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of
FORSYTH COUNTY
GEORGIA

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Chapter 33.

RICHARD PHILLIPS FAMILY

Editor's Note: The history on Richard Phillips' family was written and submitted by Mrs. Eloise Groover Lovell, a great-great-granddaughter of Richard and Delilah (Rainwater) Phillips. She was born in Forsyth Co.; completed high school in Cumming; attended G.S.C.W., Milledgeville, graduating with a B.S. degree in 1927; earned a Master of Arts degree from Scarritt College, Nashville, Tenn., 1942; married 1931, Rev. Marshall W. Lovell, Methodist minister of the Tennessee Conference, and served 1940-60 under Methodist Board of Missions in Belgian Congo, now Zaire, Africa, Mrs. Lovell working in the educational field. She taught ten years in public schools of Tenn. She and her husband are retired and live in Nashville.

* * * *

THE name Phillips means "Lover of Horses," and was probably carried into England from France at the time of the Norman Conquest. There are various spellings of the name, but the most common English and Welsh surname is spelled PHILLIPS. Families of this name can be found in Pennsylvania, Virginia and North Carolina in the early 1600's. It is not presently known just when the ancestors of Richard Phillips came to America.

Rev. Richard Phillips was born March 9, 1791 in North Carolina, and his parents removed to Pendleton Dist., S.C., when he was a small child. Richard grew up in that state and seemed to have acquired better than an average education. He had a good knowledge of the English language, of world history, and a solid foundation in the study of the Bible.

Sometime around 1809 he married to Delilah Rainwater (b. Oct. 4, 1785, S.C.), daughter of Solomon Rainwater (b. ca. 1765, N.C., d. 1814, S.C.) and Ruth FELTON.

On Oct. 13, 1813 Richard Phillips purchased 50 acres of land on Twenty-Six Mile Creek in Pendleton Dist. which bordered property of his father-in-law. On Dec. 1, 1814 he is shown purchasing items at the estate sale of his father-in-law. Almost seven years later, on Sept. 1, 1821, he signed in right of his wife, "Dilly" Rainwater, releasing land owned by Solomon Rainwater, dec'd. to Job Rainwater, Delilah's brother.

The last record found relating to Richard and Delilah in South Carolina is dated 1824, when he witnessed and proved deeds for slaves by Elizabeth Major, widow of Daniel Major, to her four sons, James, William, Elijah and Daniel. The Majors lived in that northwestern corner of South Carolina which became Anderson Co. in 1825. Other Phillips families who were probably related lived in Pendleton Dist.
Around 1825 Richard Phillips and his family moved to Gwinnett Co., Ga., but did not remain long. They may have lived in Hall Co. for a brief period. Richard was a minister in the Yellow River Baptist Association for some time. Jesse Williams, owner and editor of *The Baptist Leader*, a Cumming newspaper of the 1890s, wrote that “Richard Phillips came to Forsyth County about 1835 from Mauldin’s Mill in Hall County.” They settled in Forsyth Co. on a farm a few miles south of Cumming; for several years, according to deed records, Richard bought and sold land. He apparently operated a mill at one time, for on June 7, 1842 he bought two acres of land from Joel Estes — “which may be covered by water from Phillips Mill Pond.”

The organizational meeting of the Hightower Baptist Association was held at Silver Springs Church in Forsyth Co. on Nov. 19-20, 1835. Phillips was one of three ordained ministers at that first meeting. He was elected Moderator of the Association, serving in that capacity for the next three years.

By 1880 over one hundred ministers had supplied churches in the bounds of the Hightower Association. The minutes for that year state the most distinguished ministers were F. M. Hawkins, Alfred Webb, R. Collins, J. E. Rives, and Richard Phillips, an outstanding preacher and one of several called to “occupy the stand” on the Sabbath to preach the missionary sermon, which was considered a distinct honor.

Phillips had a vital interest in domestic missions and took an active part in
the special missionary outreach to the destitute areas. Almost every year until the outbreak of Civil War a minister would be employed to go out and minister to the people not reached by the organized churches. This was a difficult task requiring a person with a special interest and compassion for the less fortunate. Phillips was one of the eight ministers who served frequently in this way.

During the more than thirty years he served as a Baptist minister, Phillips was pastor of six churches in the Association. He served Haw Creek Church for the longest period of time, almost twenty years, and he and his wife were charter members of the church. He also served as pastor of Cumming Baptist Church for six years. Other churches he pastored were Island Ford (Gwinnett Co., post office Orr's), 1835; Silver Springs, Providence and Bethel (Forsyth Co.).

In 1846 he was appointed to write the "circular letter" for distribution among all the churches of the Association. In this annual dissertation we find portrayed Richard Phillips' deed dedication to his God and his concern for the Church of Christ. He stressed the need for regular Sabbath worship with the laity leading when the pastor could not be present. He was especially interested in the Sabbath schools and the training of children and young adults. He believed ministers should be well prepared through education and training, and that they should be adequately paid to afford them to preach full time. He also felt the great need for personal piety for all believing Christians.

A brief memorial was written to him in the minutes of the Hightower Association (1880): "Richard Phillips, the first moderator of the Association, was born in North Carolina, moved to South Carolina and from there to Gwinnett County, Georgia, in about 1825. He settled in Forsyth County near Cumming soon after. An able minister of the New Testament, sound in faith, pure in morals, he was a pioneer in Cherokee, Georgia, [and] performed much labor, accomplished much good. His sufferings were long and severe, but he bore them with Christian fortitude. Died . . . at about seventy-five."

He died on Sept. 28, 1865, at age 74, and is buried beside Delilah (who died Sept. 2, 1865) in Haw Creek cemetery. The church had been organized in 1841, dissolved in 1851, and reorganized in 1857. Phillips and many members of his family were a vital part of the growth of this church in difficult times.

**Family data:** Richard and Delilah Phillips were parents of four sons and four daughters, born and married as follows:


Richard Phillips Family 347


**Family Source:** Mrs. Hazel Major Smith, Whittier, Calif.
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WASHINGTON H. PRUITT FAMILY

Early in the nineteenth century Washington Hale Pruitt, b. ca. 1802, with his wife Martha Zelphia Early, born ca. 1800, moved from South Carolina to North Georgia, about 1825.

Their graves are in a small walled enclosure in Forsyth County, in the woods, on the Cox Property which is between the Henry Cox place and the old Dempsey Mill. The enclosure is made with field rocks and there are no markings on the graves. There are no other graves nearby.

They had eight sons and four daughters. Seven of their sons served in the War Between the States. Two of them gave their lives and another was injured.

Washington H. and Martha Z. Pruitt’s children were as follows:

1 – Daniel M. PRUITT, b. 1824 m. Elizabeth Phillips
2 – Lettie PRUITT, b. 1826 m. William Martin
3 – Enoch Early PRUITT, b. 1828 m. Malinda Albridge (Albright)
4 – Malissa Matilda PRUITT, b. 1830 m. 1st E. W. Waters, 2nd Richard Majors, 3rd Lewis Perry
5 – William Hale PRUITT, b. 1832 m. Frances Edmondson
6 – John Wesley PRUITT, b. 1834 m. 1st Hannah Margaret Rodgers, 2nd Mary Ann Holcomb
7 – Margaret F. PRUITT, b. 1836 m. 1st Huston Estes, 2nd Charles Estes
8 – James T. PRUITT, b. 1838 m. Nancy C. Redmond
9 – Samuel Asbury PRUITT, b. 1840 m. Adeline E. Estes
10 – Benjamin Franklin PRUITT, b. 1842 m. Mary H. Redmond
11 – Zelphia Angeline PRUITT, b. 1844, m. 1st Alexander Lafayette Bulls, 2nd James Marion Dillard
12 – Harvey M. PRUITT, b. 1846, m. Sarah Emeline Perry

Washington H. Pruitt had a lot of slaves, more than most other people in the county. He was very good to his slaves and they all loved him very much.

Sometime after Washington’s 12th child was born, his wife died, and Washington married again (name unknown).

Washington’s second wife was very mean to the step-children, that were still at home, especially Angeline and Harvey, the two youngest ones. Their stepmother even refused food to them.

There was a slave they all called “Aunt Clara”; she saw what was happening. “Aunt Clara” would put food in her apron and slip it to Angeline and Harvey.


1-1 – Richard PRUITT, b. ca. 1847, d. 12 Aug. 1866
1-2 – Louisa PRUITT, b. ca. 1848
1-3 – Abi PRUITT, b. ca. 1849

Lettie PRUITT, born ca 1826, South Carolina, (second child of Washington H. Pruitt), married William Martin on July 4, 1840. Their four known children are:

2-1 – Sarah Ann Martin, b. ca. 1842
2-2 – Nancy Martin, b. ca. 1845
2-3 – Jane Martin, b. ca. 1846
2-4 – John Martin, b. March 1850

Enoch Early PRUITT (third child of Washington H. Pruitt) born October 23, 1828, in Spartanburg County, South Carolina, later moved to Forsyth County. He was a farmer and married first to Malinda Albright (Albridge). Married a second time to Rebecca Jane Smith Morehead, daughter of Whitaker Smith. Enoch E. Pruitt died November 24, 1891.

Enoch Early and Malinda Pruitt had twelve children as follows:

3-2. Francis PRUITT, b. ca. 1851
3-5. Henrietta PRUITT, b. ca. 1853
3-10. Alice PRUITT, b. Mar. 14, 1864, d. Feb. 27, 1903.
3-11. Isabelle (Izzie) PRUITT, b. ca. 1865, m. Wesley Harrison Dooley, son of Wesley S. Dooley and Cleopatra Missouri Catherine Phillips.
3-12. Hester Ann PRUITT, b. ca. 1868, m. Charles W. McBrayer

Malissa Matilda PRUITT (fourth child of Washington H. Pruitt) born 1830, married first to E. S. Waters; they had one known child: William W. Waters, b. ca. 1852.

E. S. Waters died and Malissa Matilda Pruitt married Richard Majors, son of James Majors. Malissa and Richard had two children (names unknown). Then Richard died and Malissa married Lewis Perry. Lewis and Malissa had 3 known children:

1 – Evan A. Perry, born 1866, m. Missouri A. Majors, m. 2nd to Janie Holland
2 – Lena A. Perry, b. July 30, 1871, d. Feb. 10, 1941, buried Zion Hill;
Neese. The record of births and deaths contained in the family Bible were copied by Mrs. Vallie Wallis of Gainesville, Ga. **Children:**


**MAJOR – BARKER (AN OKLAHOMA BRANCH)**

The first of the surname "MAJOR" in Forsyth County was James Major (b. 1804, d. 3 Jul. 1861), son of Daniel Major (d. 1819 in Pendleton Dist., S.C.) and his wife Elizabeth (maiden name unknown), having come from Anderson County, S.C., before 1845. James married in South Carolina c1825 to Clarinda Phillips (b. 1810, died 11 Oct. 1870), daughter of Rev. Richard and Delila (Rainwater) Phillips.

Rev. Richard Phillips and Delila had removed to Georgia prior to 1830. They were charter members of Haw Creek Baptist Church and he was probably the first minister called. James Major and Clarinda were also members of Haw Creek and he was an early Church Clerk (possibly the second). All four are buried in Haw Creek Cemetery. (See record of Richard Phillips’ family.)

James and Clarinda Major were parents of 14 known children:

2. Richard M. (b. 1830, d. 4 Jan. 1859), m. 27 Oct. 1854 in Forsyth Co. to Mrs. Matilda Waters (nee Pruitt.) Two children.
4. Elizabeth Caroline - twin (b. Mar. 1833), m. 14 Apr. 1859 in Forsyth Co. to John W. Brannon.
6. Delila (b. 1836).
7. Enoch B. (b. 1838), m. Sarah A. Two children.
8. Mahala (b. 1840).
9. Martha (b. 1842).
10. Mary A. (b. 1844), m. 2 Jan. 1859 to John H. Lamb. She may have married secondly to a Karr.
12. Emily C. (b. 19 Apr. 1848, d. 19 Dec. 1928), m. 27 Oct. 1863 in Forsyth
Co. to William Marian Day.


The second son, Richard M. Major, married Malissa Matilda (Pruitt) Waters, daughter of Washington Hale and Zilpha (Early) Pruitt; they had two sons, James N., born 1855, and John Henry, born 6 Dec. 1858 in Forsyth Co. James N. Major was in Cook Co., Texas, when his grandparents' estate was settled in 1879, but nothing further is known of him. John Henry married to Sarah Carolina Barker 7 Mar. 1880 in Forsyth Co. She was the daughter of William Harrison H. and Nancy E. (Davis) Barker, and granddaughter of William and Eliza C. (Russell) Barker. They removed to Chickasaw Nation, I. T. (now Oklahoma), with a brief stop-over in Texas where the fourth of their five children was born. John Henry died 28 June 1892 at Dougherty, Okla. Sarah Caroline married, secondly, to Martin Weber, and they had two children, a girl and a boy.

John Henry and Sarah Carolina (Barker) Major's children:


2. Tessa (b. 3 Nov. 1882 Forsyth Co., d. 25 Mar. 1933 Searcy, Arkansas.) She married late in life to O. W. Ward. No issue. After Sarah Caroline died, Tessa assumed the responsibility of caring for the young Weber children as well as the infant daughter of her younger sister upon her death. She did not marry until these children were all grown.

3. Cled Henry (b. 3 Oct. 1884 Forsyth Co., d. 1918 Tishomingo, Okla., of the flu); m. 27 Aug. 1911 Coalgate, Okla., to Ethel B. Scott. Two children, George Frank and Hazel Evelyn.

4. Thad Pickett (b. 4 Sept. 1886 Bibb, Texas, d. 20 Oct. 1938 Tishomingo, Okla.); m. 3 July 1908 in Tishomingo to Sally Ellen (Ann) Horsley. Five children.


William Harrison H. Barker married Nancy E. Davis in Georgia (date unknown). They and their children also removed to Indian Territory after 1880, probably with John Henry Major and family as they all settled in Dougherty, Okla., a tiny community at the foot of the Arbuckle Mountains where Rock Creek enters the Washita River, and originally called Strawberry Flat. It officially became Dougherty 10 Aug. 1887 when it received a post office. In the early days of settlement rock crusher and asphalt mining operations were in that area and, for a brief time, it was a railroad boom town. Nancy E. (Davis) Barker was born May 1840 in Georgia, died 11 Mar. 1915 in Oklahoma. Both are buried at Dougherty.

William H. H. and Nancy E. (Davis) Barker's children:


2. Rachel Evelyn (b. 6 Oct. 1861, Forsyth Co., d. 20 June 1913 Tishomingo,
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Okla.); m. 17 Oct. 1875 in Forsyth Co. to Asa C. Wheeler. One child. She married secondly to Monroe Charles Chapman.


4. William N. (b. 19 Apr. 1868, d. 20 Sept. 1895); bur. in Dougherty, Okla., cemetery.

William Barker (b. 10 Nov. 1815, d. 28 Aug. 1904), m. 5 Mar. 1840 in Forsyth Co. to Eliza C. Russell (b. 11 Jan. 1815, d. 10 Nov. 1901), and both are buried in Island Ford Cemetery, Gwinnett Co. They were parents of nine children; the names of only eight are known. William had one known brother, Burrell P. Barker.

William and Eliza C. (Russell) Barker’s children:

1. William Harrison H. (b. 2 Dec. 1840, d. 12 Sept. 1907), m. c1858 in Georgia to Nancy E. Davis. Four children.


3. Margaret M. (b. 22 Sept. 1844, d. 14 May 1912), m. 20 Aug. 1863 in Forsyth Co. to Stephen Kile. Eight children. Margaret M. is buried in Dougherty, Okla., cemetery.


5. Thomas J. — twin (b. 1847).


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PETER H. MARTIN FAMILY

PETER H. Martin, an early settler of Forsyth County, was born about 1795 in Virginia; he was married by 1819 to Mary ?, who was born circa 1800 in Virginia. Peter died in July, 1873, and is buried in Concord Baptist Church cemetery in Forsyth County. A stone bearing the simple inscription “P Martin” marks his gravesite. Mary died sometime between 1860 and 1870, and is also buried at Concord, but there is no marker on her grave.

Peter and Mary Martin had nine children, all born in Georgia, and possibly a tenth child who may have died young.

Peter Martin left his will recorded in Forsyth Will Book A-2 (page 184), dated Feb. 13, 1873 and filed in the Ordinary’s Office on July 30, 1873. Enoch Herndon, his son-in-law, is named as executor.