

Joseph Crews 1805 – Abt. 1856

Joseph Crews, sometimes listed as Joseph Crews, Jr. to differentiate from another Joseph Crews, was born in South Carolina. Folks Huxford states the birth was in Beaufort County. Birthdates for Joseph range from 1790-1800 (1840 census for Ware county) to 1805 (1850 Census for Ware).

Joseph's parents remain a mystery. Judge Folks Huxford's personal notes and later, his sketch of Joseph, in *Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia*, Volume III, state he was a son of Samuel Crews and Elizabeth Griffis (both born 1790). The birth dates, as documented, simply do not support his statement. Samuel and Joseph are too close in age to be father and son.

An entry in near the end of this same sketch seems to contradict the Judges statement and puzzled this author for years. The quote: "Joseph Crews was a first cousin to Wm. B. Crews (Vol. I) according to his (Joseph's) daughter, Mrs. Corbitt; their fathers being brothers." William B. Crews is a son of Stephen, making Joseph a possible grandson of Alexander, in this scenario. However, for Crews researchers, this presents additional questions.

- 1) Was Joseph born later than both U.S Census' indicate or is 1790 Samuel older than reported, making the couple the parents of Joseph?
- 2) Or... is Stephen (and brother William) truly sons of Alexander. One Crews researcher, back in 2005, made the following statement in an online discussion database: "... *Steven was not the son of Alexander but was a brother to Old Samuel (referring to 1790 Samuel). The pension records of the War of 1812 show that William, who m. Sarah Bradley, was a bro. to Stephen. John/Catherine Prevatt-Crews and Roger/Elizabeth Mitchell-Crews were also brothers.*"

What we do know is where Joseph the subject is found; Stephen, William, Roger, and Alexander are very close-by. Whether in the Ware census of 1840 and 1850 or in the Indian war muster sheets from 1836-1838, these few are almost always together indicating a close family relationship. Current DNA testing results has helped certify Joseph is very closely related to Isham, Alexander, and Roger Crews Perhaps, the only way to resolve these issues in this modern era is through DNA testing of the male descendants of the key ancestors. Until such a time we move on to what we do know about this Joseph.

The first records found for Joseph are in Camden County, Georgia during the mid-1820s. Even these first records are debatable but can be resolved.

A Joseph Crews and Amy Johns were granted a license to marry in Camden County, Georgia on 7 February 1825. They married on 10 Feb 1825. The ceremony is

performed by Camden Justice of the Peace Robert Paxton. However, the JP erroneously entered the name Stephen Crews instead of Joseph on the license and was recorded as such in the Camden County records.

Amy is the daughter of Jacob Johns and Elizabeth Stafford. She was born about 1808 in Camden County, Georgia

During the November Term, 1830, Camden Superior Court, Amy sued for a divorce; he not being found in the county was ordered served by publication. At the April term, 1834, a first verdict for divorce was granted, and at the April term, 1835, a second verdict was granted. Judge Huxford questioned whether this Joseph Crews is the same that married Amy as there are at least three contemporary Joseph Crews' in the general area., Joseph born 1794 (son of Micajah), living 1830 in Camden and in 1860 in Hamilton Co. Fla.; Joseph born 1800 in S. C., living 1840 and 1850 in Ware (now Echols) with wife Jeannette; and Joseph, intended as the subject.

By process-of-elimination we find, Micajah's son, Joseph was married and fathered children during 1829, 1831, 1835, and 1836 with wife Catherine. Joseph and Jeanette had five children based on the 1840 Ware census. The eldest, a daughter was born between 1831 and 1834, the second oldest, John, was born 1835 (Note: the 1840 census did not identify names of children, so all three of the females names are unknown; the 1850 census shows no female children and sons John and Isham). It also appears Joseph Senior never lived in Camden coming over to Ware from Lowndes County, Georgia about 1840. In fact, he (Joe Sr.) cannot be found anywhere in Georgia prior to 1840, to date. Hence Joseph, the subject, likely married Amy Johns. Information gathered by Mr. Huxford from the descendants, state Joseph married Sarah Johns. It would seem likely that he married Sarah after the divorce, their first child not being born until 1835 (Samuel), and the separation from Amy having occurred in 1830. The relationship of Amy and Sarah Johns is that Amy is a half-niece to Sarah.

Joseph remarried sometime during 1834-1835 to Sarah Johns, born 1815 in Georgia. (Ed, Note: The 1860 Mortality Schedule for Clinch County indicates Sarah was born 1812 in South Carolina, however, this may be second hand knowledge and this author will defer to the 1850 US Census) Sarah was the daughter of Jeremiah "Jerry" Johns and Levicy. The couple likely married in Ware County, Georgia, shortly before or shortly after his divorce from Amy was finalized.

Joseph and Sarah had eight children, all born in Georgia. They are:

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| Samuel | b. 1835, m. Morgiana Waldron, dau. of Elias D. Waldron |
| Martha Mary | b. 1839, never married. Had at least four illegitimate children. |
| Joseph | b. 1841, m. Fannie Corbett, dau. of David |
| Alexander | b. 1842, wounded and captured in war. Died in Union prison. |
| Charity | b. 1844, m. Wily Shaw of Hamilton County, GA |
| Elizabeth | b. 1846, never married |

Simon b. 1850, m. Nancy Waldron, dau. of Elias D.
Julia Ann* b. 1855, m. Henry Corbitt, son of Daniel

*erroneously identified as Mary Ann in POWG Vol. III

One may notice the amount of time passing between the births of Samuel (1835) and Mary (1839). The best explanation is Joseph put down his plow and picked up his rifle to defend his and other Wiregrass families from marauding bands of Seminoles.

Beginning on 22 June 1836 Joseph signs on as a private in Capt. William B. North's 1st Regiment, 2nd Brigade of the Florida (Mounted) Militia. The Company mustered in Columbia County, Florida at "Camp North" which was recently discovered to be in Blount's Ferry. This initial enlistment ended in October 1836. Lt. Col. W. J. Mills, Commanding Officer of the 1st regiment stated in his "Record of Events: "This company was greatly distinguished for its services and exploits in seven brilliant affairs against the Creek. Indians who were paddling down attempting to join the Seminoles. Killing many and taking prisoners on the frontier of Georgia along on the Florida and Georgia line in the country bordering on the Suwaney and St. Mary's called the Okefenokee Swamp Bend."

After his initial six-month tour of duty was complete, Joseph again signs on with the same unit from Jan 1837 to June 1837 and again from June 1837 to December 1837.

Private Joseph Crews Jr. continued to patrol against Indian excursions into Georgia from Florida in Capt. William B. North's Co. of Florida mounted militia from 4/6/38 to 7/12/38.

With the Second Indian War over, Joseph returns to his family and farm where they were enumerated in Ware County during 1840 (district 719). This is now in Echols County. Joseph's closest neighbors during the 1840 Ware census are Stephen, Alexander, and Joseph Sr., Crews.

Joseph again served as a private in Captain North's Militia Company for a 25-day period between 5 Apr 1842 to 20 Apr 1842. This mounted militia patrolled the area around Blount's Ferry near the end of the 2nd Florida War.

Joseph and Sarah were active at the closest church to the family's domicile, Bethel Primitive Baptist Church. The church, also known as Boney Bluff, was established in 1843. Among the earliest members of Bethel are Dempsey, William B., Stephen, and Joseph's wife, Sarah. The first mention of Sarah in the church minutes began in 1843 with her christening. Joseph was received by the Church in April of 1847 and christened during June 1847.

The family was still residing within the same area of Ware during the 1850 Census though the Enumeration District was changed to 89. This area would later

become Echols County in 1858. In the 1850 census, Joseph Sr., William B., and Elizabeth Crews (widow of Stephen) households are his closest neighbors.

Sometime after the 1850 Census was taken, the Joseph Crews family relocated north into Clinch County.

Joseph passed away there 1856 and his wife died in March of 1860. Both were buried in a private burying-ground on lot of land 310, 12th district of Clinch County. This location was now known as the Ramah Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery. The family was then living in that community.

After Sarah's death, the children were taken in charge by neighbors and reared to maturity. The 1860 Census for Clinch County, Georgia shows Joseph and Sarah's children were split up among neighbors. Simon and Julia (ages 11 and 12) were in the Thomas L. Morgan household. Samuel, Joseph, and Alexander (ages 24, 20, and 18) were in the James North household.

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