

THE SIMS FAMILY
OF CRAWFORD COUNTY
AND THEIR ANCESTORS

By

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This article would not be possible for me to do without the help of members of the family now living, J.E. Barron, Elmer Sims, Alfred Creekmore, and others, old neighbors and friends of the family including Vesta and Roy Furlow and their sister, Mrs. D.M. Thrasher, Miss Alice McClendon, Owen and Isabel France and others; also the many references of archives and historians. This includes Miss Clara B. Eno's History of Crawford County.

Beginning with the first ancestor located in "Descendants and Connections of Henry Duke, Councilor", I find (1) Zachariah Sims. His son, Brigg Sims of Virginia married Francis Duke, a daughter of Burwell Duke and Francis (Hawkins) Duke of Warren County, N.C. on Feb. 25, 1796. Francis was born in 1778, so she was 18 years old at that time. This couple moved to Bedford County, Tenn., where Briggs died in 1832. The same year his widow moved to Green County, Missouri, where she died in 1849. The children of Briggs and Francis (Duke) Sims listed in this book are: Francis, Burwell, Samuel, Duke, William and Henry.

There is some belief that this Briggs Sims is the father of George Washington Sims (First in Crawford County). I believe this to be an error in transcribing notes, which is always a human element and very likely in this case. G. W. Sims was born in Virginia, Jan. 14, 1777, and died in Crawford County on Jan. 1, 1890. Briggs was not married until 1796--nineteen years later. This Briggs must have been a brother and both he and G.W., the sons of Zachariah, who was living during the American Revolution and had a war record. Both Zachariah and his wife were born in America and so were their parents. They were of English decent. This may seem unusual but caucasions had then been living in Virginia longer than Arkansas has been a state. Few women lived in Virginia until after 1619, when England began sending women over to make homes for the planters. If these women were willing the planters could marry them by paying 120 pounds of tobacco for their ship passage. So, if we have a Virginia ancestor that early, he likely paid for his wife with 120 pounds of tobacco, and we might prefer that to them marrying American Indians as the Spanish had done in Florida for over 50 years. At that time there were over 200,000 settlers in Florida. Be that as it may, there are few who had American ancestors that early having no Indian blood.

The life of George Washington Sims is very interesting to me, not only because he lived to such a great age, but due to the many interesting things he did, and the interesting period of history in which he lived. He was born during the Revolutionary War and remembered incidents of that time. He was four years old when Gen. Benjamin Lincoln (ancestor of Abraham Lincoln--16th president) received the sword of Gen. Lord Cornwallis when he surrendered at Yorktown, Va., 1781, and when the peace treaty was signed at Paris, he was six years old. When Washington was inaugurated, he was 12 years old. He lived through the Revolution, the French and English War, the Civil War, Texas and Mexico War of Independence and the War between the U.S. and Mexico; also the Black Hawk War. He went with the 49ers to the California gold rush and is reported to have buried gold during the Civil War to prevent it being stolen by the Union soldiers and Bushwhackers, as many other people of Crawford County were forced to do.

He married the daughter of Michial McWreath (Rachael) in 1798. He was one of 4 children--seven boys and seven girls--he was first and Burwell ("Burl") was last. George Washington Sims and his wife, Rachael had seven children; four came to Crawford County with him and his second wife. They are Mrs. Elizabeth Eddy of Crawford County, Mrs. Clarinda Rankin of Craig County, Ark., Mrs. Nancy Price of Missouri and Benjamin Franklin Sims of Crawford county. G. W. Sim's wife, Rachael, died in Warren County, Tenn., in 1854. The same year he married Nancy Hamlin, a niece of President John Q. Adams. She was born in Hardin County, Tenn., 1826. G.W. and his second wife, Nancy both died in Crawford County and are buried at the Mount cemetery. They lived on a farm for many years near to Shepherd Springs.

George Washington Sims had great courage and fortitude--hard to comprehend this day of rapid transit--to have traveled so many thousand miles by Conestoga or other vehicle, over mountains, through forests, across rivers and deserts. The people of these wagon trains carried their laws with them. These laws were largely an unwritten code of ethics by which they felt morally bound to abide. This code came obsolete as years went by--just as many early statutes of written law did, as the blue laws, etc. For instance, one law which was essential at the time, that of punishing a man for horse stealing--perhaps--for it amounted to murder when a man's and his family's life depended upon his horse. But as time went by this was no longer the case and such penalty was no longer argument, yet there were men who would rather exercise authority than natural justice then as now.

G. W. Sims served in the War of 1812 as a Private in Captain Joseph Brock's company of Cavalry, County of Madison - 82nd Regiment of Virginia Militia. In late years he received a pension for his war service.

Little is known to me of the sisters of Benjamin Franklin Sims and their families. He owned land in Sec. 33-Twsp. 12-R. 30 West and the home now occupied by J. E. Barron and his family of Chester before 1881. He moved from this area to a home near where Lake Fort Smith now is and all of his children were born there. Katherine and she was born on the farm just west of our home mentioned above.

Children of G.W. Sims and Rachael McWreath Sims: 1. Mrs. Elizabeth Eddy of Crawford county. 2. Mrs. Clarinda Rankin of Craig County, Ark. 3. Mrs. Nancy Price, Springfield, Mo. 4. Richard - lost at sea 5. Robert died in Calif. 6. William, no record, and 7. Benjamin Franklin.

Benjamin Franklin Sims married Emeline Lee, a daughter of Edward and Sabra (Kin) Lee. They had the following ten children: Emeline married Albert Simco. They had three children--Thomas Franklin, Allie, and one died in infancy.

William married Annie Swearingen.

Emeline married a Miss Kilpatrick.

Sabra married James Baker.

Allie married a Mr. Groate.

Albert married Rebecca Wright. Their children: Frank married Stella Teague (they have a son, Robert) and Ray married Twila Cain--they have a daughter, Rebecca.

Emeline married first Claud L. Swearingen. They had one son, Claude L. Jr. (he had World War I record, given in the July Heritage of 1958). After Claude L. Swearingen, Sr. died, Katherine married David M. Barron. They had three children, James Edgar (married Nelle Jones). They have one son, Joe Max, born Jan. 6, 1947. 2. Albert, served in World War II under General Patton, and Maxine is married to Victor Peters. They have a daughter, Vicki.

9. Emmeline married Alfred Creekmore. They have four children. Junior spent many years in the Navy. He married and has one son. 2. Norma married Mr. Centers and has four children - Centers - Wendel, Nancy, and Brenda and Lisa's father, later. 3. Nadine married first a Mr. Rush and had a son, Joe Alfred, who is married at this time. Nadine later married a Mr. Dias, who was killed in a car wreck. They had a daughter, Paula. 4. Betty Jean, a daughter, was killed by a car in Mountainburg at nine years.

Emeline and Elmer are twins. I list him as No. 10 of the family.

10. Elmer married Pearl Creekmore. They have two sons: Jack married Eutonia Kinnick and Lee married Marie. Their children are: Jesse, Martha and Linda.

Elmer Sims, a son of Benjamin Franklin Sims believes that his father was born in Georgia. The family lived in Tenn., most of their married years but may have lived in Georgia for a time. It is certain they traveled many hundreds of miles by covered wagon before reaching Arkansas. Benjamin Franklin Sims and his wife, Emeline (Lee) Sims are buried in the Basham cemetery near to Mountainburg, Ark.

Continuing with the children of their daughter, Lena Sims and her husband, Albert Simco:

1. Alice Lee (Allie) married Walter Jackson. They had no children.
2. Thomas Franklin Simco married Iva Peters, April, 1914. They had seven children, one daughter and six boys: 1. Alma Lee married Walter R. Rastall, Jr. 7/16/53- no children. 2. Hayden, killed in plane crash in India during World War II, died single. 3. William married Betty Kimes. They have three living children, 1.) Hayden 2.) Stanley and 3.) Jennifer. One son died in infancy. 4. Jack married Faye Burchfield, no children. 5. David Douglas married Geneva Hesser. They have three children, Barbara Anne, Mitchel and Dale, and a step-son, Norman. 6. Joseph Sydney married Virginia Poteet. He spent two years in the Armed Forces and holds a Masters Degree from the University of Arkansas. No children. 7. Thomas Frank married Jeraldine Osborn. They have one child, Thomas Neal. Thomas spent four years in the Armed Forces and holds a Masters Degree from the University of Arkansas.

There may be others related, but they can trace a tree for themselves from the records given here. I have listed the ones that I located.

OLD DEEDS AND TAX RECORDS OF CULPEPPER COUNTY, VIRGINIA

In 1782, Zachariah Sims paid taxes on 160 acres of land, James Sims paid taxes on 320 A., Edward Sims paid on 370 A., Thomas Sims paid on 196 A., Richard Sims paid on 116 A., Elijah Sims paid on 376 A. and James Sims paid on 250 A. In 1783, Zachariah sold his land - 160 A. to John Milbank and Sam Delph. His name does not appear on the tax records after that date, so this must be the time he moved to North Carolina.

KENTUCKY REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS lists from Bath Co., a John Sims-Age 79-in pension book of 1840 as a Private in Virginia-died in 1830. The Shelby County, Kentucky MARRIAGES list a Thomas Sims married Lucinda Hudson on Nov. 9, 1818.

VIRGINIA STATE D.A.R. ROSTER lists:

Lt. Col. Charles Sims, born in Wilmington Co., 1755. He died in Alexandria, Va., 1819, and Edward Sims born in Chesterfield, 1761, died in Powhatan, 1833. I do not know if these listed from Kentucky or D.A.R. records are related to the Crawford County Sims but give this data in case it may be useful in securing D.A.R. membership or completing family records.

A copy of the deed that Zachariah Sims made to John Milbank and Sam Delph could had by writing the County Clerk of Culpepper County, Va., and paying for the cost of copying. Such a deed would be very interesting and would likely show the name of his wife and all of his children as such Virginia deeds did at that time. I have such a deed made by my first American ancestors of Virginia. It was made by Samuel and his wife, Mary Merrifield. It contained the names of their NINE children. They reached Winchester in Fredrick County, Virginia, Aug. 12, 1747. The deed was recorded April 4, 1765.

REVOLUTIONARY RECORD OF ZACHARIAH SIMS--

A list of claims for soldiers recruited for the state's quota of January, 1781, of Culpepper County, Virginia, lists: Zachariah Sims, and many others who may be ancestors of Crawford County people. This shows that Zachariah was a soldier of the Revolutionary War and should answer for D.A.R. membership if all the other data furnished is acceptable.

LIST OF SHIBLEY GIFTS
GIVEN TO SOCIETY

The following gifts belonging to the Shibley family are on display in the society's museum case at the Van Buren Public Library. They were presented to the Society by Mrs. Harry B. Shibley, Coffeyville, Kansas:

Handmade baby dress and bonnet of Harry B. Shibley, Sr., worn year he was born, 1868. Born in Van Buren; also a picture.

Handmade quilted hood worn by Harry B. Shibley when he was three years old, 1871.

Picture: Four generations of Henry Shibley Family. Photograph made on Dec. 1, 1901. Each are the first born of the first born in each generation.

1. Rev. Henry Shibley, early day Crawford County educator and Minister of The Disciples of Christ (Christian) denomination. 86 years old.
2. W.H.H. Shibley, 1st Lt. in Co. G, 22nd Ark. Reg. (Civil War), who had three years service. Camp composed of Crawford County men. Van Buren wholesale grocer and merchant for many years. 61 years old.
3. Harry B. Shibley, Sr., wholesale grocer, printer, bookkeeper and educator in four states schools for the deaf. 33 years old.
4. Harry B. Shibley, Jr., nine months old.

THE CONFEDERATE ARMY, at the start of the war, consisted of some 36,000 volunteers and militia already mustered and in the field; in addition, active recruiting went on after March 6 to obtain the full quota of 100,000 men authorized by the Confederate Congress at that time.

(from Facts about The Civil War by The Civil War Centennial Commission)