

THE LANNOM FAMILY

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Source: LANNOM family file in the Genealogy section of the Mt. Juliet Library in Mt. Juliet, TN

This sketch is concerned primarily with the descendants of four members of the Lannom family - three brothers, WILLIAM, JOSEPH and LEVI, and their sister SUSAN -- who migrated to Tennessee and settled on Spring Creek and near-by areas in Rutherford and Wilson Counties. Just who the Lannoms were and from whence and when they came to Tennessee is not definitely known, though certain facts in regard to this matter can be derived from the Federal Census schedules and from the records of Rutherford and Wilson Counties in Tennessee.

The name "Lannom" does not seem to exist anywhere in the United States except in Middle Tennessee and areas to which the Middle Tennessee Lannoms and their descendants have migrated, principally West Tennessee, Western Kentucky, Arkansas, and Texas. On the other hand, the records of Maryland contain numerous references to the name "Lanham." The 1790 Census for that state lists thirty heads of families by the name of Lanham, several of these having the same given names as are found among the Tennessee Lannoms. These facts, together with a number of Census references to Rutherford and Wilson County Lannoms as having been born in Maryland and Virginia, suggest that the Lannoms were originally Lanhams and that they came to Tennessee by way of North Carolina from Maryland.

The Census of 1850 lists Green B. Lannom, son of Joseph, as age 48 and born in North Carolina. Assuming the accuracy of this statement, it would seem that some of the Lannoms were still in North Carolina in 1802. The records of Davidson County, Tennessee, show a marriage license issued to William Lannom and Nancy Nelson, May 31, 1804, and the records of Wilson County show a license to Levi Lannom and Rachel Gibson, August 30, 1806. Thus it would follow that some, or perhaps all, of the Middle Tennessee ancestors of the Lannoms migrated to that area around the years 1802-1804. Certainly they were established there by 1810, in which year the records of Rutherford County show William and Levi Lannom buying land from William Nash on Spring Creek.

William Lannom (1778-1854) was married three times: first, in 1804, to Nancy Nelson; second, to Mrs. Mary Clardy, a widow; and third, to someone by the name of Upchurch, of whom we have no information. We do not know the date of Nancy Nelson Lannom's death, but it was obviously in or after 1824, the year of the birth of William Green Lannom (1824-1888), her eleventh child. William Lannom and Mary Clardy were married in 1832, and she died sometime previous to 1848, as in that year the Rutherford County records show Tillman W. Lannom acting as guardian for Thomas, Albert, and Evaline Lannom, minor heirs of Mary P. Clardy, deceased. Mary P. Clardy was a native of Virginia and by a previous marriage had two daughters, Harriet Amanda Clardy and Parmelia Clardy, who were also born in Virginia. Harriet Amanda Clardy (1824-1899) married Tillman W. Lannom (1814-1906) in 1842, and Parmelia Clardy married, first, in 1846, Daniel B. Bond and, second, Joseph Pollard. Daniel B. Bond and Parmelia Clardy were the parents of Erastus K. (Rassie) Bond and of Myron Bond who married Ella Smith and was the father of Ollie, Clara, Harvie, and Daniel Bond. William Lannom is listed in the 1850 Census without family connection, and thus his marriage to Miss or Mrs. Upchurch, whoever she was, must have occurred between that year and his death in 1854. William Lannom apparently lived on the farm that was later occupied by his son and grandson, John Nelson Lannom and Simpson Berry Lannom, and was sold around 1940 to Elvin Maddox who now (1968) lives on that portion not taken over by the Percy Priest Lake.

Joseph Lannom is listed in the Census of 1820 as "over 45." Thus he was born before 1775. His daughter Mary Bywater Lannom, wife of John Nelson Lannom, reported in 1880 that her father was born in Maryland and her mother, Delilah Browning Lannom, in South Carolina. But Delilah Browning Lannom appears in the 1850 Census as having been born in Virginia. Joseph Lannom apparently died soon after 1820, as Rutherford County records show the sale of land in 1822 by Green and Simpson Lannom, heirs of Joseph Lannom deceased, to Nathan Lannom. The Joseph Lannom property was on the left bank of Spring Creek, ranging from the spring on the Johns place to the mouth of Hurricane Creek and up that creek for some distance. With the exception of Mary Bywater Lannom, who married her cousin John Nelson Lannom, all of the Joseph Lannom family eventually moved to West Tennessee, Western Kentucky, and Arkansas, where some of their descendants are still located. Delilah Browning Lannom died in 1858 at the home of her son William S. Lannom in Calloway County, Kentucky.

Levi Lannom died in 1849. In the Census of 1820 he is listed as "over 45," which would mean that he was born before 1775. The Census of 1820 also lists his household as containing, in addition to himself, one "female over 45" and one "female 10-16." These would obviously be his wife, Rachel Gibson Lannom whom he married in 1806, and his daughter who married Isaac Sanders. We once thought that this daughter was his only child, but Rutherford County records show a marriage of Levi Lannom and Jedeah Fussell in 1842 and also show John Jones acting as guardian in 1852 for Arvella or Arabella Lannom, minor heir of Levi Lannom. Arabella seems to have died before 1856. This would indicate that Levi Lannom was married a second time and had a second child. Levi seems to have been in the best circumstances of any of the Rutherford County Lannoms. He owned and lived on the Guill farm, later owned by the Fayette Sanders family and now (1968) the site of Lamar Hills, one of the recreation areas on Percy Priest Lake.

The case of Susan Lannom is a rather delicate matter but one that must be faced if serious and meaningful research into the family history is to be undertaken. She appears in the 1850 Census as born in North Carolina, 85 years old, and living in the family of Nathan McCulloch, the husband of one of her granddaughters. There is no evidence that Susan was ever married, though she brought with her from North Carolina at least three children, Nathan, John, and Tillman Lannom, who are the ancestors of a large segment, probably a majority, of the Lannom connection that is living today.

Whether Susan was "a bad character" or whether, as was so often the case on the frontier, her situation was due to the lack of churches, clergymen, and organized institutions of society, we do not know. As a child I was never allowed to discuss or ask questions about the matter. I think my grandmother Welch considered the existence of this branch of the family as an affront to her sense of morality and propriety, though she must have realized that, by and large, Susan's descendants were no different from our other Lannom relatives.

Where Susan Lannom made her home after coming to Tennessee is not known today. The home of Nathan McCulloch, where she was living in 1850, was in Wilson County south of Vesta and apparently adjoining the property of her son John Lannom. Nathan Lannom, who seems to have been Susan's oldest and most prominent son, bought some, at least, of the Joseph Lannom land on the left bank of Spring Creek in 1822 and apparently lived there until his death which occurred sometime after 1860.

Before moving to Tennessee, Leonard Lannom and his wife Tabitha lived in the mountains of North Carolina just fifteen miles from Virginia.

Caswell County, NC Land Grants

Leonard Lanham (spelling correct) was granted 150 acres on Toms Creek on July 28, 1779.

After the death of Leonard Lanham, Tabitha Lannom married Jonathon Poe in CASWELL Co., NC. They migrated to and settled in TN.