

2814 Exeter Circle
Raleigh, N.C. 27608
April 5, 1979

Dear Cousin Harriet,

Today Mary Hinton Kerr handed to me your letter of Mar.19 and asked me to reply to your questions about the Graves family in Georgia. I am a daughter of A. Yancey Kerr. I was born and reared in Yanceyville. In recent years I have done research on the Graves and Kerr lines in Caswell County.

Solomon Graves of Caswell County in 1818-1819 sold his home and plantation in said county and moved to Newton County, Ga. He built his home, Mount Pleasant. His entire family went with him or followed him to Ga. Solomon Graves died in 1830 and his will was probated in Newton Co. He is buried with others of his family at a family cemetery at Mount Pleasant. His son John L. Graves was a physician. Hence I expect the medical diplomas hanging at Mt. Pleasant are for his grandsons. It is my understanding that his family owned the plantation until it was sold in 1950's.

About 1838, Thomas Graves, a nephew of Solomon Graves, left Yanceyville, Caswell Co., with his family and moved to Social Circle, Walton Co. Ga. I understand this is very near Mt. Pleasant. Thomas Graves and wife Mary with some of his children are also buried at the Graves cemetery at Mt. Pleasant. It is known that Thomas Graves left Caswell Co. because of some health problems in his family and was seeking a better climate. It is unknown if Solomon left for such a reason.

My knowledge of the above is from deeds of Caswell Co. and from correspondence with Louise Graves of Dallas, Texas, a descendant of Thomas Graves, who has visited the gravesites.

After the death of your grandfather James Kerr (and my great grandfather), the widow Frances A. Kerr married 8 Nov. 1849 James L. Graves, her distant cousin. They lived at the James Kerr home and there were 2 more children, Barzillai Walter Graves and Leonora Graves(Scott). In 1853 James L. Graves Died. Frances A. Graves contested his will - won the right to administer the estate as she chose to do so. In 1857 she sold the home and plantation in Caswell Co. to her husband's nephew, Alvis Lea. This is apparently about the time she went to Georgia. Her son James would have been 15 years old and son John 13 years old.

I have no knowledge of her Georgia home - except what you have written. It would take a check with the deeds of Newton Co. to determine if Frances A. Graves purchased land there. Perhaps she lived with relatives. The sons of Solomon Graves were first cousins to the mother of Frances - also they were first cousins to James Kerr. It would be interesting to learn if she did buy land in Ga.

Since the slave quarters were removed from Mt. Pleasant to Stone Mt., I suppose the architectural experts would have to determine the age to prove if they were built by Solomon Graves, his sons, or some later resident of the same home.

Frances A.(Kerr) Graves did not remain in Ga. very long. In 1862 she purchased land in Davidson County, and lived there several years.

My grandfather, John H. Kerr went to the Confederate Army from Davidson County, N. C. There is a rumor that Frances Graves invested her assets in some war endeavor- possibly in a railroad or a munitions plant. After the war (1865) she returned to Caswell Co. - built a home in Yanceyville and lived there until her death 5 Sept. 1869. This house was later the home of Archibald Henderson, and has now been demolished. Frances is buried at Kerr's Chapel Church beside her first husband.

The second husband of Frances, James L. Graves, was a son of James Graves who was a nephew of Solomon Graves also. The rumor goes that James Graves went to Ga. on a trip, died there, and his son had his body returned by wagon to Caswell Co. to be buried. (1826)

I am interested in the fact that Frances could have lived at Mt. Pleasant. I hope to have time to combine my findings on the Kerr and Graves family - just in Caswell County. I leave the earlier research to others. I would be interested in knowing if James L. C. Kerr was in the Confederate Army. I remember Aunt Ennis visiting in Yanceyville about 1930.

I hope the above facts will be helpful to you.

With love,

Katharine K. Kendall

Katharine Kerr Kendall
(Mrs. Henry E.)

One more note: Dr. John L. Graves, the son of Solomon, had married, in Caswell County, his cousin, Martha W. Graves. His wife was a first cousin of James Kerr, and first cousin to the mother of Frances Kerr Graves. I do not know which of the children of Solomon Graves lived on at Mt. Pleasant.

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