

John Corder of Smith County, Tennessee
Father of Lewis Corder
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To many researchers of Lewis Corder and his wife Mary Garner one will find William Biby's notations and conclusions that Lewis Corder is the son of William Corder who died in 1782 and his wife, Phebe Bouldin. In almost every article written about Lewis Corder one will see it said that he moved to IL in the year 1822 and died in 1833. The same lineage is attributed to him, father is William who died at the Battle of Cowpens, Lewis served in the Revolutionary War and is buried in Crab Orchard, Williamson County, IL. I believe the conclusion that William Corder is the father of Lewis Corder is wrong. I am also working to prove from a paper trail that Lewis Corder ever stepped foot in Illinois, as of this writing I have not found it and at this point it is also not certain who his mother is.

John Corder lived in Fauquier County, VA until the late 1760's moving to Granville County, NC as shown by the 1769 Tax Roll and then to Caswell County, NC (which was cut from Orange County) in 1777 to 1806 when he then moved to Smith County, TN.

John's will was written 28 September 1814 in Smith County, TN. He bequeaths unto his wife, Gracy Corder property to be used until her death at which time it is to be divided amongst all his heirs except the heirs of Joel Corder, deceased and Elizebeth Cartwright, one of John's daughters. It was also his will that his, together with every other property, to be sold and divided in equal shared except the too (sic) heirs of his son Joel which he gives five shillings and his daughter Elizabeth Cartright who he gives five shillings. He also cut off Wm. Parks with five shillings and has already given his son Lewis Corder sixty five dollars which is to be considered so much in his legacy, also son Balos Corder one hundred and fifty dollars. Lastly he appointed Lewis Corder and Jarret Lloyd executors of his last will and testament. The will was produced and admitted to court in the State of Tennessee, Smith County in the February Term 1815.

On 11 Feb 1815 (Will Book C, page 30) an inventory of property of John Corder, deceased was produced in open court and recorded. It would appear from the list that John Corder was a prosperous man of means. What follows is a partial list. His land was 68 acres lying on the east fork of Goose Creek, one negro woman named Nancy and two negro boys named Nat and Morgan. Three feather beds and furniture, two horse beasts, eleven head of cattle...the bond of \$68.00 on Mr. Floyd Hurt in Nashville, one account on Mr. Owen Dejrant for \$20.00, of one account Mr. Shadrick Corder for \$43.00, account on Martin Cooper for \$4.00, Ibe Sutherland for one lent dollars...half dozen knives and forks, three dishes, eight earthen plates, dish, half dozen teacups and saucers, creme pitcher, churn, pitcher, two jugs, two bottles, four vials, sugar dish, butter bowl...half dozen pewter plates, two coolers, salt seller, pepper box, looking glass...two trunks...one pound and a half of lead, one corkscrew, frow, one rifle gun and molds, one bayonet, five chairs, two saddles...

From the "true Exhibit of Sales of the Estate of John Corder, late of said County Decd which took place on the 23rd 24th of February 1815" is this partial list of property sold. A hammer bayonet, Sundrey lumber, craze & 6 ½ lb. iron, smoothing iron, white Dish, 3 White plates, 4

plates, 1 white bowl, mug bason, vials, bason & Sundrey, dish cups and saucers, table furniture, wine bottle, 2 jugs, 1 Brindle cow, Red cow, 2 Black Steers, heifer and Bull red Heirfer, negro boy named Nat, 1 rifle and moulds. 1 bed 1 counterpin and coverlet, 1 counterpin, 1 falling ax... 1 tract of 68 acres of land...ink stand, corkscrew, small trunk, 2 chairs, 4 chairs, side saddle, Bees and Hives, 1 bell, 74 lb. bacon, 20 ducks, wool cards, 10 bushels sweet potatoes, 1 sled... Total amount of sales \$733.31 $\frac{1}{4}$. A bond in the hands of Jarret Loyd 72.11 $\frac{1}{2}$...\$805.42 $\frac{3}{4}$.

It is not until one reads the final settlement papers of John Corder which is recorded in Will Book 4, November 1816 that one sees all the heirs named. As women of that time did not directly receive their property from an estate unless they were single or a widow the son-in-laws were named, as were John's sons. There is one daughter named, Piety Gazaway who must have been a widow in 1816. Others named is John Murphy, William Corder, Solomon Corder, Shadrack Corder, Lewis Corder and Jarret Lloyd.

From the will and estate settlement papers one can draw the following conclusion as to the children of John Corder.

Joel (married Jane Anthony 15 Nov 1784 in Caswell Co., NC. Murdered in the Indian Raid 26 Mar 1794. From the will of John Corder it appears two children survived.)

Elizabeth (married 1) James Anthony, brother of Jane Anthony, 7 Feb 1781 in Caswell County, NC. James was killed in the Indian Raid also. Married 2) Samuel Cartwright.)

Lewis (married Mary Garner 4 Nov 1785 Orange County, NC.)

Baylis (married Parisaid Stone)

Piety (named as Piety Gazaway in her father's settlement in 1816, must have been a widow.)

Polly (married John Green Murphy 11 Feb 1803 in Caswell County, NC.)

William (married Mary Jones, widow of Samuel Morris who died 1791 in Caswell County, NC.)

Solomon (married Martha Brown 15 Feb 1818 in Wilson County, TN.)

Shadrack (married 1) Ann Price and 2) Elizabeth Thomas.)

Charity (married Jarrot Lloyd 10 Oct 1810 in Sumner County, TN.)

From the birth dates of all of John's children it would appear he may have been married more than once. Longtime Corder researcher, Ann Auburg raises the question of the ages and the naming patterns of the last four children who all have Biblical names. She also notes that there may have been another daughter she has not been able to identify. A Richard Leath received a child's portion of the settlement, plus a little more. Ann says she has tried to trace this person with little luck.

I believe the above mentioned documents prove without a doubt that "our" Lewis Corder is the son of John Corder who died in Smith County, TN. Now to the question, did Lewis Corder ever come to IL?

It is said that Lewis Corder was born in 1760 in North Carolina and died in 1833 in what was then Franklin County, IL. later to become Crab Orchard, Williamson County, IL. One can only suppose that this information came from Lewis Corder's son, Hamilton or William Biby. The Franklin County, IL Courthouse burned in November 1843 and with it most of the records. If a will was made it appears lost to the fire. From everything else we know of Lewis Corder it is

almost certain he would have bought property in IL and made a will. He is always in court and civil documents in North Carolina and Tennessee.

Lewis Corder is listed in the Caswell County, NC 1784 Tax List of Gloucester District. From "Smith County, TN Index to Deeds Vol. I 1800-1807, page 33" Deed Book 1, page 67: Deed from Henry W. Lawson to Lewis Corder. Indenture made 10th December 1801, between Henry W. Lawson of Robertson Co. and Lewis Corder of Smith Co. for and in consideration of the sum of \$1000 to him in hand paid, for a tract of land containing 450 acres, and lying on the north side of the Cumberland River. Deed registered 4 May 1802. From page 231-232 Lewis Corder and Mary Corder made their mark on the will of Gabriel Shaw, and Lewis was a witness on the codicil. Recorded Jun 1809. Lewis was also a juror many times in Smith County, TN.

In Goodspeed's Five County History of Gallatin, Saline, Hamilton, Franklin and Williamson County, IL 1887 it is written: In 1821 David Corder settled the Erwin farm in the east and Major James Corder settled the (David) Stilley farm. In 1822 Hamilton Corder settled where he now lives, Charles Erwin (married Sarah, daughter of Lewis) where he lived and died, Hugh Parks (married Elizabeth, daughter of Lewis) on the Jack Thompson place. Nothing is mentioned of Lewis Corder.

Milo Erwin wrote the "History of Williamson County, Illinois" in 1876. It appears the Five County History "borrowed" liberally from it. The early settlers that Erwin wrote of is copied almost verbatim in 1887 by Goodspeeds. Milo Erwin was a great grandson of Lewis Corder, his father being a son of Charles Erwin and Sarah Corder. Erwin names all the early settlers mentioned above and then says, "I have now given all the settlers up to 1822." He also mentions the "honest backwoodsmen still living among us." One of the most prominent is Hamilton Corder. But no where in his writings does he mention Lewis Corder being in IL.

In the 1820 Illinois Federal Census in Franklin County at No. 180 David H. Corder; No. 186 James Corder; No. 187 Samuel Parks (brother of Hugh Parks).

In the 1820 Gallatin County Census is listed at No. 501 William Talbert; No. 502 Hugh Parks; No. 503 Charles Erwin(Erwin).

In the 1830 Franklin County, IL Federal Census is listed 102-20 Hamilton Corder; 102-25 James Corder; 104-1 William Corder; 101 Hugh Parks; and 112 Charls (sic) Erwin. Notice again that Lewis Corder should have been listed in this census if he came to IL in 1822 and died in 1833. Unless he is living in someone else's household he does not appear. Who James Corder belongs to is also a mystery to me although Biby and Nannie Gray Parks say he is the son of Lewis Corder and Mary Garner.

In "Events in Egypt, Volume 4, 1888-1893" by Helen Sutt Lind, page two is the obit of Hamilton Corder that alludes to his parents. "Crab Orchard - Uncle Hamilton Corder, an old pioneer, died 6 Feb. 1888." On page three "Hamilton Corder died 6 Feb at Crab Orchard, 86y 8m 6ds. Born 31 May 1807 (doesn't compute) in N. C. Moved to TN with his parents when 10 years old and to IL when about 21 years. After coming to IL married Permelia Keaster. Member of Davis Prairie Church." Notice it says moved to TN with his parents, but doesn't clearly say he moved to IL with his parents. In the 1850 Williamson County Census he says he is 48 years;

1860 55 years; 1870 66 years; and in 1880 he says he is 82 years old. So the birth year of 1807 is somewhat suspicious. If he was born about 1801 he would have been 21 years old when he moved to IL in 1822, old enough to be on his own.

In October of 1936 there is a notice in the Marion paper "Revolutionary War Marker to Be Dedicated at Grave Near Crab Orchard." The article says there was to be a dedication of the government marker on the grave of Lewis Corder, the first Rev. War marker erected in this (Williamson) county." Tony Loveless was responsible for putting many Military markers on our Williamson County Veteran's final resting place. But, once again William A. Biby, of Topeka, Kansas in a letter to Tony Loveless, about the family history of the Corders says that Lewis Corder's father, William Corder, was also a Rev. soldier and died in 1782 from wounds received at the battle of Cow Pens under General Morgan, and the mistaken lineage goes on from Biby's letter which I won't repeat.

Nannie Gray Parks also writes of the "Soldiers of the American Revolution Buried In Williamson Co. ILL." Most of her writing mimic Biby's but there is one paragraph which is important enough to repeat. "In 1822, Lewis Corder and his wife Mary (Garner) Corder with his married son, Hamilton, age 23 and his wife Permelia Eva (Keaster) Corder and her parents - her father being Lewis Keaster, another Rev. War soldier, emigrated from near Nashville, Tenn. to what is now Crab Orchard, Williamson County, Illinois. Lewis and Mary (Garner) Corder had 5 children: Elizabeth who married Hugh Parks and came to IL before 1820; James, a soldier in the War of 1812, Philip (Biby says b. 1790), Sarah who married Charles Erwin and Hamilton Corder, named above, who died about 1887 on the land in Crab Orchard ILL. where he had lived 65 years." Note she says Hamilton was 23 years old when he moved to Illinois in 1822. In 1930 Robert Lincoln Parks says after Hugh Parks and Elizabeth Corder came to IL Hamilton Corder brought his family, again no mention of their parents Lewis Corder and Mary Garner.

Another important notation is in Nannie Gray Parks notes. "James Corder b. 1783 and d. 7 Feb 1853, age 70 yrs. Only stone in old cemetery E & south side road at Crab Orchard." It would appear Lewis Corder never had a stone in Crab Orchard before the Military Marker in 1936 were set for Lewis and James Corder. How did they know Lewis Corder was buried there?

The Philip that is mentioned in the article is never mentioned or associated with the Corders, Parks or Erwins of Williamson County. I do not believe he survived to adulthood or came to IL if he was a son of Lewis Corder. There is a younger Philip T. Corder, Sr. born abt 1807/1810 in KY who I don't believe is a direct descendant of this line of Corders, but is probably a brother to Anderson P. Corder born about 1810 in KY. It is always said that Anderson P. Corder is a cousin to Hamilton Corder and an uncle to Philip T. Corder, Jr. who was killed by Sam Covers in 1869, buried in the Old Marion Cemetery. This would make Anderson and Philip Sr. brothers and cousins of Hamilton Corder.

Any thoughts are appreciated, let me hear from you. And ask yourself, how do we really know Lewis Corder is buried in Crab Orchard or ever trod the soil in our Prairie State?