

**Citation:** Russell B. James, *The Early Dickson Families of Dickson County Tennessee*, 541 Bethany Road, Erin, TN 37061

## **A Labor of Love**

On a chilly morning in October, 2000 my wife and I had a small ground breaking ceremony for our family at the site upon which we were to build our retirement dream home. It is located on land in Houston County first acquired by my wife's gr. gr. gr. grandfather, Hugh DICKSON, in Dec. 1803. The location was in Dickson Co. until Houston County was created in 1871.

We video taped the ceremony which included my wife's brief comments about how her ancestor, Hugh DICKSON, traveled with his parents, Joseph DICKSON and Jane MOLTON/MOULTON, from Duplin Co. NC along with 7 other brothers to settle on Yellow Creek in Dickson County. (Note: Henceforth I will use the MOLTON spelling but both spellings MOLTON or MOULTON are commonly found on original records and are acceptable)

In 2003 we had a family reunion in celebration of the bicentennial of the DICKSON farm which is located near the intersection of State Highways 49 & 46 on Yellow Creek. From the front porch of the old DICKSON home place, a nephew made a similar presentation regarding Hugh DICKSON and his parents from Duplin Co. NC.

As we prepared for the bicentennial, I became interested in the history of the farm and rekindled an interest in an old hobby of mine, genealogy. I had abandoned the hobby years before.

For months I researched old deeds in Charlotte, old Dickson County court minutes, estate records, tax lists, marriage records, internet resources, etc. A DICKSON family internet research team of over 12 people from all over the country was formed in the process. But, the more information I got, the more confused I became because the pieces simply didn't fit.

***Suddenly it hit me!***.....the long accepted version of Hugh DICKSON of Yellow Creek in Dickson County, TN being the son of Joseph DICKSON and Jane MOLTON from Duplin Co. NC was wrong. ***It was simply a case of mistaken identity.***

Well, much to the chagrin of my wife's family, I cut off 6 generations of the family tree as a result! My conclusions contradict the version set forth in William J. NESBITT's, **The Primal Families of the Yellow Creek Valley**. They contradict other published sources. They contradict my wife's DICKSON line as accepted by the DAR. They contradict virtually every pre-2004 internet recording on the family. They contradict some information published as early as 1937!

But through the entire process it has been a "labor of love" as I've tried to piece together the true story of the man who in 1803 bought this land upon which we now live. I expect some of my conclusions to be challenged. That is how it should be as I very well may have made some errors in fact or judgment. I have used original records and documents in drawing my conclusions and welcome any additional information (whether supportive or contradictory) from others regarding the various DICKSON families of the Dickson County area in the early years. I have tried to note in this article that information that I've researched personally and that which has come to me second-hand and has not been verified.

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## **The Dickson Families of the Dickson County Area**

Much has been written about Dr. William DICKSON of Davidson County from whom Dickson County gets its name. Also, the appearance of Joseph DICKSON, whose will is the first one recorded in Dickson County, is well documented. It has been suggested that Joseph DICKSON who died in Dickson Co. in late 1803 or early 1804 might be considered the "*Father of Dickson County*" and many DICKSON descendants with roots in Dickson County have claimed him as their ancestor.

One problem I found in researching this family is that so many of the DICKSON families in upper middle Tennessee used the same given names. For example, at various times between 1803 and 1820 there were no fewer than 6 different Hugh DICKSONs living in Dickson Co. and one nearby in Montgomery Co.! Of course some were children, even infants, but it is confusing nevertheless.

The 7 different Hugh DICKSONs I can identify are: (1) Hugh DICKSON of Dry Branch a tributary of Yellow Creek, (2) Hugh DICKSON s/o Joseph DICKSON and Jane MOLTON, (3) Hugh DICKSON s/o Raccoon Creek John DICKSON and probably Jane WILSON, (4) Hugh DICKSON s/o Bear Creek James DICKSON and Margaret Ann/Ann Margaret WILSON, (5) Hugh James DICKSON s/o Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON and probably Mary COWAN, (6) Hugh DICKSON s/o Michael DICKSON and Sene WILLIAMS, (7) Hugh DICKSON s/o Bartons Creek Joseph DICKSON and Martha COWAN of Montgomery Co.

For years many DICKSON family researchers have visited the archives in Charlotte and the Public Library in Dickson. My purpose here is to publish research data on the DICKSON families associated with Dickson County Tennessee and to correct some misconceptions on family relationships previously published but found to be in error. The time period I'm addressing is from about 1803 to about 1860. I'm not addressing later generations in detail because I've found most of the previously published accounts and those currently found on the internet that set forth later generations are substantially correct.

## **John DICKSON, Immigrant from Ireland**

Most DICKSON family researchers appearing in Dickson Co. are attempting to trace their ancestry to a John DICKSON (b. in Ireland ca. 1704, d. in Duplin Co. NC, 25 Dec. 1774) I would note the children of the immigrant John DICKSON have substantially been proven. The first two children are by John's first wife, Elizabeth, and the others by his second wife, Ann.

The children were: [I] Michael DICKSON m. Sarah NEELY, to Pendleton Dist. SC, [II] John DICKSON, Jr m. ? probably to Pendleton Dist. SC, [III] William DICKSON m. Mary WILLIAMS, Duplin Co. NC. Letters written by this William DICKSON to his family back in Ireland survived and document much of the Revolutionary War history of this DICKSON family. The letters were published by James O. Carr in 1933 and are simply known as "The DICKSON Letters". [IV] Robert DICKSON m. 1<sup>st</sup>. Catherine PEARSALL, m. 2<sup>nd</sup> Barbara BONEY, Duplin Co. NC, [V] Joseph DICKSON, m. Jane MOLTON, Duplin Co. NC to Dickson Co. TN, [VI] Alexander DICKSON m. Elizabeth MOLTON, Duplin Co. NC but the marriage appears to have

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been immediately annulled or he simply left her on their wedding day. [VII] Edward DICKSON, Duplin Co. NC, [VIII] James DICKSON, Sr. m. 1<sup>st</sup> Dorothy PEARSALL, m. 2<sup>nd</sup> Susannah POWELL CARR (widow), Duplin Co. NC, [IX] Mary DICKSON m. William McGOWAN, Duplin Co. NC

A book that includes this family by Claire (Jean) SULLIVAN, Ph. D. of Westminster, MD has just been published (Fall, 2006). The title is **“Descendents of Simon DICKSON”**. It is 643 pages long including the Appendices and name index in the back of the book. There are 959 family units described. The list of descendents of John DICKSON, the immigrant from Ireland, is the most complete and accurate list published to date in my opinion. The book is very complete and sources are cited in detail including many Dickson County, TN Courthouse records. A copy of this book will certainly find its way to the Dickson County Public Library.

Deed records of Montgomery Co. and, subsequently, Dickson Co. prove that several thousand acres of land in what would eventually become Dickson County, TN were granted to brothers James DICKSON [VIII] and Edward DICKSON [VII] of Duplin Co. NC and their nephew Col John DICKSON (s/o Robert DICKSON [IV] & Catherine PEARSALL) of Cumberland Co. NC.

A John DICKSON was a surveyor in upper middle Tennessee in the early 1790's. I believe him to be the Col. John DICKSON who, at the time, was a resident of Duplin Co. NC but later moved to Cumberland County, NC. These three names are mentioned frequently in early Dickson Co. deeds but there is no evidence that James [VIII] or Edward [VII], ever relocated to Tennessee. Col. John DICKSON may have lived here temporarily while surveying.

**Dr. William DICKSON** (s/o William DICKSON [III] & Mary WILLIAMS)

Dickson County was named for Dr. William DICKSON of Davidson County, Tennessee. He was the son of William DICKSON [III], who wrote the DICKSON Letters, and Mary WILLIAMS who resided in Duplin Co. NC. A prominent physician in Davidson County, Dr. DICKSON was active in political circles and was a congressman from Davidson County having served as a member of the U. S. House of Representatives from 4 March 1801 to 3 March 1807.

According to published reports and a marriage notice found in the Raleigh Register (NC) Dr. DICKSON married Polly GRAY in Dec. 1802 in Nashville.

However, this very recent (2006) discovery has come to light:

“Dr. Dickson's wife was Mary Branch JONES, the daughter of Lt. William JONES and his wife, Anne BRANCH, of Amelia County, Virginia [John W. Pritchett, *Southside Virginia Genealogies*, p. 2404]. Mary B. JONES married first in Amelia Co. VA 13 July 1801 (bond) to Claiborne ANDERSON [Kathleen Booth Williams, *Marriages of Amelia County, Virginia, 1735-1815*, p. 3]. He died two years later leaving Mary property that came to her from her father [Amelia Co. Will Bk. 7 1803-11, p. 25]. Mary Branch JONES ANDERSON DICKSON and Dr. DICKSON were husband and wife and residing in Davidson County, Tennessee, by December 1805 when they gave a power of attorney to her brother Gen. Chamberlaine JONES to dispose of her inheritance from her father and her dower right in the property of her late husband [Amelia

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Co. Deed Bk. 15, 1817-21, p. 279]. Mary was joined in Davidson County by her brother Benjamin B. JONES, [*Ibid.*, p. 283], whom Dr. DICKSON later named as an executor of his will.”

Mary B. DICKSON was also known as Polly B. DICKSON and is so named in the will of Dr. DICKSON. Her brother, Benjamin B. JONES, and Edward WARD and William C. WARD were named as executors. Both WARD men had married sisters of Mary/Polly B. JONES.

I do not yet have copies of the Powers of Attorney filed by Dr. William DICKSON of Davidson Co. TN and his wife Mary/Polly B. back in Amelia Co. VA but I have no reason to doubt their authenticity. In my opinion, based on this preliminary data, Dr. DICKSON married twice. He first married Polly GRAY in 1802 and then he married the widow, Mary/Polly B. JONES ANDERSON, bef. Dec. 1805.

There is no question about the names of Dr. DICKSON’s daughters, (1) Cornelea Ann, (2) Sarah Indiana, and (3) Mary Florida. They are mentioned in his will recorded in Davidson County on 11 May 1816 and also in their grandfather’s will in Duplin Co. NC. Based on the approximate dates of birth of the oldest and youngest daughters using later census recordings, these children would have been born after 1805 and, therefore, were children by his second wife.

Dr. William DICKSON of Davidson County is mentioned in some early deeds of Dickson County but most frequently he was simply acting as the agent or attorney for members of his family who still resided in NC.

There is no evidence I’ve found to suggest Dr. William DICKSON ever resided in Dickson Co. As a matter of fact, there is no mention of the name Dickson County in the petition to form the new county. There is a paper as a part of the petition papers which suggests the names being contemplated for the new county were Galliton Co. or Livingston/Livingston Co. There were three DICKSON males who signed the 1803 petition, Hugh DICKSON, Sr., Hugh DICKSON and James DICKSON but more on them later.

**William DICKSON** (s/o James DICKSON [VIII] and Catherine PEARSALL) a.k.a. the “other” William DICKSON in Davidson Co.

Again I mention a man who appears to have never lived in Dickson County. Some accounts show his name as William Pearsall DICKSON but I’ve never seen the middle name used in any “original” document. This William DICKSON and Dr. William DICKSON were first cousins (sons of the brothers James [VIII] and William [III] of Duplin Co. NC respectively) and both lived in Davidson County which has caused considerable confusion. This is especially true since William DICKSON (s/o James DICKSON [VIII] & Catherine PEARSALL) was sometimes identified as William DICKSON, Jr. in early Tennessee records simply to differentiate him from his older cousin living in Davidson County at the same time! The use of Sr. and Jr. did not necessarily mean a father/son relationship in those times. It was used simply to differentiate between two men living in the same place, at the same time with the same name.

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This William DICKSON was gifted 640 acres on Jones Creek in Dickson County from his father (James DICKSON [VIII]) but he does not appear to have lived on that land selling it almost immediately. (Dickson Co. Deed Book A, pages 196 & 329)

**Alexander DICKSON** (s/o James DICKSON [VIII] & Catherine PEARSALL)

This Alexander DICKSON (not to be confused with his Uncle Alexander DICKSON [VI] who lived in Duplin Co. NC) was also gifted land by his father, James DICKSON [VIII], in Dickson County TN in 1810. (Dickson Co. Deed Book A. pg. 374) However, unlike his brother (William of Davidson Co.), Alexander did live on that land for a number of years and was a prominent citizen of the Yellow Creek area. This land was located on what was called Old Town Creek. Today it is simply known as Town Branch a tributary of Yellow Creek in Houston County. In this deed record the land is said to be located at the site of the “Old Indian Town” thus the name Old Town Creek I surmise. It was probably a Chickasaw town. This land eventually became part of the FENTRESS plantation. More recently this land was owned by Hugh Hinson DICKSON (Little Hugh) of Houston Co. who married Mary Evelyn WISEMAN. The farm on Town Branch was given to “Little Hugh” by his father, Benjamin Hugh DICKSON (“Mr. Hugh”) who had purchased it.

While Alexander is mentioned frequently in Dickson County records (deeds, court minutes, estate records) from about 1810 through about 1835, I’ve not been able to document with certainty all his children but census recordings suggest a small family. Alexander DICKSON married Janette STEWART the daughter of James STEWART and Catherine KNOWLAN of Montgomery Co. TN. Janette’s father, James STEWART, was the twin brother of Duncan STEWART from whom Stewart County gets its name.

The children of Alexander DICKSON and Janette STEWART are believed to be: (1) James McDougal DICKSON (died young), (2) William Pearsall DICKSON (not *William Pearsall DICKSON s/o James DICKSON [VIII]*), (3) Unknown daughter, (4) Margaret Williamson DICKSON (m. George MARTIN), (5) Nolan Stewart DICKSON.

William Pearsall DICKSON and Nolan Stewart DICKSON appear to have moved their families to Wilkinson or Amite Counties in southern Mississippi where both Duncan STEWART and James STEWART died and are buried.

**Joseph DICKSON** [V] (s/o of John DICKSON the immigrant from Ireland)

Finally we get to the man some have called the “*Father of Dickson County*”. This Joseph DICKSON [V] moved from Duplin County, NC to Dickson Co. TN ca. 1803. He married Jane MOLTON (d/o Abraham MOLTON/MOULTON and Jane NORRIS). All their children were born in NC and all but the one daughter came to Dickson Co. TN

The children were: (1) Ann DICKSON m. James PEARSALL but they remained in Duplin Co. NC (2) Michael DICKSON m. Sene WILLIAMS. Moved to Humphreys County, TN then to Franklin Co. AL. (3) Hugh DICKSON m. Hannah DICKSON. Moved to Humphreys County, TN and was first Recorder of Deeds there. I believe he returned briefly to Dickson Co. ca. 1816-

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1822 then moved to Franklin Co. AL. This Hugh is addressed in some detail below. (4) David DICKSON m. Elizabeth McNAIRY (d/o Robert McNAIRY). David was the first County Clerk of Dickson Co. but resigned in 1812 and moved to Giles County, TN where he died ca. 1818-1820. (5) Joseph DICKSON, Jr. m. (1<sup>st</sup>) Mary McNAIRY (d/o Robert McNAIRY) & (2<sup>nd</sup>) the widow, Mrs. Mary SMITH. He also moved to Giles Co. TN. His first wife probably died in Giles Co. and he probably married his second wife there. He lived for awhile in Alabama and then moved to Pontotoc Co. MS where he was living when he died ca. 1872. (6) Molton DICKSON m. Martha STRONG (d/o Christopher STRONG).

Molton and Martha lived near Charlotte and he was a prominent citizen of the area until his death ca. 1835. It is important to note that Molton was the only child of Joseph DICKSON [V] and Jane MOLTON to remain in Dickson County until his death. Two of Molton's children died in Dickson County. A son, Joseph A. DICKSON, Sr., is buried in the Christopher STRONG cemetery and a daughter, Elizabeth Jane DICKSON, who married George RAWORTH on 27 Nov, 1833 but she died before 1845. To my current knowledge all of the other children of Molton DICKSON and Martha STRONG moved out of Dickson County before 1850. Most of them moved to Tipton Co. TN. It is unlikely any current residents of Dickson County are descendents of Molton, unless they descend through the RAWORTH line. Of course it is possible some descendents of Molton and Martha returned to Dickson Co. at some later date.

Here I return to the list of the children of Joseph DICKSON [V] & Jane MOLTON. (7) Abner DICKSON never married. He moved to Humphreys Co. TN but was permanently and totally disabled in the War of 1812 while serving under General Andrew JACKSON at New Orleans. He was taken to Franklin Co. AL. The disability pension file of Abner DICKSON is extensive and is available through the National Archives. The U. S. Congress passed a bill (24<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, H.R. 377) specifically increasing Abner's pension.. (8) Robert DICKSON married Martha TONEY in or near Franklin Co. AL but was killed shortly after the marriage according to a document known as the Ann DICKSON WATSON Memorandum (see below). That account says he was killed a week after the marriage but I suspect it was a bit longer. He appears living near his brother, Michael, in the 1820 Alabama State census (no 1820 federal census for Alabama available). There were no children born of this union. (9) William DICKSON never married. Little is known of him but apparently he too moved to Franklin Co. AL.

Recent discoveries (2006) suggest that Jane MOLTON DICKSON, the widow of Joseph DICKSON [V], remarried to the widower, James STEWART (twin brother of Duncan STEWART) ca. 1811-1812. The Joseph DICKSON family and the STEWART brothers were closely aligned. Duncan and James STEWART witnessed the Will of Joseph DICKSON in 1803. Per Dickson County Court minutes, Duncan appeared at the Dickson Co. Court to prove the will. Jane DICKSON witnessed a business transaction of James STEWART of Montgomery Co. in 1811. Then she is named as being Jane STEWART in her mother's (Sarah NORRIS MOLTON) Will dated in 1812 and recorded in Dickson Co. James STEWART's Will recorded in Montgomery Co. in 1818 gives his wife's name as "Jane". It is generally accepted that all of his children were by his first wife, "Catherine" KNOWLIN. In other words....all the pieces fit that the widow, Jane MOLTON DICKSON, married the widower, James STEWART, ca. 1811-1812.

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**Hugh DICKSON** (s/o Joseph DICKSON [V] and Jane MOLTON)

I'm going to address in some detail only this one son of Joseph DICKSON [V] and Jane MOLTON. It has been erroneously reported that this Hugh DICKSON married Hannah HICKS and lived on Dry Branch a tributary of Yellow Creek in what is now Houston County. The name HICKS appears as early as 1937 in a Duplin Co. NC newspaper article by A. T. OUTLAW. There were a few errors in the 1937 article and I believe the name HICKS is one of them.

In fact, this Hugh DICKSON married Hannah DICKSON. This comes from two original sources. Hannah's own depositions found in her bounty land applications from the 1850's available from the National Archives and a document known as the Ann DICKSON WATSON Memorandum found from sources in AL. The ADW Memorandum is reported to be a list of family members written by a daughter of Michael DICKSON and Sene WILLIAMS. While Ann's list is not complete (especially regarding the children of her Uncles & Aunts who did not live in Franklin Co. AL) it is absolutely accurate on the information it does contain based on other original documents found to date.

The memo says Hugh DICKSON married his "cousin" Hannah DICKSON. More on that later.

This Hugh DICKSON moved to Humphreys County TN where he purchased land on Blue Creek from his brother, Michael and became the first Recorder of Deeds in that county. He appears to move back to Dickson County and is found there on page 14 in the 1820 census. In about 1822 he moved to Franklin Co. AL and is found there in the 1830 and 1840 censuses. He died in Franklin Co. AL in 1843. Hannah continued to live in Franklin Co. AL and is found on the 1850 and 1860 censuses.

Dr. Sullivan's book shows the children of this union as: (1) Jane DICKSON possibly married a BAKER. (2) Elizabeth DICKSON m. William H. PRICE. (3) Lucinda DICKSON possibly married a PETERS. (4) Catherine DICKSON possibly the second wife of William H. PRICE. (5) Michael DICKSON. (6) Edward DICKSON a school teacher in Alabama who can be found in Ellis Co. TX in the 1880 census. (7) William DICKSON. (8) Robert DICKSON. (9) Julia DICKSON. Before our recent discoveries, most sources said the children of this marriage were those who were actually children of Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON shown below.

### **"The Creek Guys" Theory**

Evidence of four other DICKSON families who moved to Dickson Co. or Montgomery Co. ca. 1803 to 1806 has surfaced. I have identified them by using the Creek names found in their deed records and I believe (but have not proven) they were brothers. Three of them lived near each other on Yellow Creek and one lived on Bartons Creek in Montgomery Co. There is strong circumstantial evidence that the four came to upper middle TN from Jefferson and/or Greene Co. in far East Tennessee. The families were closely associated with WILSON (especially Adam WILSON) and WOODS families who also came to Dickson Co. from the Jefferson/Greene County area. The four "theoretical" brothers were: (1) Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON, (2) Raccoon Creek John DICKSON, (3) Bear Creek James DICKSON, (4) Bartons Creek Joseph DICKSON

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The names Hugh DICKSON, John DICKSON, James DICKSON and Joseph DICKSON appear on two NC petitions dated 1788 and 1789 from citizens living in the area of what became Greene Co. & Jefferson Co. TN. The petitions sought NC assistance (protection) following the failure of the State of Franklin. Also appearing on those petitions were Adam WILSON, Joseph WILSON, Joseph WOODS, James WOODS, Patrick WOODS, Joseph MANNING, Job MANNING, and James GILLESPIE. These are all names that also appear in the early minutes of Dickson Co. TN. As a matter of fact Hugh DICKSON, James DICKSON, Adam WILSON, James WILSON, Joseph WOODS, James WOODS, Jos. MANNING and James GILLESPIE also signed the 1803 petition that resulted in Dickson Co. being established.

Early Dickson County road orders and deeds prove the DICKSON, WILSON and WOODS families settled near each other along Yellow Creek and some of their farms were adjacent to each other. The WOODS families moved from Dickson Co. ca. 1814 and are in Indiana by ca. 1819.

### **Hugh DICKSON of Dry Branch**

It is believed that Hugh DICKSON of Dry Branch married Mary COWAN. They are mentioned as a daughter & son-in-law in an estate settlement court entry of Andrew COWAN in Jefferson Co. TN ca. 1808. Hugh bought 150 acres of land on Dry Branch from David WILSON of Sumner Co. in 1803. That original 150 acres remains a part of the farm on Bethany Road in Houston Co. Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON is listed on pg 5 of the 1820 Dickson Co. census and he is also on the 1830 and 1840 Dickson Co. censuses.

This Hugh DICKSON is the one frequently said to be the son of Joseph DICKSON [V] and Jane MOLTON but he was not. At the time of this writing I've been unable to find the parents of "The Creek Guys". Hugh was born ca. 1770-1774 and died ca. 1847. He is probably buried in an unmarked grave in the old DICKSON Cemetery on Bethany Road in Houston Co.

Proven children of Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON are: (1) John DICKSON (b. 1801, d. 1865) m. Elizabeth M. DUNCAN, (2) Martha DICKSON m. (1<sup>st</sup>) Endimeon BRIGHAM of Stewart Co., m. (2<sup>nd</sup>) Robert CALDWELL. The CALDWELLS lived in Stewart Co. (3) Mary E. DICKSON m. Robert BONDS 17 March 1834. They moved to Pope Co. AR (4) Unknown son b. ca. 1810-1815 based on 1820 & 1830 censuses, (5) Rebecca Caroline DICKSON m. Aaron James PARRISH 27 Jan. 1830. Rev. PARRISH was the founding minister of the Bethany Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He officiated at many marriages recorded in Dickson Co. and wrote the obituary of Wiley TURNER (father of Holley Frances TURNER) of Humphries Co. for "The Christian Advocate". (6) Hugh James DICKSON (b. 1817, d. 1873) m. Holley Frances TURNER. This is our family line.

The children of (6) Hugh James DICKSON and Holly Frances TURNER are found listed on pages 58-59 of a booklet entitled **Early History of The Turner Family and the Charles New Turner Branch** by William Bruce Turner (Publication date uncertain, probably early 1960's). The list has not been verified by me but included are: (a) Mariah Tennessee DICKSON b. 26 July 1842. probably died young. (b) William Erskin DICKSON b. 18 March 1844, d. 8 Feb.



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1886, m. Mary DAVIS a widow. (c) Sarah Alice DICKSON b. 24 Feb. 1846, d. 1 Jan. 1867, m. William Carney ALLEN. (d) James Wiley DICKSON b. 12 Dec. 1848, d. 14 Dec. (tombstone says 14 Sept.) 1892, m. Bennetta EDMONDSON. The latter is my wife's (Bennetta Dickson MALLORY) namesake. (e) Sophronia Wilton DICKSON b. 10 Dec. 1849, d. 20 Jan. 1869, m. David A. MITCHELL. (f) Martha Blanche DICKSON b. 23 Dec. 1851, d. 4 Oct. 1933. m. Alfred B. SKELTON. (g) Thomas Clark DICKSON b. ca. 1854, d. 1 Feb. 1885. (h) Minerva Jane DICKSON b. 31 March 1856, d. 24 Nov. 1934, m. Jeremiah NESBITT. (i) Hugh Joseph DICKSON b. 29 May 1862, d. 21 Dec. 1882. (j) Samuel Nolan DICKSON b. 22 July 1865, d. 31 July 1890, never married. (k) Frances Inez DICKSON b. 22 Nov. 1866, d. 4 Feb. 1889, m. Dr. James H. STOKES but she died young and is buried in the DICKSON cemetery on Bethany Road. (l) Mary Eliza DICKSON b. 12 July 1869, probably died as infant

Continuing with the children of Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON and probably Mary COWAN. (7) Elizabeth Alice DICKSON b. ca. 1824, m. Ebenezer Erskin LARKINS 15 Dec. 1841. Family lived in or near Charlotte. (8) James W. DICKSON m. Minerva Jane LEACH. Family lived in or near Charlotte. (9) William C. DICKSON moved to Pope Co. AR then to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory. I've found no evidence as yet of a marriage of the William C. DICKSON.

It is from this line of Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON that many current residents of Dickson or Houston Counties may find their descent. Most are probably descendents of the oldest son, John, or the younger brother, Hugh James, both of whom had farms near the intersection of State Highways 46 and 49 in what is now Houston County.

### **John DICKSON of Raccoon Creek**

In 1788 John DICKSON of Raccoon Creek married Jane WILSON per a marriage bond on record in Greene County, TN. He moved to Dickson County, TN and bought land on Raccoon Creek a tributary of Yellow Creek from William DOAK in 1806 (Dickson County Deed Book A, pg 217). This land is located near the intersection of Ellis Mills Road and Williamson Branch Road in what is now Houston Co. Raccoon Creek is small and doesn't have an identification sign where Ellis Mills Road crosses it near the point it enters Yellow Creek.

In the 1820 Dickson Co. census there is no female of age to his wife but Dickson County court records prove he had a widow, Mary/Polly DICKSON, when he died ca. 1821. There was a bitter fight over the estate between the widow and the children as proven in the Dickson County Court minutes of the 1820's. The minutes mention peace bonds, riot and trespass. This has led me to believe that Mary/Polly was his second wife whom he married shortly before his death. It may have been a death bed marriage.

There is an old stone marker in the A. B. SKELTON Cemetery located on Ellis Mills Road in Houston Co. This cemetery overlooks Raccoon Creek and deed records prove it is on the land previously owned by Raccoon Creek John DICKSON. The marker gives only the initials "J. D." who died 20 April 1815 aged 47. A SKELTON descendant placed a modern marker at that location a few years ago and named the "J. D." as James DICKSON and said he was an indigent farm hand of A. B. SKELTON but there is no documented evidence to suggest that name is correct. The land and cemetery passed through two other owners before being acquired by the

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SKELTON family in 1847 over thirty years after the death date on the original marker. I believe the old stone marker with simply the initials "J. D." is that of John's first wife, Jane WILSON DICKSON.

Most of the children of Raccoon Creek John DICKSON are mentioned as purchasers at the sale of the personal property following his death (Dickson County Estate Settlement Book, pg.90-91) It is interesting that there is a James W. DICKSON mentioned and a James DICKSON. I think one is the son and one is a brother (Bear Creek James) of John. Then there is a Hugh DICKSON and a Hugh DICKSON, Sr. mentioned. I think one is the son and one is a brother (Dry Branch Hugh) of John.

Dickson County Court minutes of the February term 1843 document the 10 children of Raccoon Creek John DICKSON. All are probably children by his first wife, Jane. I do not know dates of birth but the children are listed here from oldest to youngest as best I've determined to date. Robert was almost certainly the oldest male being born ca. 1790 and Polly Lundy/Lindy was definitely the youngest. It is possible that Polly L. DICKSON was a daughter of John's second wife. I've found virtually no research on the children of Raccoon Creek John DICKSON so I'm showing the children with some detail in this article.

Dr. Robert DICKSON (b. ca. 1790, d. 1834) m. (1<sup>st</sup>) unknown; m. (2<sup>nd</sup>) Peggy MORRISON (d/o William MORRISON). Dr. Robert DICKSON moved to Madison County, TN and he died 16 Aug. 1834 and his wife, Peggy, died the next day on the 17<sup>th</sup>. He had children by both wives. The children of Peggy are mentioned in the Will of their grandfather, William MORRISON, found in Dickson Co. This Robert DICKSON has frequently been mistakenly named as a son of Joseph DICKSON [V] and Jane MOLTON.

Margaret DICKSON m. (1<sup>st</sup>) David COWAN and moved to Humphreys County. David died in the early 1820's and, based on the Dickson County Court minutes regarding the estate of her father, Margaret appears to have married (2<sup>nd</sup>) James BOATRRIGHT. The estate records of Andrew COWAN in Jefferson Co. TN previously mentioned in this article indicate he had a young son named "David" and it is very possible they are one and the same. Perhaps David moved to Dickson County following the death of his father in Jefferson Co. A William COWAN signed the petition in 1803 to form Dickson Co. Andrew COWAN also had a son named William. Margaret COWAN was the person mentioned most frequently in the sale of the personal property of her father.

Hugh DICKSON. Little is known about this Hugh DICKSON although he is mentioned frequently in the estate settlement of his father. He claimed he was deeded a small tract of land of his father without a written deed as proof. I have not found him as head of a household in any census. There were probably three adult men named Hugh DICKSON living in Dickson Co. at the time of the 1820 census. This Hugh DICKSON would have been the youngest and may have been living in his father's household (John DICKSON pg. 5). The other two were Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON (b. ca. 1770-1774) pg. 5 and Hugh DICKSON (b. ca. 1781) pg. 14 (s/o Joseph DICKSON [V] & Jane MOLTON.)

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Joseph DICKSON m. Sarah/Sally LATIMER (probably d/o of James L. LATIMER and Jane Gwin "Jennie" HAMILTON) and moved to Carroll County, TN. Sally DICKSON appears as widow in the 1830 Carroll County census and she remarried shortly thereafter to Samuel Finley MOORE.

James W. DICKSON m. Mary Abigail LATIMER (d/o James L. LATIMER and Jane Gwin "Jennie" HAMILTON) and moved to Carroll County, TN. In 1832 Carroll County Court minutes indicate James W. DIXON was named guardian of the minor children David COWAN and Margaret DICKSON, both of whom had died. Before 1840 James W. DICKSON moved with his family to Red River Co. TX.

Sally DICKSON m. Benjamin CUMMINS but she died very young possibly in giving birth to their only son, George CUMMINS. Benjamin CUMMINS was very much involved in the John DICKSON estate dispute frequently being associated with his brother-in-law, Hugh DICKSON. Both Benjamin CUMMINS and his son, George, appear together in the 1850 Dickson County census.

John DICKSON, Jr. married but his wife's name is not known to me at this time. He too moved to Carroll Co. TN and had children but this family has not been researched by me.

Adam DICKSON (b. 18 May 1802, d. 7 May 1883) was probably named after Adam WILSON. Based on a tombstone inscription, I believe Adam married Celia CORBIN (probably a daughter of Burrell CORBIN) but she died very young at the age of 16 in 1838. She is buried in the Dunbar Cemetery located just off Hwy 13 at Sailors Rest in Montgomery County. Celia may have died giving birth to a son Joseph DICKSON who appears at age 12 in the 1850 Montgomery Co. census living with Adam DICKSON and his second wife, Matilda.

Adam then married Matilda NOLAN (d/o Robert NOLAN & Charity MORRISON). This Charity MORRISON and Peggy MORRISON who married Dr. Robert DICKSON were sisters. Adam and Matilda are buried in the family cemetery located at the home currently known at the Lylewood Inn Bed and Breakfast near Indian Mound. The old plantation was on the Montgomery/Stewart County line.

Adam was given Power of Attorney by William DOAK (guardian) of Madison Co. TN to act in behalf of the minor heirs of Dr. Robert DICKSON

Jane DICKSON m. Tharpe ESTES. Jane was a minor at the time of her father's death but had married Tharpe by 1827 based on the estate records of her father. Both Tharpe and Jane were alive in 1827 when the land of Raccoon Creek John DICKSON was finally sold but I've been unable to find any record of them after that date.

Mary/Polly Lundy or Lindy DICKSON m. Thomas H. GOODRUM. She was the baby in the family and Howard W. TURNER was named her guardian in 1825. The marriage of Polly and Thomas is recorded in Williamson Co. April 2, 1840 but they appear to be living in Montgomery Co. TN in 1843 at which time they filed for her portion of the proceeds of the sale of her father's plantation.

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### **James DICKSON of Bear Creek**

I believe the James DICKSON who signed the 1803 petition resulting in the creation of Dickson County was the person I identify as being James DICKSON of Bear Creek. He served on the Dickson County Court ca. 1812 to his resignation recorded in the January term 1818. He moved to Perry County, TN where he was instrumental in setting up that county government. As a matter of fact, the first meeting place of the Perry County Court was his home which still survives and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

No record of his marriage has been found but descendants of this line identify his wife as being Margaret Ann (or Ann Margaret) WILSON which certainly fits with the association of the WILSON family back in Greene Co. TN and subsequently in Dickson Co. TN.

Most internet sites show Bear Creek James DICKSON had a son named James or James W. DICKSON born ca. 1795. It is my belief this is based on the records of James W. DICKSON who moved to Carroll Co. TN and then to Red River Co. TX. I believe he was a nephew (s/o Raccoon Creek John DICKSON) and not a son of Bear Creek James DICKSON who moved to Perry Co. TN. To the best of my knowledge the children of Bear Creek James DICKSON and Margaret Ann WILSON are: (1) Joseph DICKSON b. ca. 1795. (2) Mary Ann DICKSON b. ca. 1796. (3) Jane DICKSON m. ca. 1799. (4) Elizabeth DICKSON b. ca. 1800. (5) Matilda DICKSON b. ca. 1802. (6) Hugh DICKSON b. ca. 1804. (7) Hannah DICKSON b. ca. 1808. (8) William Kennedy DICKSON b. ca. 1811.

Information on this line including marriages can be found at several internet sites so I am not listing additional details here. However, I would caution that most sites do say James W. DICKSON of Carroll Co. was a son and I don't believe there was a son by that name.

### **Joseph DICKSON of Bartons Creek**

Although there is no evidence Joseph DICKSON of Bartons Creek ever resided in Dickson County, I include him here because I believe he was the fourth DICKSON brother to move to the area from the Greene and Jefferson Co. area. Also, one of his sons did move to Dickson County and lived in Dickson County for many years. Bartons Creek Joseph DICKSON has occasionally been listed as being a son of Joseph DICKSON [V] and Jane MOLTON. He was not their son.

A sibling relationship of this Joseph DICKSON to the other "Creek Guys" is the most questionable because of a 1796 deed (Montgomery Co. Deed Book B, pg. 56) which specifically states he was living in Orange Co. NC. This DICKSON family seems to be closely associated with the McCAULEY family and that name is not common in Greene or Jefferson Counties but is found in Orange Co. NC.

Family tradition states the name of his wife as Martha COWAN and, in fact, there is a record of the marriage of Joseph DICKSON to Martha COWAN in Jefferson County bearing a date ca. 1797. Also, in the same estate record mentioned above for Andrew COWAN of Jefferson

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County, his daughter Martha COWAN and son-in-law, Joseph DIXON are listed. In other words, I believe the brothers Hugh DICKSON and Joseph DICKSON married sisters Mary COWAN and Martha COWAN respectively.

The evidence is confusing. There could be two different Joseph DICKSONs marrying two different Martha COWANs but I doubt that. I can not explain the variance of location of Orange Co. NC vs. Jefferson Co. TN as yet.

The children of Bartons Creek Joseph DICKSON and Martha COWAN are: (1) Hugh DICKSON, b. ca. 1800; d. 1838; did not marry. (2) James C. DICKSON, b. 11 February 1802, Montgomery Co., TN; d. 03 December 1863. James m. Mary McCAULEY and they lived in District 9 of Dickson County. (3) Margaret DICKSON, b. 28 September 1803, Montgomery Co., TN; d. 06 November 1880. (4) Martha DICKSON, b. 28 September 1803, Montgomery Co., TN; d. Abt. 1859. (5) William DICKSON, b. Abt. 1805; d. Abt. 1847; did not marry. (6) Anne Kate DICKSON, b. 01 November 1807, Montgomery Co., TN; d. 09 November 1868, Hustburg, Humphreys Co., TN. (7) John B. DICKSON, b. 10 November 1810, Montgomery Co., TN; d. 24 July 1894. (8) Joseph DICKSON, Jr. (b. ca. 1812, d. ca. 1858. m. Sarah Ann DUVALL). (9) Abner DICKSON, b. 10 January 1814, Montgomery Co., TN; d. 06 October 1879, Hustburg, Humphreys Co., TN. I would note that this Abner DICKSON has sometimes been confused with Abner DICKSON (s/o [V] Joseph DICKSON & Jane MOLTON but there is a considerable difference in age and they are clearly two different guys. (10) Adam Wilson DICKSON, M.D., b. 10 July 1818, Montgomery Co., TN; d. 1870, Humphreys Co., TN. The given name "Adam Wilson" does intrigue me as it does tend to support the possible tie with the DICKSON and WILSON families from the Greene & Jefferson Counties who settled along Yellow Creek.

There is considerable detail available on the descendents of this Joseph DICKSON. The family was researched and documented by an outstanding genealogist, Louise Dickson TOWNLEY. Her book and some notes on this man are available at the Montgomery County Library in Clarksville.

### **Recently discovered family listing**

I have recently been provided a family listing from another DICKSON family researcher. There are no sources mentioned but the list is very interesting. Unfortunately the list shows a father and mother who cannot possibly be the parents of the list of children based on other research. However, the children listed are: (1) Nancy DICKSON b. ca. 1770 m. William WILLEY. (2) John DICKSON b. ca. 1769, d. bef. Oct. 1822. (3) James DICKSON b. ca. 1770. (4) Hugh DICKSON b. ca. 1775. (5) Joseph DICKSON b. ca. 1779, d. ca. 1835. (6) Hannah DICKSON b. ca. 1881. (7) Elizabeth DICKSON b. ca. 1890.

I do know that William WILLEY and his wife, Nancy moved to Dickson Co. but did not live in the Yellow Creek area. The names of the sons match perfectly with "The Creek Guys" theory. The Hannah shown here could surely be the person who married the Hugh DICKSON who was the son of Joseph DICKSON [V] and Jane MOLTON. Elizabeth could be the Betsy DICKSON who married Hartwell WEAVER 27 July 1808 in Montgomery Co. although I'm told the surety

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on the marriage bond was a Jesse DICKSON and I have no data on him whatsoever. This list is intriguing but I'm not prepared to say it proves anything. It may be the result of some of my own research coming back around!

### **The 1803 Dickson County Petition**

Three DICKSON men signed the 1803 petition that resulted in the formation of Dickson County. They are listed here with possible identifications based on my DICKSON family research. (1) James DICKSON (Bear Creek James DICKSON?). (2) Hugh DICKSON, Sr. (Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON?). (3) Hugh DICKSON (s/o Joseph DICKSON [V] & Jane MOLTON?)

I would note that Hugh DICKSON, Sr. and Hugh DICKSON signed one right after the other. "IF", the "Senior" is Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON and the younger Hugh DICKSON is the son of Joseph [V] and Jane it would certainly support the idea of a close family association of the Duplin Co. NC family with those who lived in Greene/Jefferson Co. TN. Perhaps the two Hugh DICKSONs lived together or close to each other in 1803. This idea also supports the 1808/1809 Dickson Co. marriage of Hugh DICKSON (s/o Joseph [V] & Jane) with Hannah DICKSON (his cousin?).

Having said that, our DICKSON research team eliminated virtually ALL the sons of John DICKSON the immigrant from Ireland as possible fathers of "The Creek Guys". The connection (if there is one and I believe there is) must go back at least another generation.

### **Thomas L. DICKSON**

Thomas L. DICKSON makes a brief appearance in Dickson County between 1836 (Dickson Co. Tax lists) and 1842. He is found in the same district as Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON in 1836 and a road order suggests he may have lived around Bear Creek. He also is listed in the 1840 Dickson County Census with three young males and a teenage female.

The grand jury of Dickson County found that Thomas L. DICKSON was killed on 6 Aug. 1842 by a blow to the head inflicted by William H. NICHOLS who "*not having the fear of the God before his (him?) but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil*"...did willingly, deliberately, maliciously and premeditatedly kill Thomas L. DICKSON by hitting with a stick of wood on the left side of the head. William H. BAKER was accused of aiding and abetting. Both men were apparently found not guilty.

Three sons appear as orphans (Dickson Co. Minutes 1842-1850) but that doesn't mean the mother was deceased necessarily. The sons are named: (1) Andrew J. DICKSON (2) Thomas J. DICKSON. (3) W. H. DICKSON.

I've found no additional records on Andrew J. DICKSON or Thomas J. DICKSON but William Henry DICKSON remained in Dickson County, married Penina WAYNICK, served in the Confederate Army, and died in Dickson Co. in 1918.

On the death certificate of William Henry DICKSON his mother is named as Irene PROCTOR.

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It is possible that Thomas L. DICKSON was a son of Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON? Here are some interesting facts: (a) There is an unknown son b. ca. 1810-1815 appearing in Dry Branch Hugh's household in the 1820 and 1830 census. (b) Thomas L. DICKSON appears first on Dickson County Tax rolls in 1836 paying a poll tax. Perhaps because he had just turned age 21. He is in the same district with Dry Branch Hugh. (c) In 1850 the orphaned son, William Henry DICKSON, appears in the household of Minor A. BIBB in Charlotte. Living next door were E. E. LARKINS, his wife, Elizabeth Alice DICKSON (d/o Dry Branch Hugh) and James W. DICKSON (s/o Dry Branch Hugh). (d) In 1860 William Henry DICKSON is listed twice in the Dickson County census, once in Charlotte and once as a farm hand with the family of David WAYNICK out on Yellow Creek.

While these facts suggest a relationship of Thomas L. DICKSON and Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON there are other conflicting facts. I've found no mention of Thomas or his children in the estate settlement of Dry Branch Hugh DICKSON d. ca. 1847. If Thomas had been a son of Dry Branch Hugh I would think his children would have received his portion of Hugh's estate.

### **Melinda DICKSON**

I mention Melinda (or Melissa) DICKSON here because there could be a connection to her and Thomas L. DICKSON. According to Dickson Co. marriage records Melinda married David P. WAYNICK on or about 14 Sept. 1842. I am guessing that she could have been a sister of Thomas L. DICKSON since Thomas's son, William H. DICKSON, appears living with David and Melinda WAYNICK in Dickson Co. in 1860 and he eventually married their daughter, Penina WAYNICK. Of course, the theory suggests that 1<sup>st</sup> cousins married but that did happen from time to time.

### **Mary DICKSON and James DICKSON**

These two names are mentioned here because of a possible connection to Thomas L. DICKSON. The only records I have for these two individuals are the Dickson County Tax lists of 1836 and 1837. They appear in District 10 with Thomas L., Dry Branch Hugh, and Dry Branch Hugh's oldest son, John. Mary and James are both taxed on 27 acres which looks suspiciously like a divided estate. James pays no poll tax and the note "guardian" next to his name in 1837. I don't know what either means. I cannot identify these two individuals as yet.

It should be noted that paying taxes on land in Dickson Co. did not necessarily mean the person was actually a resident of the County at the time.

### **Lewis DICKSON & Elisha DICKSON**

Very little information on Lewis DICKSON has been found. He appears as a juror in Dickson County in 1805 and at the April Term 1812 a deed is acknowledged of Abraham ROBISON selling 320 acres to Lewis DICKSON. At that same term of the county court, the sale of 213 acres from Elisha DICKSON to Stephen FARMER is acknowledge upon the oaths of Andrew STEWART and James KNOX. I have not reviewed either of the actual deeds.

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I can not identify either Lewis or Elisha DICKSON.

### **Robertson DICKSON**

Robertson DICKSON is mentioned several times in Dickson County Court minutes. He is a Yellow Creek person but I've not been able to identify his connection to the other Yellow Creek DICKSON families with any certainty.

Robertson DICKSON's name first appears in the County Court Minutes, January term 1813 when Thomas SIMMONS is ordered to make settlement as guardian to Robertson. So, Robertson was a minor in 1813 and his father had probably died shortly before. Then he appears in the 1820 Dickson County Census as a single male aged 16-26.

At the September term 1820 there was a legal matter involving Francis S. ELLIS (a Yellow Creek name) and Robertson DICKSON which mentions a slave owned by DICKSON. The slave had been purchased from C. (probably Christopher) STRONG.

Finally at the January term 1826 of the Dickson County Court, Alexander DICKSON was named administrator of the estate of Robertson DICKSON.

I think it is highly likely that Robertson DICKSON is somehow related to the Duplin Co. NC DICKSONs rather than "the Creek Guys". This is supported by the mention of Christopher STRONG (father-in-law of Molton DICKSON) and Alexander DICKSON (s/o James DICKSON [VIII]).

### **Henry DICKSON**

A Henry DICKSON is mentioned twice in the Dickson County Court minutes of the January Term 1818. He is shown as being on the witness docket in Oct. 1817 in the State vs. Clark SPENCER. Then there is an entry naming Henry's wife, Elizabeth, as the administrator of his estate. This suggests to me that he died sometime between Oct. 1817 and Jan. 1818. Elizabeth was joined by Jesse S. KIRK, John L. McREA and John READ in a bond of \$6,000. I do not recognize these names as being Yellow Creek names and I cannot identify this Henry Dickson.

### **Wallace DIXON**

Wallace DIXON appears on the 1830 census of Dickson County. This family has not been researched in detail by me. Internet sources (RootsWeb.com) state he was from Caroline Co. Maryland where he was born 1 Jan. 1790. He married Eliza R. BRADY of Westmoreland Co. PA. He was associated with the VanLeer family in the production of Iron managing the furnace at Cumberland Furnace. He removed to Perry County where he built the Cedar Grove Furnace. He died and is buried in Decatur Co. TN.



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I don't believe there is any connection of Wallace DIXON or his son Thomas Y. DICKSON with the other DICKSON families with roots back to NC or East TN. I do think they lived in the Van Leer area near Yellow Creek.

### **Thomas Y. DICKSON/DIXON**

Thomas Yateman DICKSON/DIXON is reported to be a son of Wallace DIXON and Eliza R. BRADY. His name frequently appears in Dickson County records and he also appears to have been associated with the production of iron as was his father. He was born 12 Sept. 1830 in Dickson Co. and married 1<sup>ST</sup> Cora T. MARABLE on 9 Jan. 1854 in Montgomery Co. TN. He married 2<sup>nd</sup> Mary RAIMEY about 1868. I do not have a location or date of death for Thomas Y. DICKSON/DIXON.

### **Levin DIXON/DICKSON**

The will of Levin DIXON is Will #11 in the first Dickson County Will book was proven during the Dickson Co. Court July term 1815. However the Will was not recorded until 10 March 1820.

This again is a line which has not been personally researched but data found during my Dickson Co. research tends to support the data published on the internet (RootsWeb.com).

Levin DIXON was the son of Ambrose DIXON and Martha HORSEY. He was born in 1753 in Maryland and married Abigail PARKER. The family first lived in Georgia but came to Dickson County ca. 1804. The children of this union were: (1) Sally DIXON b. GA. (2) Patsey Tennessee DIXON. (3) William DIXON. (4) Lurany DIXON. (5) Melinda DIXON, (6) Richmond DIXON

All but Sally are reported to have been born in Dickson Co. It is possible some of the daughters married and remained in Dickson Co. but I've found no evidence that the sons remained in Dickson County. The family appears to have moved north, probably to Illinois. There is one record in Dickson Co. that reveals that the youngest son, Richmond, did return for additional settlement of the estate of his father.

It is of some interest to note that Levin and Abigail were Uncle and Aunt of Cynthia Ann PARKER who was captured by Indians at Ft. Parker in Limestone Co. TX in 1836. The story of her capture and life with the Indians is well known in Texas. She was the mother of Chief Quanah PARKER.

I feel I have only scratched the surface in researching the DICKSON families of Upper Middle Tennessee and especially of Dickson County. I'm in hopes there is a Bible record or old family record that might identify the parents of the "The Creek Guys". 2/17/07