

## KEITH FAMILY

### JONAH KEITH

Jonah Keith was born about 1774 in Brunswick County, NC and died in Alabama territory (which later became Henry County, AL) about 1824/25. He was one of eight children born to William Keith and Martha Ellis of England. They married 13 MAY 1754, Brompton By Sawden, Yorkshire, England and came to America about 1766, first landing in Fernandina Beach, Nassau Co., FL, then moved to South Carolina and on to Brunswick Co. NC. Their children were: William, Lucy, James, Margaret or Morgans, George, Isabella or Thabella, Jonah and Ferraby. The eldest son, William may have aided the Swamp Fox, Frances Marion during the Revolutionary War.

Jonah and his brothers James and George came to the Alabama territory about 1816 with Colonel Robert Irvin's party and part of the militia that aided the soldiers during the Indian uprising of 1814/1815 at Fort Gaines. Believe the Keiths were one of the first twelve families to settle in this area. James Keith was the first white settler to be killed by Indians in 1816. The Keith brothers are mentioned on page 2 of the Heritage Book of Henry County, Alabama, printed 2002. The Keith brothers and their families contributed in many ways to the settling of the Henry County area, along with the other brave men and their families who came to this territory.

Jonah married his only wife in SC about 1804. Mary Elizabeth Hayes was born in SC about 1790 to father Gilbert Hayes (b 1759 – NC) and died Henry County, AL after the 1870 census at about 80. Name of her mother is unknown, possibly died from childbirth complications. She was 14 when she married a 30 year old Jonah. By the 1810 Brunswick Co., NC census, they had two children between ages 5-10, one male and one female, their names unknown because the census only listed head of household by name. Nothing is known about these children. Jonah and Mary had three other known children. Their third child was Elizabeth born 08 MAR 1814, Georgia. She married Reuben Newton in Henry Co., AL on 07 SEP 1832. Reuben was the son of David H. Newton. Elizabeth died in Holmes Co., FL on 08 MAR 1879 at 65, buried Piney Grove cemetery, Houston Co., AL. They had six children. Jonah's fourth child was David H. Keith born 1815, N. Carolina and died about 1859 at 44 in Coffee Co., AL (now Geneva County). He married Martha P. McCorkle on 27 OCT 1836, Early Co., GA. They had five known children. Jonah's fifth child was Martha was born 1819, Henry Co., AL and died 05 DEC 1911, Robertson Co., TX. She married Hilary Watford on 21 OCT 1838, Henry Co., AL. It is believed Martha was the first white female born in Henry Co., AL.

Mary Elizabeth Hayes Keith married her second husband Noah Allen on 11 MAY 1826, Henry Co., AL. They had six children: Amos, Nancy, Elizabeth, Noah, Charlotte and Martha Jane. This was Noah's second marriage, also. Mary Elizabeth Allen was listed in 1860 Henry Co., AL census at 80 years old living with her youngest child, Martha 'Mollie' Jane Newton and husband George Newton. Mary is listed as a widow (Noah Allen died about 1850). Mary is listed in the 1870 Henry Co., AL census. She died soon after this was taken, assuming she is buried in Henry Co., AL.



## DAVID H. KEITH

David was the second son of Jonah Keith and Mary Elizabeth Hayes. He was born in North Carolina about 1815 and died between 1855-1859, Geneva, Coffee County, AL. It is unknown where he is buried. He died at about 40-44 years old. David and his two sisters were only young when they lost their father. Mary, at 35, was appointed administrator of Jonah's estate. The Henry County Orphans Court records for 31 JAN 1825, indicates letters of administration were ordered for Mary Keith, wife of Jonah Keith upon the estate of Jonah Keith. Then on 6 FEB 1832, the Orphans Court of Henry Co. ordered that letters of administration be issued to David H. Newton upon the estate and effects of Jonah Keith, late of said county. The last entry was on 28 FEB 1832 when the Henry Co. Orphans court ordered that David H. Newton, Administrator of Jonah Keith, deceased, be allowed to sell the property of the said deceased. It is understood that David H. Newton was a close friend of Jonah Keith. Newton's son Reuben would marry Jonah's daughter Elizabeth in September of 1832.

On 27 OCT 1836, in Early County, GA David married his only wife, Martha P. McCorkle. Martha was born 15 JAN 1819 in Early Co., GA and died 06 OCT 1892 at 73, buried Geneva City cemetery. Nothing is known about her parents. The 1840 census for Jackson Co., FL shows David and Martha living there. The 1840 Juror List for Jackson County shows David as a juror. David owned a great deal of land in Holmes Co., FL and Geneva County, AL along the Choctawhatchee River. He owned the "8<sup>th</sup> of January" steamboat, which ran the river from the gulf to Geneva. It sank about 1857 near what is now called the 8<sup>th</sup> of January Cut-off, just below January Island, five miles below Cerro Gordo, FL.

Martha and David had five children:

William Jonah born 26 OCT 1840, Jackson Co., FL and died 23 MAR 1904, Geneva, AL; James Madison born about 1844, Jackson Co., FL and died JAN 1885 Coffee Springs, Geneva Co., AL; Mary E. J. born about 1849, she died between 1851-1859. She is not listed in the 1850 Coffee Co., AL Mortality Schedule or the 1860 Coffee Co., AL census; Martha Callice 'Callie' born 1854, Coffee Co., AL. She is listed in the 1870 Geneva Co., AL census at 16 and going to school, living with widowed mother Martha Keith. A Martha Keith owned land in Huntsville, Madison Co., AL purchased 11 May 1884. Believe she died 06 MAR 1934, never married. (Unverified if this is our Martha Callice Keith); Thomas B.J. was born 1856, Coffee Co., AL and died 1880 in Geneva Co. In the 1870 census, he's listed at 14 living with widowed mother Mattie Keith. Thomas is listed in 1880 census, occupation merchant, age 24, single, living with 60 year old mother. Thomas died after the census was taken between July and December of 1880.

David Keith was one of the first merchants of Geneva, AL. He was the owner of a steamboat that helped carry people and supplies to Geneva, and owned a lot of land around the area. He, like his forebearers, helped settle Alabama and accomplished a lot in his short lifetime. He also left offsprings who continued to help Alabama.



## WILLIAM JONAH KEITH

William was born 26 OCT 1840, Jackson Co., FL and died 64 years later on 23 MAR 1904. His first wife was Roxy Ann Jordan whom he married about 1858. She was born 07 FEB 1839 in Georgia and died 02 DEC 1876 at 37. Her mother was Elizabeth (unknown) Jordan listed in the 1850 Pike Co., AL census at 35, born Georgia; Roxy Ann, age 11, David age 8 and Martha Ann, age 6, all born Georgia. William and Roxy had ten children:

James D. was born 22 JUL 1859, Geneva, Coffee Co., AL. He died at 11 ½ months in JUN 1860, after being ill for five days (from Coffee Co., AL Mortality Schedule 1860).

William Jonah, Jr. born 22 OCT 1860, Geneva, died 27 APR 1941 at 82, Holmes Co., FL. He married Ella (Ellen) Rodgers on 01 FEB 1885, Floyd Co., GA. Ella was born AUG 1856, AL and died at 70 in DEC 1925, Geneva, AL, no children.

Mary 'Mamie' Elizabeth Ophelia born 6 APR 1862, Geneva and died 26 AUG 1936, Miami, Dade Co., FL at 74. She married Edgar M. Greene about 1883/84. Edgar was born 27 APR 1861, Pike Co., AL and died 28 JUN 1888, Geneva, AL at 27. Edgar and Mamie had one child, Edgar Mosley I Greene born 13 MAR 1884, Geneva and died 19 JUN 1963, Miami, Dade Co., FL.

Charles Reuben was born APR 1865 and died in 1942, Geneva, AL at 77. Charles married 13 MAR 1890 to Minnie Josephine Slaughter. Minnie was born JUL 1865, AL and died 1910, Geneva. They had six children, with only four surviving to adults: Roxanne 'Annie' b DEC 1890; Charles Reuben, Jr. b FEB 1893; John Henry b 04 JUL 1894; and William Jonah b 09 AUG 1900.

Thomas M. Keith was born 1866, Geneva, and died after 1910 census was taken in Geneva. No indication he ever married.

Martha Callice 'Callie' was born 1868, Geneva, died 08 JAN 1956, Jefferson Co., AL. She married first husband Thomas C. Laney b 24 JUL 1862 died 23 SEP 1886 at 24. They had one son, Thomas C. Jr. Second husband was Augustus Douglass McKinnon on 13 MAR 1890 Geneva. Gus was born 08 JAN 1856, Walton Co., FL and died 15 OCT 1911 at 55, buried Geneva City cemetery. They had eight children: Augustus, Jr. b JAN 1891; Julia Kathleen b MAR 1892; Cleopatra b JUL 1894; William Jonah b 12 OCT 1895; Laura Belle b APR 1898; unnamed boy born and died OCT/NOV 1899; and Wallace R. b NOV 1900.

Laura E. P. was born APR 1869, Geneva died ~~10 MAY 1911, Florala, Covington Co., AL, age 42~~. She married Capt. Stephen A. Cawthon about 1892, no children. She was his fourth wife. Stephen was born 19 JUL 1834 and died 12 MAY 1918.

Katherine 'Katie' was born JAN 1871 and died MAY 1942 at 71. She never married.

Julia was born 05 JUN 1873 and died 31 AUG 1913. She married first husband Benjamin A. Latimer in early 1893. They had two daughters. Ben was born 19 MAR 1869 and died 03 SEP 1900 at 31. Her second husband was Wallace Douglass McKinnon, younger brother of Gus McKinnon. They married on 02 FEB 1907, Geneva. He was born 1861, Walton Co., FL and died 1933, Ferry Pass, Escambia Co., FL, no children born to this marriage. This was Wallace's second marriage.



Johnie R. was born OCT 1876, Geneva and died APR 1964 at 88. John was town marshal of Geneva in 1900. Unknown if he married.

William Jonah married his second wife, Julia Harkley Runyon about 1877. They had no children, but she helped raise the children from his first marriage. Julia was born in Florida on 19 MAR 1838 and died Geneva on 04 SEP 1930 at 92. William and Roxy's children still at home were Mary at 15 through to last born John at one year old. William Jonah was a farmer, elected tax collector, county superintendent of education; Mayor of Geneva, owned W.J. Keith Mercantile and was the elected representative for Geneva County in the Alabama legislature. He was known as Uncle Jonah and nearly everyone in Geneva town attended his funeral in 1904. He was remembered as a very generous, kind and gentle man by everyone.

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01 DEC 2005