

Notes on the History and Migration of Walter Blaine Thompson's Ancestors: (v.2)

Walter Blaine Thompson was born in Davidson County NC into a family that had been farmers for several generations, but not continuously in the same place. The 1850 census shows that the family was in Randolph County. We have not been able to find them listed again in the census until 1880, when James Alfred Thompson (Walter Blaine's father) is listed as the head of a four person household (him and 3 of his siblings) in Davidson County. Their married brother, Madison Thompson and his wife are listed as neighbors. By 1900 James Alfred has a large family of his own in Davidson County. Walter Blaine Thompson is part of this household and is listed as a farm laborer (age 15). Our records show that Walter Blaine attended school in Denton NC and then attended Rutherford College (now Brevard College). In the 1910 census, we learned that Walter Blaine is living with his first wife Lillie Catherine (Lowdermilk) in Denton in a private home as boarders and Walter Blaine's occupation is listed as a saw mill laborer. Within six months, the couple's first child was born (Mildred). Their second child, Collins Denny, was born prior to Walter Blaine's joining the Western NC Conference as a minister. Lillie died in 1918 after only nine years of marriage, leaving him with four small children. He married Mary Ethel Wood in 1920. They had four children of their own.

Walter Blaine Thompson began his service as a Methodist minister in the Western NC Conference in 1914 at a church in Deep River, North Carolina. During his career, he served churches in the following communities: Mars Hill, Uwharrie, Salisbury, Lowesville, Advance, Pilot Mountain, Waxhaw, Bethel, Winston-Salem, Linwood, Bostic, Thomasville and West End. He retired in 1954 to Lexington NC. There he served for eight years as chaplain to the Junior Order Children's Home.

Walter Blaine Thompson's son, Walter Rowe Thompson, and his son-in-law, Harold D. Minor were also Methodist ministers.

Among the families that we are researching, only the individuals whose ancestors came from Montgomery and Randolph Counties are without German ancestors. In fact, it seems that 100% of their ancestors were from the British Isles. Being from Rowan County, I have always heard about the Great Wagon Road that lead settlers from Pennsylvania to the Piedmont. Apparently there was a different migration trail into Randolph and Montgomery Counties that these English speaking settlers used.

There were a number of Thompson males in Rowan County before 1800. Early records show that there was a John, James, and Joseph in Rowan in 1756, Clauss in 1762, Alexander in 1764, Henry in 1768, Moses in 1770, Valentin in 1772, Lawrence in 1778, and George in 1795. It is possible that they are somehow related to our Anderson L. Thompson, who was in Montgomery County in 1832. There were three Thompsons listed in Montgomery County in the 1790 census. They were: Walter, John, and Elisha.

Thompson is generally considered to be a Scottish surname and there were numerous Thompsons arriving in America prior to 1700. Edward Thompson, a passenger on the "Mayflower" arrived in 1620. David Thompson arrived in 1623 and settled in Maine. William Thompson arrived in 1653 and settled in Virginia.

Additional information on the Thompson family and the following surnames are provided below: **Benson, Coggin/Coggins, Cranford/Hopkins, Elliott, Haltom, Harris, Johnson, Moore, Pennington, and Watson**

Benson- Alice E. Benson was Walter Blaine Thompson's great-great grandmother, but we do not know where she was born or where her family originated. There were numerous Bensons that migrated from England to Massachusetts and New York before 1700; perhaps her ancestors were among these settlers.

Coggin/Coggins- Walter Blaine Thompson's great-grandmother, Sarah Elizabeth Coggins, married Nathan Christopher (Kidd) Cranford in Rowan County in 1804. A John Coggin appears on the 1790 census in Rowan County and is probably her father. Our records indicate that John was born in Virginia. This family is possibly related to a James Coggin that settled in Virginia in 1638. Coggin is generally considered a Welch name.

Cranford/Hopkins- Both Walter Blaine Thompson and Myrtle Ann Morgan are descendants of this family. Our records show that Leonard Cranford and Mary Hopkins were the first members of this family in North Carolina. They migrated from Calvert County, Maryland to Montgomery County, MD where they were married in 1800. Leonard Cranford's family was in Maryland before 1705. Perhaps Mary Hopkins was somehow related to Johns Hopkins, a fellow Marylander. These families probably came from England.

Elliott- Amy Elliott was Walter Blaine Thompson's paternal grandmother. Her family was among early settlers in Montgomery County, however, the 1790 census does not have a James Elliott (Amy's grandfather) listed anywhere in North Carolina. There were 13 Elliotts listed in Randolph County. James would have been about 20 years old, possibly married, but childless in 1790, so he may have been living with family. The surname Elliott is generally considered Scottish, but our records show that this family came from Ireland

Haltom- Amy Elliott's mother was Pricilla Haltom, also from Montgomery County. Based on the 1850 census, we know that her father was living in Montgomery County and was born in South Carolina about 1777. However, if you check the 1790 census, there were no Haltoms in all of South Carolina. The Haltom surname is generally considered English.

Harris- Pricilla Haltom's mother was Rhoda Harris. There were 13 Harris families in Montgomery County in 1790 so it seems likely that there were several around the time of the Revolutionary War, but we have not determined who her parents were. The Harris surname is considered English and was common throughout the Colonies.

Johnson- Early records have a Francis, James, and Edmund Johnson in Rowan in 1762, an Ashle, David, and Robert in 1762, John in 1766, Gideon and Thomas in 1768, Henry in 1788, and Archibald in 1795.

Moore- Our records show that Valentine Moore migrated from Ireland to Montgomery County, NC, probably between 1790 and 1800. Valentine Moore does not appear on the 1790 census, but he is listed in the 1800 census. Our records also indicate that Valentine's father was born in Scotland. The surname Moore is very common and appears very early in Ireland, Scotland and England.

Pennington- Margaret Pennington, wife of James Elliott was born in North Carolina about 1775. There were 4 Pennington households in Montgomery County in 1790. It is likely that she was part of one of these families. Pennington is an English surname and several with this name immigrated to Virginia in the 1600's.

Watson- The parents of Sally Watson (Walter Blaine Thompson's paternal great-grandmother) are a mystery. In the 1850 census, it says that Sally was born in North Carolina. There were no Watson households in Montgomery County in 1800, but there were 54 Watson households in the state. The Watson surname has origins in England and Scotland.