

A History of our Peebles Family Line

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Based in part on previous work by family historian
Mrs. Mauritz L. Anderson in her book *"The Peebles Family"*

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Preface

Based on multiple DNA test results, we feel reasonably confident in the accuracy of our paper trail back to Abraham Peebles.

If you or another Peebles descendant has taken a DNA test, please send me the username of your test results for inclusion. No personally identifiable information of any living person will be shared.

Thanks! kevin@irelanddavis.com

(1) DAVID PEEBLES

? - 1659

According to the family historian, Mrs. Mauritz L. Anderson in her books The Peebles Family, the family was part of a group of refugees who left Flanders before 1115 because of civil and religious difficulties and disastrous sea floods. Their home became the area at the confluence of the Tweed and the Eddleston Rivers, the latter for centuries being called "Peeble's Water."

The family name originally was Pabell and variously spelled Pebyl, Pebly, Pebilli, etc. It began to be standardized to Peebles in the 1500 and 1600's and it meant "tent dweller".

Near the Firth of Forth where the Peebles lived, there were many raids by the native Scots and border disturbances with the English were commonplace. It was the custom to dig burrows or cellars under the dwellings in which the women and children could hide when raids occurred.

Astride the Tweed River, Peebles was celebrated in an old Scots poem "Peblis to the Play" ascribed to James I of Scotland. It is also the site of Scott's book St Ronan's Well. The ruins of a 13th century monastery in the town are those of the Cross Church which contained the relics of St. Nicholas of Peebles.

A royal burgh since the 14th Century, the town of Peebles was burnt down by the English in 1406 and again in 1649 when the town's Neidpath Castle was taken by Cromwell. A coat of arms was granted to an Alex Peebles in 1621 by Charles I, and he was made the Earl of Wemyss, Marquis of Queensbury, both of which titles are now extinct. It was at the Castle of Wemyss that Mary Queen of Scots first met Darnley.

Therefore there is solid reason to suppose that the Peebles - or at least some of them were Royalists. In 1649 over 300 adherents of Charles I were condemned to the block by Cromwell and escaped. It is thought that this is the reason David Peebles came to Virginia.

We know very little about his life in Scotland except that he married Elspet Mackie in Fife Scotland. There is no record in Virginia Colony of Elspet or any of her children with one exception. She may have died in Scotland or in the boat on the way over as did so many. It is unlikely that she ever arrived in Virginia as her headright land was not claimed by anyone.

Elspet and David's first child was a girl, Criston, baptized in 1634 at St. Andrew's Scotland. On July 7, of the following year, their son, William, was baptized in Kilconquhar. The next child of whom we know is Allison who was baptized July 7, 1641 in Balclavie; where this church was located is unknown. Margaret was next and her baptism took place September 18, 1642 in St. Monance. She was followed by John, April 9, 1644 again in Balclavie. Why the children were christened in different towns and across the Firth of Forth some distance away from the Peebles family home area we do not know. Perhaps the unsettled times played a role.

In 1650 on August 5, David Peebles had arrived in America and was given a grant of 833 acres of land on the south side of the James River and slightly inland. This included not only his own portion but also the headrights for 16 other people. In those days it took at least 6 months to obtain a patent for land which would put his arrival in late 1649 or earlier, as of course it was frequent that the claiming of headrights was put off for some time.

He was relatively wealthy to have paid the passages of 16 persons and from his subsequent standing in the community we know this to be the case.

In the Court Order Book of Charles City, Virginia (1655-1665) David Peebles appears as a Justice of the Court, a vestryman of Westover Parish and a Captain of the Militia. At this time vestrymen were elected by the people of the parish - an Open Vestry. After 1661 the Closed Vestry was established by law wherein the minister and the other vestrymen chose successors for vacancies. This was an important change as vestrymen controlled a great portion of colonial Virginia life. They set the budget for the parish, apportioned taxes and elected churchwardens who often served as tax collectors and they exercised control over the recording of land titles by the "proccessioning of the bounds of every person's land." They also supervised the counting of tobacco which served as the currency of the state.

What controls remained of local civilian life were in the hands of eight justices appointed by the governor, and David was one of these.

As for his military duties as Captain of the Militia, the area in his charge lay between Powell and Wards Creek on the south side of the James. After muster, the officers usually dined together so that it is likely that David Peebles would have dined now and then with Thomas Jefferson, the grand father of President Jefferson, who was also a Militia Captain for Henrico County as well as a fellow Justice. Jefferson was a friend of Byrd whose Westover Plantation was just across the James from Peeble's land.

By 1655 David had married Elizabeth Bishopp who had arrived in the colony four years previously. Her father had come over in 1638 as a servant to Thomas Gray, but had prospered, becoming a landowner and later sending for his family to come over from England. He served in the House of Burgesses in 1641, 1652 and 1653. Mr. Bishopp, or Captain Bishopp, as he was also known, as a Burgess was paid 150 pounds of tobacco per day during sessions and given a servant and horse or a boat with rowers for his convenience. It is interesting that no former servant who had arrived after 1640 became a Member of the House of Burgesses which became much more aristocratic with the passage of time as the range of opportunity narrowed.

David and Elizabeth's children were Sarah and Christian. (David's first wife, Elspet, was named the Scottish variant of Elizabeth, and in his Scottish family there was a Criston, again a form of Christian.) Christian and her husband John Poythress will enter our story again later.

During this time David, as was the custom where hands

were in short supply, rented out portions of his land.

Money too was short and the credit system operated with the exchange of promissory notes based on land, cattle, servants or future crops. Given the high mortality rate of the signers, the hazards of tobacco transportation on the high seas, and the instability of the tobacco market, it is no wonder that this system led to complications and abuses.

A litigious lot, the early Virginians sued early and often. There are court records wherein money is owed to or by David Peebles and the following people: Theodorick Bland, Lt. Col. Walter Alston, Mrs. Sarah Rice Hoe, Morgan Jones, Rich Jones ("Minister") and William Ditty, whose High Peake plantation was put up as security against his debt to Peebles.

There was also a dispute with James Crews who continually demanded payments in court and finally engaged in physical action and then took his claim to the General Court of Virginia Colony. It is there recorded in December, 1656,

"...for the Stabs and Blows mentioned...they were occasioned by Crewes unworthy and uncivil provocation for which Notwithstanding, Peebles have given satisfaction and...not just proof appears on Crewe's part, whereas we humbly Conceive that the said Crewes ought to be made Example of for such foul Base and unworthy defamations against Capt. Peibles...by paying costs of Suit and a fine to Capt. Peebles..."

There was a considerable court case when Rice Hoe sued in behalf of Sarah Hoe's estate, but by this time William, David's son, had arrived from Scotland to help with his father's affairs.

In the summer of 1656 there was unrest and Indian trouble which Capt. David's militia helped subdue. He was perhaps injured at that time as he was not thereafter present as a Justice in court although the court had moved closer to his plantation.

His place was named Bon Accord, locally called Bonnie-cord. Few early Virginia patents contain plantation names unless they were river front lands, so it was unusual that his land down Powell's Creek from the river was named. The "City of Bon Accord" is Aberdeen and perhaps either Elspet Mackie (who carried a Highland name) came from here or it may have been the port from which David left Scotland.

David lived inactively and perhaps invalided for two years more. "Mrs. Peibils" appears in records of his tobacco transactions, also in suits, two of which she lost. She was exempted from paying tax on "2 persons escaped", no doubt runaway indentured servants.

On September 1, 1659, the court ordered David's estate appraised for the orphans of Capt. David Peibils. Presumably these orphans were Sarah and Christian, either the children of David and Elizabeth or else adopted by David from a previous marriage of Elizabeth Bishopp Peebles. At the age of 24 David's Scottish son William certainly would not have been considered an orphan.

(2) WILLIAM PEEBLES
1635-1695

William Peebles had been baptized in Kilconquhar, overlooking the Firth of Forth on July 7, 1635. Where he spent his childhood is not known, only that at some time before the end of his father's life, he joined him in Virginia. As far as we know he was the only one of his father's Scottish family to come to America.

Shortly after his father died in 1659 Bon Accord, the family plantation, was lost to William in a complicated court battle. It passed as a result into the Poythress family through John Poythress' marriage to Christian Peebles, William's half-sister. The boundaries, some of which still exist, of Bon Accord were cited as follows:

"Up Powell's Crk at the head thereof, west upon the Birchen Swamp, South and West upon the land of Mr. Rich Tye [part of this section is still called Old Town, formerly the site of an old Wyanoke Indian town], East upon the woods. NE upon land of James Ward, North upon the Reedy Swamp."

In her book, Mrs. Anderson somewhat tartly remarks, "Bon Acoord has been claimed as the original seat of the Poythress family, but they have never found the patent and records do not uphold them."

William, unlike his father, took no prominent part in county activities but served as a jury member, appraised estates and went security for some people.

The times were difficult. The year 1667 was particularly disastrous. An April hailstorm destroyed the new tobacco. In June there was a Dutch raid followed by a forty-day rain. August saw a fierce hurricane and floods. In 1673 there was another Dutch raid and a terrible winter. Tobacco prices fell to a ha'penny a pound in 1677 due to the Navigation Acts. Although by 1683 when the price of tobacco had greatly increased, the small landholders were having other troubles competing with the large landholders.

In 1670 and 1673, William purchased two tracts of land. This land lay about five miles south of Bon Accord on the headwaters of the Birchen Swamp - 388 acres east and 73 acres lying across and to the west of the Swamp. It was here that Burleigh Plantation was situated.

Where he lived with his first wife, Judeth, before this purchase we don't know. Judeth was a ward of John Drayton, whose receipt for her "porcon" - portion or dowry - was recorded in court in 1662-63. Judeth was probably the mother of William II born in 1670.

By the time young William was five years old the Indians had become troublesome again. In 1675-76 an English fort was established upriver on the eastern shore of the Blackwater River. Heavy taxes were levied to pay for the forts and troops who manned them although this system of fortified defense was totally ineffective against the hit-and-run Indian raids.

This state of affairs paved the way for Nathaniel Bacon and the subsequent Bacon's Rebellion.

The "Southsiders" (those living south of the James)

were particularly apprehensive and vulnerable to attack, and they gathered together at Jordan's Point just below the mouth of the Appomatox very near Burleigh Plantation. Bacon came down to their meeting and here he was proclaimed leader for the civilian defensive efforts. Previously he had become a military spokesman for a group of neighbors including in their number, Capt. James Crews (presumably David Peeble's old enemy) and Byrd. Bacon succeeded in putting down the Indian threat which the fearful Governor Berkeley had refused to do. Bacon, however, went on from Indian fighting to challenging the government itself. Although routing Berkeley, he himself died and the rebellion collapsed. It was the last challenge of the yeomanry, and government became the province of the privileged in Virginia.

In defense of Berkeley and his wariness of the freedmen, "A Rabble Crue", it should be noted that everyone in the colony was required to keep a gun and with the increase of single freedmen who were often without the possibility of bettering themselves legally and were without a family or roots, the situation was potentially dangerous. The guns were supposed to be used in protection of the cattle against wolves and thieves, for hunting, for shooting Indians, for signalling and "at weddings and funerals". But there was no reason that the guns could not be used against the established order too and of this Berkeley and the landed gentry were fearful. A Virginian writing in 1691 observed, "There is no custom more generally to be observed among the Young Virginians than that they all learn to keep and use a gun with a marvelous dexterity as soon as they have strength to lift it..."

Meanwhile Judeth had died and a second wife whose name is not recorded had been married by William. They too had a child whose name was David.

Then once again a widower, William married a third time a woman named Elizabeth who was probably the Widow Busby. In assessing the date of this marriage there is a clue as in 1690, Wilmot, the orphan of James Munford, was bound to Elizabeth Peebles who was referred to as the "now wife of Wm Peebles", indicating that she had not long been so. They too had a son, Henry who was born before 1695, the year in which his father William died at home on his Burleigh Plantation in his 60th year.

(3) WILLIAM PEEBLES II
1670-1740

The second William Peebles was the first native American of the family, having been born in about 1670 in Prince Georges County, Virginia. He had grown up at Burleigh Plantation and here he lived the rest of his life as a small landholder.

Southside was the poorest section of the state where the soil was less good, Indians were more dangerous and a greater proportion of roaming rootless freedmen lived. The use of slaves was becoming an increasingly complicating factor in the lives of small farmers. By the time William was starting to farm on his own, there were over 6,000 slaves in the colony.

When he had been born, the population of Virginia was two to three times more than it had been just twenty years previously. This was due in part to increasingly healthier conditions. For instance now that the orchards planted earlier had grown to bearing age, cider and other fermented drinks were consumed instead of the water contaminated by high water tables and shallow wells. In addition as more women immigrated, there were more marriages and not only more births but correspondingly fewer infant deaths.

William himself reflected these changes. He married in his twenties and his first child, Abraham was born in the same year that his grandfather died, 1695. The young family continued to live at Burleigh, which William had inherited from his father. And here the rest of the children were born and reared: William III, Thomas, Hannah, John, Peter, Joseph and Sarah.

William had become a Quaker and his plantation gave the site and name to the first Quaker Meeting south of the James River. It was a subsidiary of Henrico County Monthly Meeting. To be a Quaker in those times was not only unpopular but also occasionally dangerous and the Friends were persecuted and reviled more often than not. Perhaps because of this, William lived a quiet life with very few records in the courts or elsewhere. He witnessed wills and deeds as reflected in Merchant's Hope Court, and witnessed marriages as inscribed in the Minutes of the Quaker Meeting. Even the journals of the traveling Quakers from the north only mention Burleigh briefly.

Somehow he managed to make a living and raise his eight children on his 150 acres. It must have been a welcome gift when he received some hogs and "yews" under the will of Jno. Green. Animals were a highly favored asset - even ewes which commonly did not thrive.

By 1727 he had put together enough money to patent 200 acres nearby on the south side of Joseph's Swamp. For this document and all others, William, the only male member of his family who could not sign his name, made his mark - a linked W-P. This period of colonial Virginia is known to have been the most difficult time in the history of the colony in which to become educated. Before the establishment of William and Mary College, only the wealthy could send children to Great Britain for an education or to afford the expense of a family tutor. With plantations separated by great distances and with

no roads to link them, each family was on its own when it came to the education of the young.

By 1738, he had given 100 acres of his Joseph's Swamp land to his son William, and this land is still in the family. The other 100 acres he sold when he was 70 years old.

He died sometime after this date, 1740 and this land deed is the last document found for the quiet Quaker.

(4) ABRAHAM PEEBLES
1690/5-1783+

As was his father, Abraham was born on Burleigh Plantation between 1690 and 1695. There were seven brothers and sisters to keep him company. They probably worked hard on the farm, attending Quaker Meeting and living a sober life. Quakers judged themselves very severely and lapses were dealt with by the entire community of Friends in those days. The first record which has been found of Abraham is his signing as a witness in January 1729 at the Quaker wedding of his sister Hannah. A more minute examination of the Minutes may reveal more information but at the moment this is about all we know.

It would be helpful to know when he married his first wife and what her name was. We do know that she was an Eppes. This was a very old Virginia family. Francis Eppes transported servants in 1635 and one of the very few duels of old Virginia was fought when Captain William Eppes killed Edward Stallings at Dancing Point. City Point, opposite the mouth of the Appomatox River was and is the home of the Eppes family. The 1704 Rent Rolls show that eight members of this family held a total of some 4,000 acres of land.

Sometime later Abraham married a woman named Green. The Rent Rolls reveal only two Greens in that part of Virginia, both of whom were small landholders.

Which of these two women was the mother of the first five children is therefore unknown. In any case, Abraham's first son was David. Thereafter at lengthy intervals there were Isham, Lewis and Henry.

Then sometime before 1752, Abraham married his third wife Keziah Carlile (?), who was the same age as his eldest son! Her name is spelled in two different forms: Esaia and Keziah and it is thought that the latter is correct. It is probable that she is the mother of Abraham's last son, Reuben, who was born in Prince Georges County as were the other five. His birth is recorded in the Bristol Parish Register so it would seem that Abraham had chosen to become an Anglican instead of a Quaker.

Shortly thereafter the 50 year old Abraham moved south to Brunswick County in North Carolina in the Tidewater area around Cape Fear. Here in 1746 he witnessed a deed with a John Green, perhaps a relative of his second wife.

In the next few years, Abraham was sued, witnessed deeds, appraised an estate and bought 100 acres on Three Creeks.

Life was considerably different in the Carolina tidewater region than in Virginia. There were many more slaves and most of these at this time were fresh from Africa and therefore "unseasoned". As a result they were rebellious and there was a greater fear of slave uprisings on the part of whites.

In 1752, Abraham and Keziah sold at least a part of their land. Sometime between then and the next 13 years they went to Craven County. This was still in the tidewater region but farther north at the mouth of the Neuse River inland from the Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout island barriers. These were years of exceptional growth in North Carolina; growth accompanied by internal disorder and mismanagement. Not a few of the people pouring in from the north after taking a look at the more southern sections, settled in both coastal and hill counties closer to Virginia. Except for the Cape Fear region, it was a raw pioneer area.

When he was past seventy in 1767, he patented 250 acres even though North Carolina was undergoing extremely turbulent conditions. His son, Reuben, also bought land at this time and place, as did his son Lewis.

North Carolina had a fairly large share of Loyalists at the outset of the Revolution and Abraham was included in their number. The last printed information we have of him is his listing in the "Reports on Loyalist Exiles from South Carolina, 1783" where it is indicated that both Abraham, by now about 90 years of age, and his youngest son Reuben had moved to Georgia or Alabama with other Loyalists. Once again war had divided a family.

(5) LEWIS PEBBLES of Kershaw
1731/35-1830+

All of Abraham Peebles sons were rather grandly known by their land holdings. It was "David and William of Pitt", "Isham of Beaufort", "Henry of Lancaster" and "Lewis of Kershaw", all the place names being counties in one or the other of the Carolinas. And if the brothers were as assiduous and successful in the acquisition of land as Lewis of Kershaw, these "titles" do not seem too ridiculous!

Lewis was first married, probably in North Carolina. For this wife we have no information whatsoever except that she produced a son at three year intervals starting with John in 1763. He was probably born on his father's land next to that of grandfather Abraham's in Craven County, North Carolina. Thereafter came David, Lewis II, and Sampson in the year when Lewis bought some land on Goodman's Creek off the PeeDee River back in the hill country of South Carolina. He also purchased another 100 acres in nearby Lancaster County near the Broad River.

By 1761 the last of the Indian uprisings had been put down and the hill country was opened up to a great inpouring of settlers.

Manners were rustic. Most settlers engaged in foot and horse racing, cockfighting, house raisings, corn shuckings, shooting matches and the like, all accompanied by the consumption of great quantities of liquor. Some of the leading pioneers attempted to emulate the more civilized seaboard customs but they gained few adherents. Books and learning however were generally revered and while there were many lawyers there were very few doctors. Despite the efforts of the ministers, settlers in the South Carolina back country were notorious for free thinking and loose living.

A letter written by a traveler of the period noted that the inhabitants of the interior were bold and intrepid in the art of war although hospitable to strangers, dirty, impertinent and vain! Usually eschewing slavery, the settlers lived as ranchers and farmers and in word and deed were rugged individualists.

Settlers on the frontier were often the prey of ruffians, horse and cattle thieves. By 1764 a voluntary vigilante system had grown up to take care of this long-standing problem; these were called the Regulators. The Regulators were finally defeated by the government at the cost of near civil war, but with one good result in that this led to the formation of circuit courts the same year that Lewis moved into the area. Previously the only legal recourse had been in courts situated in the far-away tidewater region.

Farming in the interior was generally inefficient as at first there always fresh land available to move to. The pattern was usually subsistence farming for the first 5 to 10 years and then diversification allowing for cash crops. The crops were transported to the rivers and thence to the coast for sale. Therefore river front land was premium.

When the Revolution started, Lewis, unlike his father,

sided with the American troops and furnished many supplies to the Continental Army. He was paid for these over the next eight years sometimes in the form of land grants.

In 1786 and 1787, Lewis received a total of 625 acres of land on Scape Creek in the counties around the Broad River. This land was in the form of grants for aid in the Revolution. In the 1790 census he is shown both in Claremont and in Chester Counties, but since the listings are identical it is thought that it was simply an erroneous double entry of land on or near the boundary of both counties.

During the next 25 years he bought and sold hundreds of acres of land.

One parcel in 1796 was countersigned by Lewis' second wife, Elizabeth, who merely made her mark indicating that she was illiterate. It was estimated that in this part of the world at least half the women and a third of the men could not write their own names.

By 1814, his eyesight must have been failing as from this time on Lewis also signed documents with a mark.

He eventually moved to Henry Alabama where he spent his last years. The D.A.R. puts the date of his death in 1840, although the family history lists it as having occurred in 1830. "Lewis of Kershaw" lived to the incredible age of between 95 and 109 years, depending on how one figures it! That alone should give him the right to any title he wanted.

(6) JOHN PEBBLES
1763-1849

The eldest of seven sons, John Peebles spent his childhood in the South Carolina back country where his father was a large landowner. He however was probably born in North Carolina along the tidewater in Craven County near New Bern.

It was in Kershaw County that he married Wilmouth Owens in 1785. They lived here for twenty years, accumulating considerable property and here their children were born. Abraham was the first, followed by Sarah, Mary, William and Hannah in 1793. Bird followed and then Jesse, John L, and Ann Elizabeth (Betsy). At about this time, Wilmouth died and John was left with a brood of nine children to raise.

It probably wasn't long afterwards that he married Martha Johnsey. A frontier family required a woman's help and this was a recognized fact of life; people there with families rarely remained widows or widowers for long. While the hill country of South Carolina was by now not really the frontier, the family did shortly go to a much more rigorous country when they went to Kentucky in the years before 1810.

In moving to a raw land the choice of a piece of land had to be taken with an eye to the availability of water as nearby streams meant that fewer roads had to be built. Timber for building and fuel had to be at hand and of course the quality of the soil was paramount.

In the true frontier the first "house" was often a temporary shelter which was an open-faced lean-to with one side open to the fire and which sometimes had to suffice for as long as a year as labor was needed to ready the land for crops by tree-girdling and cutting.

Next came a log cabin which was done by a cabin-raising unless it was too isolated. The settler usually did the cutting and hauling of the timber to the site and his neighbors then helped him erect the walls and the rafters. The owner put on a roof after the building was up and this was of thatch or whatever else was available. It was usually small - 16 or 20 feet by 10 feet was normal. The windows then were fit in, a door hung and the fireplace made.

Furniture was simple. Chairs were usually slabs resting on three legs or blocks of wood. The table was a slab, often attached to the wall with two legs which hung down, so that it could be swung up out of the way. The mattress of the bed was stuffed with pine, chaff or dried moss. By the window where the light was best, the spinning wheel and loom were placed. The fireplace of course served as the stove with a large flat stone at the base, and a mud-plastered chimney rising above, festooned with firearms, knives and carved powder horns. Tableware of wooden spoons, bowls and noggins either went on a shelf or were hung on wall pegs. Candles tended to be made out of the plentiful bear grease. There weren't many pots, but usually there would be a cooking iron (a bulbous pot with a top flare to hold the lid in place) a spider (a frying pan with three legs) and a deeper Dutch oven whose lid had upturned edges in order to hold the coals in place which were heaped on top for baking.

The favored weapon was a 30 or 45 calibre Kentucky rifle.

Bigger muskets made too loud and therefore too dangerous a report.

A man needed a rifle, a knife and an ax while a woman had to have cooking pots and a knife. If need be, everything else could be made on the spot. Dishes were of wood; gourds were important for "soup, soap and sap" and gourd seeds were a cherished possession.

Before the first crop was in, food was the most pressing problem and a hunter's skill was important.

Always the first crop was corn which could be ground for meal, fed to livestock and was easily stored and transported. It was the basic grain and from it was made corn dodger (baked meal, water and salt), corn pone (the same plus milk and yeast), johnnycake or hoe cake (meal and shortening baked in a flat cake), mush (meal, water and salt boiled with the addition of anything else at hand - milk, honey water or gravy) and hominy.

Until the first crop was harvested, game was augmented with nuts, paw-paws, wild fruits, herbs, roots and honey. Interestingly, although bees are not native to the United States, they always swarmed in advance of the frontier and were thus waiting for the settler!

Salt was important but expensive enough to hoard carefully for a bushel of salt was reckoned at the same price as a good cow and calf! A cow was bought as soon as possible for the variety it introduced into the diet. Orchards were put in early even though the produce was far-distant; chickens and the garden patch were quicker to show results. As for other animals, pigs were turned out to forage for themselves although as they became wild they were hard to catch and grew tough and lean. Although the wool would have been welcome sheep were too much to take on at first as they had to be both penned and fed.

In clearing the land, help was needed when it was time to fell and burn the previously girdled trees, and log rollings were social and political occasions as well. In this and other large-scale labors, the help of neighbors was essential and mutually given. Just about the worst thing which could happen in frontier life was to be branded "not true" because then one was outlawed; stealing was handled in the same way.

But for every-day labor, hired help was scarce and too expensive and the neighbors were as busy as oneself, so the family was the only reliable source of labor.

Women's chores were as many and arduous as those of the men. Especially at first cash was apt to be rare and so most of the cloth had to be spun and woven. Wool was so scarce that it was usually combined with linen to make a scratchy but tough linsey woolsey. When absolutely necessary, fabric could be made from nettle fiber added to buffalo hair or wool.

In addition to making cloth, the women cooked, churned, milked the cows, hoed corn, chopped wood, carried water, made candles, took charge of the vegetable patch, tended the sick and bore children!

Courting began in the early teens and a woman was scorned if she was unmarried by the advanced age of 20. In the early Tennessee and Kentucky frontier, women were often married by 14 to 16 years of age.

Being surrounded by constant danger and the loneliness of isolated cabin life, religion became exceedingly important. Perhaps because they gave the greatest sense of personal participation, the Methodists and Baptists were unusually strong. The circuit riders or traveling preachers made their rounds in all kinds of weather. There was a Kentucky saying that, "There is nothing out today but crows and Methodist preachers!" And of course there were camp meetings which were religious and social events of enormous interest which often turned to hysteria and sometimes even violence as frustrations surfaced and strong drink flowed.

Their sports also reflected the life around the frontiersmen. There was shooting, wrestling, tracking, jumping, bird and game calling and tomahawk throwing.

Every woman had her own family remedies which in the absence of other medical resources were all-important. Malaria prevailed from Illinois south and there was very little help for this. Typhoid was called brain or nervous fever and its cause quite unknown. Although a scourge of pioneer life, smallpox was seldom vaccinated against as it was considered such a dangerous step. There was always pneumonia, TB, blood poisoning and lockjaw, with rheumatism very common from the exposure to the weather. The homemade remedies of "yarb and root" were passed on from one person to the other. Of one thing however the frontier was generally free-hypochondria; there just was no time for it!

But knowing all these problems, still a group of neighbors from South Carolina decided to migrate to Kentucky together. They each painted their names on the white canvas of the wagon covers and there was a saying as people saw them, "The Wright Blisset Peebles have passed through!"

John and Martha Peebles had their first child, Cynthia, in Hart County Kentucky in 1808. From this point on the roll call of children becomes highly confused since record keeping held low priority in early Kentucky. Certainly there were five other children: Rebecca, Lucinda, Lavina, Charles and Camilla and there may also have been Stewart. There may even have been a third wife! So, depending on whose list you read, John had either two wives and thirteen children, or three wives and sixteen offspring. I suppose with those numbers, a few more or less wouldn't matter much.

The last Kentucky census in which John Peebles appears is the 1830 count in Hart County. He had owned land in North and South Carolina and Kentucky, and now the restless old man took off for the hopefully greener pastures of Illinois.

He and much of the family along with some of the same neighbors who had come originally from the South, started north. The place they decided on was Macoupin County in the rich and fertile prairies close to St. Louis, Missouri. Apparently in his 82nd year he was ill or maybe just plain tired, because he decided to file for a pension and retire from planting and tending his crops and shoeing horses at his

trade as a smithy.

His pension was awarded to him for his service in the Revolutionary War. When he was 18 years old he had gone off to fight under Generals Sumter and Marion in the South Carolina dragoons. This was a volunteer group formed under the brilliant leadership of Francis Marion, who knew how to get his militia to fight effectively, a trait unfortunately not universally shared by his fellow officers. I have not read the Pension application of John Peebles which would tell much more detail of what and where and when he fought. But this description of Marion's guerilla force gives a picture of his tactics:

"Making the greatest possible use of the mobility of his little force, he never camped two nights in the same spot. He marched under the cover of darkness from one friendly woods or swamp to another, setting off at sunset, making camp at dawn, and resting his men in the daytime with sentinels constantly on the alert. Upon him depended almost solely the success of the provincial army of South Carolina."

The men seldom had enough to eat, their clothing was more rags than anything else, and they were fighting to defend their homes. A glance at the map will show that the great battles of 1780 and 1781 fought in the South - Camden, Waxhaws, Kings Mountain, Deep River, Guilford were for the most part in the home counties where the Peebles owned land. While his father Lewis was furnishing supplies to troops in the year of the seige of Charleston, John Peebles was preparing to do some of the fighting.

After John received his pension, he retired to his farm seven miles from Carlinville, Illinois where he died in 1846 when he was 86. His wife died in 1878 when she was also very old. They are both buried in a country cemetery near Chesterfield, Illinois.

The Peebles Family

(1) David Peebles - Elspet Mackie
-c. 1659 -

(2) William Peebles - Judeth _____
1635 - 1695 -

(3) William Peebles II - _____
1670- 1723? -

(4) Abraham Peebles - _____ (Eppes) (Green)
1690-1782 -

(5) Lewis Peebles - _____
1731/5-1830/ 0

(6) John Peebles - Wilmouth Owen
1763-1849 -

(7) Hannah Peebles - Allen Wright
1793-1854 1789-1855

Peebles Family

Coat of Characters

1st generation: David Peebles

born: Scotland

died: 1659 Prince Georges County Virginia

married: Elspet Mackie

born: Scotland

died:

children: Criston Peebles 1637 St Andrews Scotland

William Peebles July 7 1635 Kilconquhar Scotland

Alison Peebles July 7 1641 Balclavie Scotland

Margret Peebles Sept 18 1642 St Monance Scot

John Peebles April 9 1647 Balclavie Scotla

married Elizabeth Bishopp

born: England

died: after 1659 Pr. Georges County, Virgini

children: Sarah

Christian

2nd generation: William Peebles

born July 7, 1635 Kilconquhar Scotland

died Will probated August 5, 1695 Prince Georges County

married: Judith _____

born:

died:

Prince Georges County

children: William Peebles II 1670 Prince Georges County

married: _____ (Huttard?)(Kudley?)

born:

died:

Prince Georges County

children: David Peebles

Prince Georges County

married: Elizabeth (Busby?)

born:

died:

Prince Georges County

children: Henry Peebles before 1675 Prince Georges County

Rebles Family

3rd generation: William Rebles II

born: c 1670 Prince Georges County Virginia

died: Will witnessed April 9, 1723. Lived after 1740 in Geo Co Virginia

married: _____ (Hamlin?)

born

died

children: Abraham c 1695 Prince Georges County Virginia

William III c 1700 Prince Georges County Virginia

Thomas c 1703 Prince Georges County Virginia

Hannah 1708 Prince Georges County Virginia

John 1710 Prince Georges County Virginia

Peter 1714 Prince Georges County Virginia

Joseph 1716-20 Prince Georges County Virginia

Sarah Prince Georges County, Virginia

4th generation: Abraham Rebles

born: 1690-1695 Prince Georges County Virginia

died: after 1753 Georgia or Alabama

married: _____ Epps

married: _____ Green

children of the above women:

David Rebles c 1715 Prince Georges County Virginia

William Rebles c 1720 Prince Georges County Virginia

Isaham Rebles 1725-29 Prince Georges County Virginia

Lewis Rebles 1731-35 Prince Georges County Virginia

Henry Rebles 1740 Prince Georges County Virginia

married Keziah (Carlisle?)

born 1715 Prince Georges County Virginia

died

children: Reuben Rebles 1745 Prince Georges County Virginia

Peebles Family

5th generation: Lewis Peebles

born: 1731-1735 Prince Georges County, Virginia

died: 1830-1840 Henry County Alabama

married: _____

children: John Peebles 1763 Craven County North Ca

David Peebles 1767 North Ca

Lewis Peebles II 1770 North Ca

Sampson Peebles 1772 North Ca

Ephriam Peebles 1775 North Ca

married: Elizabeth _____

children: Isham Peebles 1779 North Ca

William Peebles 1794 North Ca

6th generation: John Peebles

born: January 31, 1763 Craven County (?) North Carol

died: October 28, 1849 Chesterfield, Illinois

married: Wilmoth Owen

born:

died: before 1805 South Ca

children: Abraham Peebles June 17, 1781 South Ca

Sarah Peebles May 5, 1789 South Ca

Mary Peebles March 21, 1791 South Ca

William Peebles October 8, 1792 South Ca

Hannah Peebles June 30 1793 Chester South Ca

Bird Peebles Sept/Dec 8 1795 South Ca

Jesse Peebles Jan 18 1798 Camden South Ca

John L. Peebles 1800 South Ca

Ann Elizabeth Peebles Dec 23 1802 South Ca

married: Martha Joh

born:

died:

children: Cynthia Peebles Feb 29 1808 Hart County Kentu

Rebecca Peebles 1812? Hart County Kentu

Lavina Peebles Hart County Ken

Stewart Peebles Hart County Ken

Charles Holiday Peebles 1810? Hart County Ken

? married: ?

children: Lucinda Peebles Hart County Kentu

Camilla Peebles Hart County Kentu

Leekle Family

7th generation: Hannah Leekle

born: June 30, 1793 Chester County South Carolina

died: September 12, 1854 Hart County Kentucky

married: Allen Wright

born: November 22, 1787 Chester Co, South Ca

died: December 17, 1855 Hart County Kent

children: John Wright Oct 24, 1811 Hart County Ky.

Elizabeth Wright July 15, 1813 Hart County Ky.

Sarah Wright Aug 9, 1815 Hart County Ky.

Carter Wright June 9, 1817 Hart County Ky.

Lewis Wright Dec 14, 1819 Hart County Ky

Preston Wright June 8, 1822 Hart County Ky

Blatchley Wood Wright Aug 31, 1824 Hart County

Phoebe B. Wright Mar 2, 1827 Hart County Ky

William Wright Dec 29, 1829 Hart County Ky

Robert A. Wright Feb 26, 1832 Hart County Ky

David Wright April 29, 1835 Hart County