actually, there is in the Hawkins County records an indication that Timothy fell victim to one of the dangers of the frontier. Timothy paid Alexander Outlaw for the 300 acres on the creek. Outlaw was an agent for Richard Caswell, governor of North Carolina who had claimed several parcels on Beech Creek through North Carolina land grants. Timothy's was one of these parcels. We can find no record, however, that Timothy ever sold this land. Nor can we connect the land of any of his children to this parcel. We do find, however, an entry in the Hawkins County Deeds dated 1808, three years after Timothy bought the land, in which William Caswell notified the county that Alexander Outlaw no longer would serve as his agent and that any of Outlaw's subsequent actions were void

(Hawkins County Deeds 4:711). Did Alexander Outlaw live up to his surname? Was he selling land fraudulently? Did Timothy lose \$500, a great deal of money hard earned on the frontier, to a land swindle? The court records for Hawkins County were destroyed during the Civil War, so we do not know if there was ever any record of a possible swindle in them. In fact, because the early deed books were also destroyed and reconstructed at a later date it is possible that deeds selling this land were lost. But we think that we have found proof of Outlaw's fraud. In Jefferson County, Tennessee, Timothy filed suit against Alexander Outlaw in 1809. Outlaw was arrested and held in jail in 1811. In July, 1812, a jury in Jefferson County awarded Timothy \$915 in damages and costs. [4] Although the details of the case have not been found, it appears that this may confirm the theory that Timothy lost his land through fraud.

TIMOTHY, JR.

The only member of the second generation of Daltons that we can document as a child of Timothy was probably his youngest -- Timothy, Jr. The death register for Lee County, Virginia, which records Timothy, Jr.'s death in 1870, indicates he was born in 1803 in Tennessee, that his father was Timothy and his mother Sarah. Timothy, Jr., was married to Susannah Kelly at his death, but we are not certain if this was his first or a subsequent wife. We believe from the 1830 census of Hawkins County that he was married before 1830. Timothy, Jr., moved to Lee County in the 1830s, probably after the death of his father. Two of his children were probably born before that move: Rebecca, born in 1828, who married James Stewart and died in 1869; and Thomas, born in 1829, who married Catherine Collingsworth and died in 1871. Timothy and Susannah had other children born in Lee County:

- Sarah, born in 1832, who married Albert Cope and died in 1913
- Patience, born in 1834, who married John Pennington
- Jonathan, born in 1837, who married Rebecca Gilley and died in 1914
- Isaac, born in 1840, who was killed in the Civil War;
- Mary or Polly, born in 1842
- Martha, born in 1845.

Fanny Dalton was among the early Daltons in Hawkins County, and records have not indicated whether she was a sister to Timothy Sr. or an early child of his. Fanny married Reuben Bernard in Hawkins County about 1801. [5] She was born in the 1780s. Reuben was close to the Daltons on Beech Creek. He witnessed Timothy Dalton's first land purchase in Hawkins County, and many others afterwards. The older woman living with her son George Bernard in the 1840 census was probably Fanny.

THOMAS

Thomas Dalton, another probable son of Timothy Sr. and Sarah, was born in the 1780s or 1790s. He married Dorothy (Dolly) Light, probably around 1815 or 1816. He purchased his first land in 1816 from Vachel Light (Hawkins Deeds 8:9-11), who may have been his father-in-law. Thomas died before the 1830 census, probably after the birth of his youngest son in 1825. Dolly lived on the land Thomas had acquired on Beech Creek until her children were grown. In 1850, she and the children sold the land (Hawkins Deeds 21:132-33), and she moved west to Phelps County, Missouri, with several of her children. She died there in 1863. Thomas and Dolly's oldest son, Peter, was born in 1817 on Beech Creek. He married Ann Dykes around 1837 and died on Beech Creek in 1883 (Hawkins County Cemetery Records, Bernard Cemetery). Thomas and Dolly's daughter Elizabeth Dalton was born on Beech Creek in 1818. She married Francis Wright Light and moved with him and other members of the Dalton and Light families to Leclède County, Missouri, where she died in 1897. Their daughter Sally Dalton was born in the 1810s. She married John Morelock. Margaret Dalton is probably the youngest of Thomas and Dolly's daughters. She was unmarried when the family sold its land in 1850, and may or may not be the Margaret Dalton who married Wesley Bernard in 1862 on Beech Creek. Simon Dalton was the youngest of Thomas and Dolly's children. He was born in 1825 on Beech Creek. He was the first of the family to leave for Missouri around 1849. In 1850, he was living with Samuel Light in Pulaski County, Missouri, and approved the sale of the family land in Hawkins County with a power of attorney to John Ball. He became a leading citizen of Leclède County, Missouri, famous for his support of public education, and died in 1900.

JOHN DALTON

John Dalton, who was still in Hawkins County when Timothy Sr died and who administered Timothy's estate, was also a son of Timothy Sr. John was born on Beech Creek in 1801. He married Patience Light around 1822 on Beech Creek. His first recorded land deal was in 1837 when he received a land grant for his sugar camp on Chimney Top Mountain. We know, however, that he had land earlier. He sold an additional 44 acre tract when he left Beech Creek in 1846 (Hawkins Deeds 21:300), and this is probably the tract on the tax lists in 1836 and 1837. John was a cooper by trade. His and Patience's children were born and raised on Beech Creek before they moved west to Lee County, Iowa, in 1846. He died in Clark County, Missouri, in 1872, and Patience died eight years later. John and Patience's oldest son, Riley, was born on Beech Creek in 1824. He moved west with his parents in 1846. He went west to the Gold Rush in California in the 1850s, returned to Iowa as poor as when he left,

married, and moved to the frontier in Bourbon (now Crawford) County, Kansas, in 1858. There he fought in the Civil War and raised a large family, dying in 1891.

John and Patience's oldest daughter, Elsira, was born in 1827. She married Wright Mullins about 1845. When the rest of her family moved west, she and Wright remained in Tennessee where Wright fought in the Civil War, perhaps for both sides. She died on Beech Creek in 1897 and was buried in the Dykes family cemetery (Hawkins Cemetery Records). Judea Dalton was born in 1830 and moved west with the family, married William Gardner, raised her family and died in Scotland County, Missouri. Berry Dalton was born in 1834, moved west, went to California with Riley and stayed on the west coast. He was in Washington Territory in 1880, and may have died in Shasta County, CA, in 1906. Jonathan Dalton, born in 1837, moved west with the family and remained to take care of John and Patience in their old age. He married twice, Emily Ann Richardson in 1857 and Cloey Livingston in 1868. After John died, Patience lived with Jonathan and his family on the land that John had purchased in Clark County, MO. Jonathan died in Farmington, IA, in 1906. The youngest son, Samuel Lewis Dalton, born in 1840, moved west with them at a young age. He married Rebecca Rinker in 1862 and moved west to Nevada two years later. He moved from there to California, married Mary Christenson Lawson in the late 1890s and died in Fresno CA in 1924. His obituary says he fought as a Confederate in the Civil War, but that seems unlikely given his living in Iowa, and having married in 1862 and moved west in 1864.

Hawkins County marriage records and associated family histories indicate that Timothy probably had other children as well. A daughter Patience, born in 1791, married John Ball, Sr. Their son, John Ball, Jr., became a justice of the peace in the valley in the 1830s and 1840s. William Morrison married two Dalton women: Mary in 1821, who was born around 1800, and Fanny in 1829, who was born in the 1790s. Given the ages of these women they would have been daughters of Timothy unless there is some other Dalton now totally lost from the records.

The Bernard family indicates that Mary Jane Dalton, born around 1800, married Spencer Bernard. The Morelock family indicates that Sarah Dalton, born in 1807, married John William Morelock. Both of these would probably be daughters of Timothy as well. Finally, David Dalton, born in the 1790s, was in the 1830 census for Hawkins County and then disappeared.

Timothy died in 1836 on Beech Creek. John was the administrator of his father's estate (Hawkins County Court Minutes, October 1836, 247-48). Timothy's inventory was destroyed in the War, there is no record of land being passed, and he died without

a will. Sarah died sometime in the late 1830s as well. She was granted support from Timothy's estate, but was absent from the 1840 census.

LEWIS DALTON

The youngest Dalton of Timothy Sr.'s generation to appear in the records on Beech Creek is Lewis Dalton. Lewis was in Hawkins County by 1824 when he received a land grant for 50 acres next to Jacob Light on Beech Creek (Hawkins Land Grant #176). Lewis was born in the 1780s, probably in 1785. [6] He probably came to Hawkins County with a second wave of Dalton migration about 1800. He married Anna Morrison, a daughter of James Morrison. Much that we know about Lewis came from the pension papers of his father in law. James Morrison had served in the revolution from Pittsylvania County. He said in 1818 that he had lived on Beech Creek for over 20 years, which means he arrived before 1800. The best estimate of Lewis and Anna's marriage is around 1805, so Lewis must have been in Hawkins County by that date. It is possible that Lewis migrated with the Morrises. Lewis and Anna were both deceased by 1855 when James Morrison, Jr., filed papers in his father's pension account.

Lewis and Anna had at least five children, and probably six, all of whom had died or left Hawkins County by the mid 1850s. The oldest is John. John was born in either 1807 or 1809. John married Sarah Dalton, daughter of James and Aggy Dalton and his first cousin, sometime in the late 1820s. [7] John appeared in the 1830 census, then did not appear on the 1836 or 1837 tax lists nor in the 1840 census. But Sally who appeared in the 1840 census as head of household appeared to be his wife. John and Sarah moved to Lee County, Iowa, in the early 1840s. Sally died there and John married Nancy Jones, before 1850. John and Sarah's children were:

- Emery, born in the 1830s and killed by Confederates during the Civil War
- Mary Ann, born in 1834 who married Peter Huff in Clark County, Missouri, in 1852, and died in Athens, MO, in 1894
- Elizabeth, born in 1836, who married Sylvester Parsons in Missouri and died there after 1902
- Alexander, born in 1840, who went to Iowa with the family.

Mary was Lewis and Anna's oldest daughter. She was born in 1808 and married James McClellan Piercy about 1826. They lived in Sullivan County in 1840 and 1850, but left soon after for Metcalfe County, KY. She died in Barren County, KY, in 1889.

We also know from Elizabeth Dalton Parsons' 1902 letter that Lewis and Anna's daughter Sarah married William Dalton, son of James and Aggy. Sarah was born in

1815 or 1819. After William died in the 1850s, she remained in Hawkins County in 1860, but then disappeared after that.

We know that Lewis and Anna had other daughters. The 1855 pension papers of James Morrison Jr. indicate that four daughters were alive in 1855 but living elsewhere than Hawkins County. Two of those were Mary and Sarah. In the 1830 census, Lewis and Anna had four young women living with them. Since Mary was married by then, it would seem that there were five daughters, one dead by 1855. Family historians of John and Sarah's family indicate that two of the sisters were named Patience and Judee. We know nothing more about them. It is possible that the fifth is Jane Dalton who married Thomas Dunham in Greene County, TN, in 1843, and was living in Washington County in 1850. But we cannot document this.

Lewis died in 1842 and Anna died sometime before 1850.

JAMES DALTON

The third Dalton of the generation of Timothy and Lewis was James Dalton. Sometime in the 1810s or 1820s, James and Agatha Dalton migrated to Hawkins County. We know that James Dalton and Agatha Patterson were married in 1791 in Pittsylvania County. If the 1850 census was accurate, James was born about 1769 and Aggy about 1770. [8] He may have been a Baptist preacher, but we are not certain. [9]

James was on tax lists in Pittsylvania County until 1822. In the 1820 census, he and Aggy were living next door to Robert Patterson, a brother of Aggy. A female over 45, possible Aggy and Robert's mother, Nancy, were with Robert in that census. James disappeared from the Pittsylvania tax lists in 1823. By 1830, both James Dalton and Robert Patterson were in Hawkins County. It seems likely that Robert and Aggy's mother, Nancy Patterson, died in the early 1820s, and the brother and sister migrated to Hawkins County together in 1823.

We know little about James and Agatha's time in Hawkins County. There is no record that James ever owned land. In 1856, support was paid by the county to Jonathan Bernard for the support of "James Dalton and his wife." Jonathan owned land that had belonged to William Goad. It is likely James lived on this land. By 1860, Aggy was gone from the census. James was listed as age 110 (although the age is probably wrong), and the census taker listed under occupation "a very old man."

The only son that we can document in public records as James and Aggy's is John Dalton who appears in the 1830 census and the 1836 and 1837 tax lists of Hawkins

County. John appears to have been a wanderer. As early as 1815, John, son of James, appeared in the Pittsylvania tax list. A John Dalton also appeared in the 1850 Hawkins County census, born in 1794 in Virginia, and thus the correct age to appear with a separate listing in the 1815 tax list. This John was married to a Phoebe, born 1813. John Dalton appears to have stayed in Pittsylvania County when his parents moved to Hawkins, and to have married Phoebe Bennett in Pittsylvania County in 1836. We do not know if this was a second marriage for John. John, son of James, was then in the 1836 and 1837 tax lists for Hawkins without land.

In 1838, back in Pittsylvania, John bought land from Dillard Parsons (Pittsylvania Deeds 41:396). He was 'of Pittsylvania' indicating that he and Phoebe must have moved back. They appeared in the Pittsylvania census in 1840 and John was absent from the Hawkins County Census that year. In 1841, John, still 'of Pittsylvania,' sold the land acquired from Parsons and Phoebe gave dower (Pittsylvania Deeds 42:323). There are no further legal records for the couple in Pittsylvania County.

In the 1850 census they do not appear in Pittsylvania and were probably the couple in Hawkins. There they were listed with children:

- Berry, age 12,
- Chary, age 11,
- Washington, age 6
- Eliza, age 7
- Dolly, age 3,
- Rebecca, age 8 mo.

All the children were listed as born in Tennessee which would cast doubt on the theory of travel listed above.

The 1860 census confirmed this data except that Eliza was listed as 13 and Dolly as 11. Berry had married by 1860. The question remaining is whether these two John Daltons with records in Pittsylvania and in Hawkins were the same man and son of James and Aggy.

Elizabeth Parsons' letter indicated that Lewis and Anna Dalton's daughter Sarah married a son of James and Aggy, and that this couple had a son named Solomon. This letter points to William Dalton as the son of James and Aggy. William was born about 1813, in Tennessee according to the 1850 census, but almost certainly in Pittsylvania County. He and Sarah were married about 1835. They had children: Isom, born 1836, who served in the Confederate army, married Margaret Bernard in 1873, and died in Hawkins County in 1919; Matilda, b. 1838, who married George Bernard in 1859; Fanny, born in 1839; Thomas, born in 1842; George, born in 1844;

Mary born in 1846; Solomon, born in 1848 or 1850, who married Mary Lucas in 1874, and died in 1914; and Ann, born in 1850. I know nothing about what happened to these children except for Isom and Solomon. William died in 1856 and Sarah remained in Hawkins County with the children at least through 1860.

It is possible that Booker Dalton who appeared in the 1836 and 1837 tax lists for Hawkins County was also a son of James and Aggy. He did not appear in either the 1830 or 1840 census, but James and Aggy had a male born between 1815 and 1820 living with them in both these censuses. This could be Booker. Booker never appeared independently in any other Hawkins County records, and he was gone by the 1850 census. It is also possible that Booker was the male born between 1800 and 1810 living with Timothy and Sarah in 1830. So, his parentage is unknown.

James and Aggy also had females living with them in the census, and likely daughters. A female, born between 1794 and 1804 was living with them in 1820 and 1830. No record of a marriage of this daughter was recorded in Hawkins County, but she was not in the 1840 census listing for the family. Another daughter, born in 1810 from census records, was also with them in 1820 and 1830 and may also be the female listed in the 1840 census. No marriage can be found for this daughter, gone by 1850. There is another female, born between 1815 and 1820 in the 1820 and 1830 censuses. This could be Elizabeth Dalton who married James Jackson in 1839 with William Dalton as surety for the marriage bond. This Elizabeth is listed in the 1850 census, however, as born in 1822. So the females in James and Aggy's line are still unsubstantiated.

Of course, this leaves the question: What is the relationship between Timothy, Lewis, and James Dalton? We know from Elizabeth Parsons' letter that Lewis and James were brothers. Was Timothy also their brother? If so, who was their father? It seems likely that these three were brothers, but that is a story for another time.

NOTES:

[1] The Hawkins County deeds contain a 1793 deed for a Richard Dutton or Dulton (Hawkins Deeds 2:142). No further evidence has been found, however, for a Richard Dalton in Virginia, North Carolina, or Tennessee at this time or afterwards. Since this deed book was recopied in the nineteenth century from the original deed book, the most probable explanation is that this deed is in error, or that the name is Dutton.

[2] In fact, two Timothy Daltons appear for the last time in Pittsylvania County in the

1787 tax list. One is the son of John and Patience Dalton, born in the 1750s. The other is Timothy, Jr., with no parentage obvious from the tax lists, born in between 1766 and 1771. We have only one record indicating the age of Timothy of Hawkins County, the 1830 census that indicates he was born in the 1760s. If we rely on the accuracy of that record, then Timothy, Jr., is most likely Timothy of Hawkins.

[3] In the 1796 tax list of Sullivan County, are Gabriel, Peter, Margaret, and William Goad. In 1803, Timothy witnesses the deed when Margaret, widow of John who died in the early 1790s, sells her land. The Goad cabin exists today as part of the Bays Mountain Park, near Kingston, TN. The author is grateful to Kenneth Haas for his research on the Goads.

[4] Jefferson County, TN, Circuit Court Records, 1809, p. 23; Jan 1811, p. 66; July 12, 1812, p. 161. Esther Bruesch did the original research on these records.

[5] Although Bernard family tradition said that Fanny was a Dalton, there is reason to doubt this. Reuben served in the War of 1812 and Fanny applied for a pension for his service after his death. There she testified that her name before marriage was Fanny Burton. Although this would seem to be incontrovertible proof, there is no evidence that we have found to now of Burtons in the Sullivan/Hawkins area. In addition, the manuscript of the pension affidavit appears that the maiden name was left out and inserted after a memory was recovered. Fanny was 70 at the time. So, it is possible that either tradition or the pension is correct.

[6] Censuses agree that Lewis was born in the 1780s. He is not tithable in the 1836 tithe list which means that he was age 50 by then (Tennessee law removed residents from the tithe list at age 50). Thus, his birth would be before 1786.

[7] We know about John's marriage and the relationship of his father and father-in-law from a letter written in 1902 by Elizabeth "Betts" Parson, a daughter of John and Sarah. That letter explains that Betts and Solomon Dalton, son of William and Sarah Dalton were double cousins. John, son of Lewis, married Sarah, daughter of James, and Sarah, daughter of Lewis, married a son of James and Aggy. We can identify that son as William Dalton through the census.

[8] The 1850 census lists both as born in Tennessee, but this is almost certainly an error. The child credited with being the first born in Tennessee was a child of William Bean born in Carter's Valley in 1769. In addition, we can find no record of James in Tennessee prior to the 1830 census, and we have no evidence of any Daltons in Tennessee earlier than Timothy. James is Timothy's contemporary rather than a son.

[9] James and Agatha were befriended by a Baptist minister, Nathan Thurman, in Pittsylvania County. During the rough economic times of the 1790s, Thurman paid their debt at the Calland Store. Common practice at the time was for an older minister to provide such support for a younger man called to the ministry.

About the Author

James F. Klumpp is a Dalton through his mother's line. He has researched the Hawkins Co. Daltons for many years and has extended his research interests to the Daltons of 18th c. Pittsylvania Co. VA. His website

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offers new approaches to old problems in Dalton research, dispelling many of the myths that have attached themselves to Dalton lore.

On a daily basis, Jim is a professor at a large university and is married to a preservation archivist.

The Dalton Journal is an appendage of the Dalton Gang Letter. If you have a topic you would like to write about for the Journal, please contact me (below).

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