

Isaac Stephens (c1800-1856)

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky., 1990

27 December 1990

Eva L. Pope
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Dear Mrs. Pope:

I had hoped to get a letter to you before Christmas but as usual I am hopelessly behind.

Recently I did some research at Hartford on the Stephens family and was surprised to discover that I have six more ancestors for you. Matilda, wife of Isaac Stephens, your great-great-grandmother, was a "Sweeney". You are not going to believe this but just last summer I finished a book on the same Sweeney family, how is that for coincidences. In my earlier research I had traced Isaac & Matilda Stephens to Ohio County, KY from Warren County, KY but had not compiled data on their children and thus not until now had I realized that your ancestor, Susan A. Stephens Haynes was their daughter.

Matilda Stephens was a daughter of Edmund Sweeney & Mary Johnson. Edmund was a son of Moses Sweeney & Elizabeth Johnson; and Mary was a daughter of Noel & Tabitha Johnson I compiled about 300 pages of data on the Sweeney family for some descendants of William Northcut Sweeney (1832-1895), a noted lawyer & U.S. Congressman from Owensboro, KY (he is a 2nd cousin to your great-grandmother, Susan A. Haynes).

Presently I am in a dilemma on how to get the Sweeney book, as well as 4 other family histories I have compiled (Igleheart, Mason, Thruston & Todd), published. I have requests for about 12 copies of the Sweeney book and had planned to have about 20 copies printed by McDowell Publications, here. They, however, will no longer print any orders under 50 copies. I cannot afford to sink that much more into the project; time & expenses already spent equates to about 25 cents per hour payment for my efforts (other professional genealogist would laugh at this). I have contemplated purchasing a Xerox machine, which would allow me to do my own printing.

I have enclosed family group charts I compiled on your ancestors, Moses & Edmund Sweeney. After realizing your family tied into the Sweeneys I went on and did some additional research on Isaac & Matilda Stephens in the records of Ohio County, KY, in order to get proof of the connections. Would you think it unfair if I requested a fee for my additional research (or \$40.00 for 8 hours of research time) is this being mercenary? In the past I have tried to differentiate between exchanging data on my own family lines (ex. Wilson, Pruner, Davis, Vanmeter) and

doing research work on other families other than those of my own. One of these days I would like to return to just being a family genealogist.

I am sending a complete copy of an article, "The Stephens. Family of Warren Co., Ky.", by Patricia E. Reid, which was published in The Longhunter (Vol.9 ,#1, Spring 1986), a periodical of the Southern Kentucky Genealogical Society, of Bowling Green, KY.. The following are some additional notes on the family of Isaac Stephens & Matilda Sweeney:

- In the 1852-1861 vital statistic records of Ohio County, KY there is a death record for Isaac Stephens. It records that Isaac Stephens died in Ohio County on 16 June 1856, he was age 51, a farmer, married, died of consumption, parents were Isaac & Mary Stephens, he was born in Ohio County [the latter statement is apparently in error].
- I could find no will, estate, or administrator records in Ohio County for Isaac Stephens (d. 1856).
- I checked the Ohio County deed & circuit court records for Isaac Stephens. A copy of the abstracts of the records found are enclosed. Isaac Stephens was apparently a gambler, he lost his farm in Warren County in a card game and the property he later acquired in Ohio County he had to mortgage to his brother, Thomas L. Stephens & a brother-in-law David T. Busby. In an 1858 Ohio County deed (Q-p231) the heirs of Isaac Stephens deceased were named; his wife & 8 children were named, no mention of two other children, Sarah E. & Cornelia F., who appear in the 1850 census, is made.
- A daughter, Mary E., of Thomas J. & Sarah Crawford Stephens, has a monument in the Bean Cemetery, in Ohio County; she was born 23 Sep 1855 & died 24 April 1856.
- In the 1850 Ohio County census book a Henry "C." is listed in the home of Isaac & Matilda Stephens. In the 1858 deed referred to above, his name looks like Henry "L." Stephens. In the article on the Stephens family of Warren Co., KY enclosed it is written that Henry Clay Stephens, son of Isaac & Matilda, married Louisa Ernspiger in Ohio Co., KY on 22 March 1859. This is in error! This Henry Clay Stephens was born about 1838 in Ohio Co., KY to the marriage of Joseph Stephens & Nancy Smith (d/o Thomas Smith & Elizabeth Leamon), his parents died prior to 1848 when an uncle Jefferson Smith was appointed his guardian. In both the 1850 & 1860 Ohio County censuses this Henry C. was living with his uncle, on 26 May 1862 Henry Clay Stephens was killed in the Civil War near Corinth, Miss., he was a member of the 17th KY Infantry, Co. F, USA. His widow Louisa Ernspiger married 2nd John W. Simmons in 1867.
- Thomas J. Stephens & Laura Bell Stephens married children of Granville Crawford & Polly Bean of the Sulphur Springs area of Ohio Co.KY.

Enclosed a copy of what I have on the family of Daniel T. Wilson (1821-1874) & Amelia Mariah Allen. Can you add any other data to this sheet (ex. places of marriages)? I would like to compile data on what is known about the families of each of Daniel's children, can you help me get started? In the past month I have been going through the 1930-1940 issues of the newspaper, The

Ohio County Messenger, and the most interesting discovery I made was in the name of Nimrod D., son of Samuel Wilson & Winney Lee. In an obit of a son of Nimrod his name was listed as Nimrod "Dassie" Wilson and in the obit of another son it was reported to be Nimrod "Dossie" Wilson. The name Dassie or Dossie may have some significance, in olden times middle names generally did. You may want to keep an eye open for this clue while investigating Samuel Wilson & Winney Lee. If you learn anything more on the Wilsons, their antecedents or descendants, please keep me in mind.

Yours truly,
Jerry Long

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Isaac Stephens, Jr., was born c1800 Warren County, KY. He was the son of Isaac Stephens & Mary Wright. He married Matilda Sweeney, 18 October 1825 Warren County, KY. Matilda was the daughter of Edmund Sweeney & Mary Johnson; she was born 4 November 1806 in Lincoln County, KY. Isaac & Matilda Stephens are listed in the 1850 census of Ohio County, KY. He died in Ohio County on 16 June 1856. His widow, Matilda, is shown in the 1860 census of Ohio County, KY.

Children of Isaac Stephens & Matilda Sweeney were:

1. Thomas J., born c1826 Warren County, KY; married Sarah Crawford; in 1870 he was living in Ohio County, KY.
2. Henry C., born c1828 Warren County, KY; died after 1858.
3. Mary E., born 11 June 1830 Warren County, KY; married John W. Keith, 3 February 1849 Ohio County, KY and 2nd William Harvey Rice, 9 October 1856 Ohio County, KY; she died 27 May 1911 and buried Old Salem Cemetery, Ohio County, KY.
4. Sarah E., born c1834 Warren County, KY; married Milton Combs, 19 December 1852 Ohio County, KY; died 1852-1858?
5. Caroline Matilda, born c1836 Warren County, KY; married Columbus Bean, 8 December 1857 Ohio County, KY and 2nd Richard Taylor, 25 January 1870 Ohio County, KY.
6. Susan A., born 2 May 1838 Warren County, KY; married a Harrison, 1850-1858 and 2nd Francis Webster Haynes, 3 February 1863 Ohio County, KY; she died 13 September 1873; buried Panther Creek Baptist Church, Ohio County, KY.
7. Helen M., born 24 February 1841 KY; married Francis Webster Haynes, 27 July 1859 Ohio County, KY; died 2 October 1862 Ohio County, KY.

8. William A., born c1842 KY; died after 1858.
9. Cornelia F., born c1845 KY; died 1850-1858?
10. Laura Bell, born 1849 Ohio County, KY; married Henry Clay Crawford, 16 September 1868 Ohio County, KY; died 30 March 1939 Owensboro, Daviess County, KY; buried Elmwood Cemetery, Owensboro, KY.

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The Family of Moses Sweeney (c1734-1813), by Jerry Long, McDowell Publications, Utica, KY, 1990:

Edmund Sweeney, son of Moses Sweeny & Elizabeth Johnson, was born 29 August 1768. His date of birth was preserved in a family bible. He first, appears in the tax records of Lincoln County, Ky. in 1790, he was then in his 21st year. In Lincoln County on 20 March 1797 he married Mary ("Polly") Johnson. . She was the daughter of Noel & Tabitha Johnson. Her family like the Sweeneys had cane from Amherst County, Va., where Noel Johnson was listed in the 1783 tax list. Noel & Tabitha Johnson are buried in the McCormack Church Cemetery in Lincoln County, Ky., a short distance from the old Moses Sweeney farm. On their tombstones it is inscribed: Noiel Johnson (born 9 January 1729 - died 6 December 1802) & Tabitha Johnson (born 9 January 1740 - 12 December 1818). Noel Johnson's will was recorded in Lincoln County, Ky. Will Book C, p.37, on 10 January 1803; it was written on 15 July 1802. In the will his wife, Tabitha, and the following 10 children were named: Tandy, Thomas, David, John, Benjamin, Susannah (married Thomas Davis 14 February 1786) & Matilda Johnson, Patsy Rice (married John Rice 24 June 1793), Nancy Alcorn (married James Alcorn 10 May 1797) & Mary Sweeny.

Edmund Sweeney in 1809-1810 left Lincoln County, Ky. and moved to Warren County, Ky. He was last listed in the Lincoln County tax lists in 1809 and in 1810 he was enumerated in the census of Warren County. In the 1820 Warren County census he was listed as Edward Swinny. Edmund Sweeney died on 20 November 1820. An inventory, sale & division of his estate were recorded in Warren County, KY. Will Book 2 (1813-1824). In the division of his estate his wife, Polly, & the following 8 heirs were named: Noel (married Jane Moorman), Thomas Jefferson (married Elizabeth), Benjamin (married Nancy Wilkerson), Charles (married Ann E. Moorman), Matilda (married Isaac Stephens Jr.), Martha (married David T. Busby), Elizabeth (married John H. Williams) & John (married ? Rachel Foster & Elizabeth). Polly Johnson Sweeney, widow of Edmund, died on 5 March 1824 at the age of 54. Edmund & Mary were buried on their farm in Warren County, Ky. In the family cemetery they have monuments as well as several grandchildren. The farm where the cemetery is located in later years was owned by the Davenport family and was recently the property of Dr. Andrew Koostra.