

*Biographical Sketch of Martha Jane Vaughan,  
Youngest Daughter of John and Nancy Callicott Vaughan*

By Helen Vaughan Michael



*Pictured: Front yard of Martha Jane Vaughan's childhood home. Mabel Harp photo, 1997*

## Introduction to My Vaughan Narratives

*. . . Enquire I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of thy fathers; for we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow. . .*  
*Job, IX: 8 & 9. KJV*

In my search for ancestors I have been aggravated by finding that--this record exists here and that record exists there, and that there exists family talk linking the two, but, no paper trail between them can be found. Recent news that in Texas old boxed up paper files are turning to dust means that more written family history could be disappearing. Add these to files that have gone up before in the fire and smoke of homes, churches, courthouses, and government buildings. Most of my family trees have suffered heavily from such losses.

The Vaughans suffered the least. Thanks to my great-great-great grandmother, Nancy Callicott Vaughan, one of the branches of my family tree left a fine paper trail to accommodate my talkative kin and my need to write down everything I hear. Sometimes I see a story emerge from what I've heard and what has been written, and most of the time the spoken word and the written word actually match up and form a fact about the Vaughans. Then, the loose ends, when played with, and trailed through American history, can turn into quite a yarn. Being in love with the English language, I spin words into my stories for fun. Loving history, I write to record what facts are still readable, combine them with stories Vaughan chroniclers have told, and in effect, use facts for fun and family. Along the way a photo or relic or letter has turned up here and there to help sort out the fibs from the facts. The final result is--my folks get to take up a page in the annals of their nation's history, which, though un-named, they helped to make. Sometimes, as in the case of James L. Vaughan, they should have been named . . . .

The whatifs, the wudduh-cudduh-shudduhs, and the maybes expressed in my stories are products of a blend of curiosity and imagination and are intended to provide interest and provoke my descendants, and others, to keep digging before all they have to dig through is ashes and dust. Thanks to Linda Pelz, descendant of Martha Vaughan for enhancing my imagination with intriguing family stories. Tim Childress provides a repository at his website, <http://www.childresscousins.org>, to preserve my old-fashioned, often flowery ramblings in case I am on to something. Being motivated by belief in a spiritual world—motivation that might be viewed in some circles as insanity—I always feel one ancestor or another may be reading over my shoulder, saying, "It's about time."

*Helen Vaughan Michael*  
9/20/2015

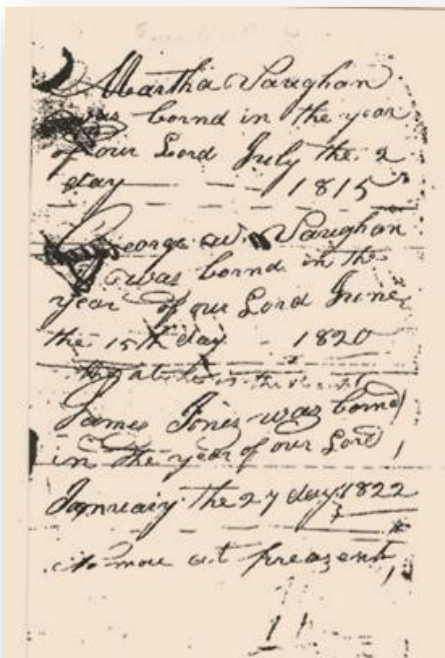
*The little Road says, Go:/The little House says, Stay:  
And Oh, it's bonny here at home,/But I must go away.  
Josephine P. Peabody—The House and the Road*

## Martha Vaughan Davis: Her Life and Times

Beginning in 1801 Thomas Jefferson sowed the seeds of the expansion of the United States from sea to shining sea. With the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803, and--to explore the new purchase--the launching of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1804, he provided a whole new world for our pioneering ancestors to harvest. Not two decades later there were Vaughans and their fellow frontiersmen who were facing a precarious path that was being plowed across that new world, a path that would lead to civil war.

Following an eight year term of President James Madison, James Monroe was elected to office in 1817, the last of the Revolutionary leaders, and he was President when the United States Congress of 1820 passed the Missouri Compromise. The agreement was worked out by pro-slavery and anti-slavery people to decide the parameters of slavery in the new territories. It prohibited slavery in the former Louisiana Territory north of the parallel 36°30' except within the boundaries of the proposed state of Missouri and allowed Maine to enter the Union as a free state. The problem of what to do about slavery existing in a nation founded on the belief of the equality of all men--the same problem that had plagued Madison, Monroe, Jefferson and the colonial founding fathers--continued to wreak havoc in the republic they had struggled to create. Thirty years later, their nation's so-called compromise continued to give southern slave lords more representation and power than they deserved, a decision that only postponed civil war when, in the election of 1860, they didn't get their way. In 1820 Martha Vaughan was just a five year old exploring the Tennessee home of her parents, John and Nancy Callicott Vaughan, but one day she would leave the old home place and weave her way along the risky path west to settle in the treacherous lands which the Missouri Compromise and the eventual Kansas Nebraska Act affected. There, her son would have to fight against despotism one more time for the lofty ideals of justice, equality, and freedom which Madison himself had written into the Constitution of the United States.

Martha was the tenth child and last daughter of John and Nancy Callicott Vaughan. Martha is the name written in her mother's Day Book, but sometimes she referred to herself as *Jane*, so at some time, her middle name became, *Jane*.



*Martha Vaughan was born in the year of our Lord July the 2 day--1815 (Daybook, Nancy Callicott Vaughan, p 3)*

Nancy gave birth July 2, 1815. Martha was born in Hawkins County in the Tennessee hills, and life's final journey ended for her in Missouri. She probably died in Missouri, but details of her death are unknown.

After the 1794 wedding of Martha's parents, John and Nancy resided in Halifax, Virginia with their two little boys, James L. and Beverley. After Tennessee became a state, they moved from Halifax about the year 1800, and came to Hawkins County to a spot near the Virginia border. This northern section of Hawkins County was later changed to Hancock. They settled near the Clinch River, and siblings--Mary Polly, Rebecca, Benjamin, Nancy, Mahaly, John Jr., and Samuel followed one after the other. After Martha came George Washington in 1820, the Vaughan's last child.

Martha grew up on the Tennessee frontier. Folks had cleared the land for their hillside farms, using the felled trees to build houses, barns, fences, furniture, trading posts, churches, schools, and jails—until they had built communities in which they could raise their children. Their farms, nestled in the Appalachian foothills of Tennessee were beautiful.

Children worked at vital jobs in the nation's budding agricultural industry, but they didn't have to give up their childhood to earn their keep, and pioneer families with a lot of kids considered themselves lucky. Parents were free to do the heavy chores as their small ones fed the chickens and yard birds, gathered eggs, picked berries and beans, and even helped in the fields where they could. Working in the fields, they enjoyed the excitement of discovering arrow heads, catching bugs, chasing butterflies, and picking herbs and wildflowers.

In the house, when she was old enough to sweep a broom, Martha would join her older sisters, Mahala and Nancy, in helping with the laundry, cooking, cleaning, and sewing. Her two oldest sisters, Mary Polly and Rebecca moved out and started their own families when she was about five. Her mother could read and write, and several of Martha's siblings left written documents, but her meager records



**Mowed Appalachian pasture**



**John Vaughan Farm, Mabel Harp Photo, 1997**

**Mowed pasture in the hills of the John Vaughan farm, Mabel Harp Photo, 1997**



are unclear on whether or not she learned any literary skills. Growing up in a house where people were reading and writing, the records which say she was able to do so are possibly true. She surely had dolls and may have claimed a favorite spot in the woods, or down by the creek, where she could play house—or, with a couple of bossy older sisters—even school. Furthermore, a number of musicians have shown up amongst the descendants of the Tennessee Vaughans, typical of Appalachian mountain folk—as have orators and storytellers, so perhaps there were songs sung and stories told and enjoyed by children, whether or not they could handle the written word and put pen to paper. Happily, stories can be told and songs can be sung over work and play.

One of Martha's sons, Campbell, was known for his love of music, as were nephews, the grandsons of her brothers Beverley and Samuel N. John Vaughan claimed he was born in Ireland. The Appalachian hills were alive with melody, and with a number of his descendants showing a propensity for making music, it's likely the sound of songs could be heard wafting from the home of Martha's Irish father. Campbell is pictured with a guitar. (BELOW) The fiddle, fife, drum, harmonica, piano, and a slew of homemade instruments were also popular amongst Tennesseans.

### *Campbell C. Davis, 1849-1918*




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### **The Kitchen**

If latter day culinary preparations for family reunions and Sunday dinners by descendants of the Vaughans are any indication, meals were an everyday treat in the home in which Martha Jane grew up. In time, Vaughan cooks have been known to be as talented over a cook stove as their musicians have been over a musical instrument.

In recent images of the old Vaughan home of hewn logs, and according to visitors who have seen it, the kitchen seems to have been attached to the house in latter times. Because of kitchen fires, and in part to contend with summer heat, some of the very old frontier families built their homes with separate



***Front side of Kitchen, restored and remodeled, John Vaughan house; Mabel Harp Photo, 1997.***

summer kitchens. Martha, being a younger daughter, may not have spent as much time in a hectic kitchen as did her older sisters when it was a busier place, crowded with siblings.

Not only would the family's meals be prepared and eaten in the kitchen, the food itself was processed in the kitchen. Milk had to be strained and separated before it was turned into buttermilk, yogurt, and cheese, and the cream churned into butter, and then it all had to be stored. Since coercing butter out of a churn followed a slightly musical course, even a small hand could drum out the butter. Meat had to be cured, sliced, chopped, or ground—after it was skinned, scraped, or plucked, before it was baked, boiled, roasted, smothered, stewed, grilled, or fried. On a kitchen doorstep the feathers of many a goose got plucked by the nimble fingers of farm girls, like Martha and her sisters, who then saved the precious fluff to stuff them into soft mattresses and pillows. In the wills of fathers of this time, it was not unusual for feather beds to be handed out as if they were treasures.

Martha may have picked peppers, herbs, and spices from a kitchen garden growing just out the back door. And after meals, when she was through helping her mother and big sisters clean up, perhaps there was time to chase fireflies outside in the yard and play games with the other brothers and sisters in the evening twilight, although Martha and her one younger sibling, George Washington, were on the tail end of child's play; four of her older brothers and sisters were grown and gone by the time she was five.

***Back side of kitchen—before restoration. Photo courtesy of A.J. and Opal Frances Vaughan family, 1985.***





View of Portland, Oregon from William Wesley Davis grave.



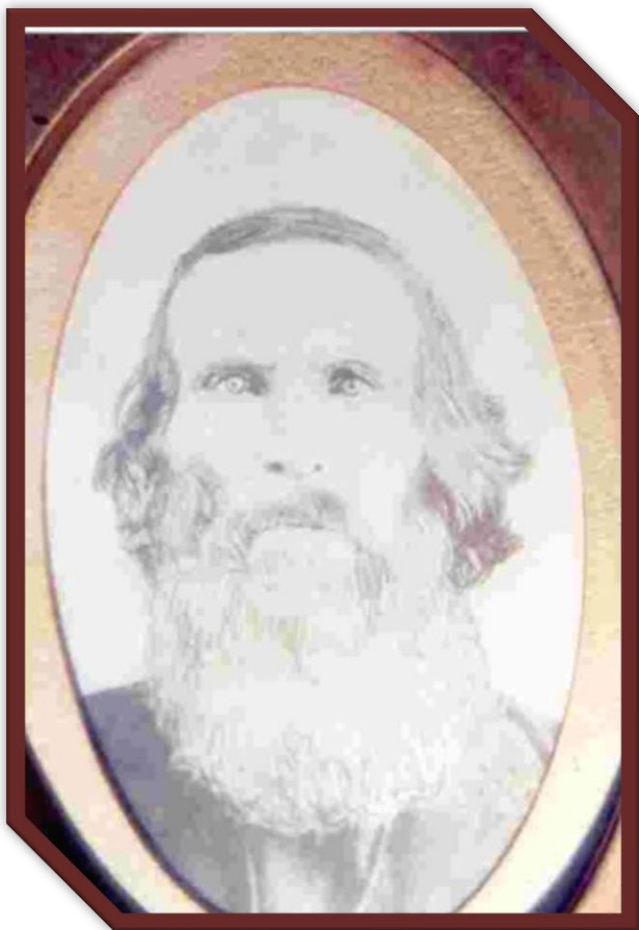
Veteran's Memorial Circle, Lincoln Memorial Park, Portland, Oregon (grave, with Civil War marker a few yards to Right)  
Ancestry.com File Photos

Just as they filled up, chairs around Martha's parent's kitchen table began to empty. Her two oldest brothers, James L. and Beverley, moved west. James L., a Captain in the Texas Revolution of 1836, kept up the winning of the west, while the sons of Beverley fought and died in winning the 1848 War with Mexico, growing the nation ever nearer its Pacific horizon. The Mexican War would open up trails all the way to the Oregon Territory. William Wesley, Martha's soldier son, was one of the first Vaughans to find his way to the Pacific Coast. Born around 1846, he was a Union veteran, 12th Indiana Cavalry, in the Civil War, and he is buried in Veterans Memorial section of Lincoln Memorial Park, Portland, Oregon.

Martha's oldest sister, Mary Polly, married John Gilliam in the early twenties, and Rebecca was eighteen when she and John Roller got married. So close were their marriage dates, the two sisters







*Wilson N. Davis*

#### 1830 Census

Martha, under fifteen, was still at home in 1830 along with sixteen year old Samuel, nineteen year old John, Jr. and ten year old George Washington in Hawkins County. The day the census taker came in 1830 it looks like Martha's friend, or a cousin, was visiting. Or, a careless census worker may have mistakenly logged twenty-three year old Nancy, as yet unmarried, with her much younger sister.

On the frontier, teenagers didn't have a lot of peers hanging out on their doorstep. Most friends came from local, but widespread families. Nevertheless, boys and girls of a neighborhood would meet and strike up an acquaintance which then, quite often, enticed the Hawkins Vaughans—guys and gals--into marrying someone off their census roll.

Sometime during the next three years Martha got married. Her family and the family of her future husband lived in different districts, but the houses of the two families may have been just across the dividing line. In 1836 her husband, Wilson N. Davis, Jr., is listed in District 8, Hawkins County, on the Tax and Voter list. The location and landmarks of District 8 include: John Carmack's Spring Branch, Stanley Valley, Stanley Valley Knobs, and Benoni Caldwell's plantation. Wilson N. Davis, Sr. is listed with his son. By 1836 Wilson, Sr. had become a grandfather; Wilson N. Davis, Jr. and Martha Jane Vaughan were the parents of four by 1840.

A few other citizens with interesting names, sometimes with links to the Vaughans, are included on the list of voters; a number of insignificant others are omitted here:

#### *1836 Civil District 8 Hawkins County Tax and Voter list*

*Civil District 8: Beginning at the mouth of Renfroes Creek thence down the river to the mouth of Big Creek then up said creek to the mouth of John Carmack's Spring Branch then up said branch to the road that leads up Stanley Valley then along said road to Cornelius Carmacks thence crossing Big Creek and running to the top of Stanley Valley Knobs then along the top of said Knobs to the line of District No. 9 nearly opposite Benoni Caldwell's plantation at the Gap between said Caldwell's and Walter's then with said line to the beginning. The election to be held in Surgoinsville. List of taxpayers:*

*James Y. CAMPBELL; Anderson CAMPBELL; Robert CAMPBELL; William CORMACK; Andrew CAMPBELL; Nelson CAMPBELL; John CHARLES; John R. CHARLES; Willie B. CORMACK; Thomas DAVIS; **Wilson N. DAVIS SR ; Wilson N. DAVIS JR;** Thomas EDISON; Isaac B. FORD; James R. FORGEY; George FRANCISCO; James FORGEY; Robert JOHNSON; William KINHEAD; Robert W. KINHEAD; Thomas KINHEAD; John KINDRICK; Joseph KNOX; Henry S. LARKIN; Lewis D. LONG; William LOONEY; Henry LARKIN; Anderson LARKINS; William LYONS; David LYONS; **George MAWK; John MAWK;** William PHIPPS; Jane PHIPPS; James S. PHIPPS; Joshua PHIPPS; John A. ROGERS.*

Records of Wilson N. Davis mostly say he was born about 1814 in Tennessee. His father owned a farm on the north side of the Clinch Mountains in Hawkins County. There were many Davis families in this area—the same area where John and Nancy Callicott Vaughan moved young Martha and their family sometime after 1832. Wilson Sr.'s wife was Mary, and his children were all girls except for Wilson, Jr.—Isabella, m-Creton Eidson; Frances, m-Wilbourn Amis; Mary, m-John Vaughn; Sarah, m-Isacc Johnson; Elizabeth, m-Henry Light; Lydia, m-Stephen Haygood. Wilson, Jr. and a very young Martha were married around the year 1833, the year of the birth of their first child, Sarah Ellen. (Pictured, Right, as a young woman) Sarah was born in Hawkins County and she was followed by George, Amanda Jane, and John. The four children are numbered, but not named, in 1840. Martha's first four children may well have known the joy of playing in the tree-filled yard of their Vaughan grandparents. (Below: Huge tree still growing on Vaughan farm. Mabel Harp, pictured, 1997)



## 1840 Census

*Wilson N Davis*

*Home in 1840 (City, County, State): Hawkins, Tennessee*

*Free White Persons - Males - U-5: 1(John)*

*Free White Persons - Males - 5 thru 9: 1 (George)*

*Free White Persons - Males - 20 thru 29: 1 (Wilson N. Jr)*

*Free White Persons - Females - U-5: 1 (Amanda Jane)*

*Free White Persons - Females - 5 thru 9: 1 (Sarah Ellen)*

*Free White Persons - Females - 20 thru 29: 1 (Martha Jane Vaughan)*

*Persons Employed in Agriculture: 1*

*No. White Persons over 20 Who Cannot Read and Write: 1*

In the 1840's Martha still lived near her childhood home and was remembered in her father's will.

#### **WILL OF JOHN VAUGHAN**

*Dated: Dec. 27, 1841*

*Proven: Aug. Term 1842*

*I, John Vaughan of the County of Hawkins and State of Tennessee, do make this my last Will & Testament hereby revoking and making void all former wills by me heretofore made.*

*First. My will and desire is that all my just debts be paid out of any money that I may die possessed of, or that may first come into the hands of my Executors.*

*Eleventh. I do give and bequeath unto my daughter Martha Davis \$1.00.*

*And for the performance and execution of this my last will, I do appoint Robert W. Kinkead my Executor. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal.*

*This 27th day of December, 1841.*

*John his x mark Vaughan (seal)*

*In presence of:*

*William Carmack, James T. Brice, William E. Carmack*

Martha's father, a Revolutionary soldier, died the following summer, in old Hawkins County, July 14, 1842—sixty-six years and ten days since his first Independence Day.

#### *William Wesley Davis, 1847-1935*



Three more children were born to Martha during the 1840 decade: Benjamin Franklin 1844; Mary Roseanna 1845; William Wesley 1846.

Due to a bureaucratic name change, in the forties some people on the Hawkins census would become residents of a brand new Hancock County, patriotically named for the 1776 Rebel who put his signature on the Declaration of Independence with a flourish—John Hancock. The name change did not affect the Davis family, or the newest home of her father, as their districts remained in Hawkins County. Martha's childhood home, however, got a new Hancock County address.

1850 to Fort Sumter

**SCHEDULE I. Free Inhabitants in District No 9 in the County of Hawkins State of Va enumerated by me, on the 20 day of Nov 1850. R. B. High Ass't Marshal.**

1	2	3	DESCRIPTION.			7	8	9	10 11 12			13
			Age	Sex	Color				Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.			
		Abby	8	M				Yes				
		Rebecca	7	F				Yes				
		H. Benjamin Jr	4	M				Yes				
65	65	Carroll Carey	37	M		Carpenter		Yes				
		Sarah	33	F				Yes				
		Thomas	12	M				Yes				
		Abdeline	10	F				Yes				
		Agnes	8	F				Yes				
		Hubert	4	M				Yes				
		Francis	3	M				Yes				
66	66	Henry Grayson	61	M		Farmer		Yes				
		Walter	57	M				Yes				
		Silvia	30	F				Yes				
		James	17	M		YB		Yes				
		William	13	M				Yes				
		Henry	11	M				Yes				
		Maria	9	F				Yes				
		Walter	4	M				Yes				
67	67	Henry Colton	33	M		Farmer		Yes				
		James	21	M				Yes				
		Mary	8	F				Yes				
		John	6	M				Yes				
		Walter	11	M				Yes				
		Julia	2	F				Yes				
		Oliver D.	4	M				Yes				
68	68	Wilson Davis	30	M		Farmer		Yes				
		James	25	M				Yes				
		John	15	M				Yes				
		George	15	M				Yes				
		James	13	M				Yes				
		John	12	M				Yes				
		Benjamin	7	M				Yes				
		Mary	5	F				Yes				
		William	3	M				Yes				
69	69	James Williams	31	M				Yes				
		Ronald	11	M				Yes				
		Samuel	9	M				Yes				
		Mary	4	F				Yes				
70	70	George Simpson	38	M		Farmer		Yes				
		Walter	35	M				Yes				
		Samuel	14	M				Yes				
		Elizabeth	16	F				Yes				

1850 Hawkins County

At age thirty-five Martha's residence was in Hawkins County, District 9. This could be the same property as that which is listed in 1836 as District 8 when the two districts meandered through Stanley Valley side by side.

#### 1836 Civil District 9

*Civil District 9: Beginning on the top of the Stanley Valley Knobs at the gap between Benoni Caldwell's and Walter's at the corner of District No. 8 running thence with the line of the same and along the top of said Knobs to Big Creek opposite to Cornelius Carmack's Spring then crossing the creek to the Stanley Valley road then along the road to the road that leads to through the Caney Creek Knobs at Molsby's Gap continuing along said road through William Molsby's land to intersect the little War Gap road near Spencer Acuff's field then along the road to the corner of the fence of the lot that includes said Acuff's home thence a straight line to the creek leaving said Acuff's to the west of said line thence up said creek to the top of Chestnut ridge then a straight course to the top of Clinch mountain leaving Pleasant Starnes, Andrew Spears, Hays Lewis and David Patterson to the west of said line then along the top of said mountain to the corner of Lot No. 8 thence with the line of said Lot No. 8 crossing the line that divides Coldwell and Walter's tracts of land to the beginning. the election to be held at Arthur Galbreath's home in Stanley Valley.*

With names like Acuff, Arnold, and Ford in the neighborhood, it is no wonder her boy Campbell took a liking to the guitar. When Martha and Wilson named a son *Campbell* they most likely named him after the Campbells in District 8. Baby Campbell was born in 1851.

The 1850 US Census, shows Martha using her middle name. The age of her eldest daughter, Sarah Ellen, suggests that she may have gotten married at age seventeen or younger:

About Jane Davis, 35, B 1815, TN, Home in 1850: Dist 9, Hawkins, TN. Wilson Davis 36, Martha Jane Davis 35, Ellen 18, George 15, Jane 13, John 12, Benjamin 7, Mary 5, William 3.

### Martha Jane's Family and the Civil War

During the 1850s the times, people, and borders in Tennessee were changing with the rest of the growing nation. Stephen A. Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854 opened up Kansas as a territory and set the stage for a six year preview of the incivilities of the Civil War. The Missouri-Kansas border area was already primed for neighbor going against neighbor when Martha's family arrived in southeastern Missouri, several years later. Her sister Rebecca, already there for some time, was in Barry County on the very frontier of Bleeding Kansas.

In 1858, with Civil War coming, Martha's mother died in September. Her brother Benjamin testified in their mother's pension application that Martha had moved with her family to Knoxville, Tennessee. By that time three of her siblings had already gone further west. She, herself, was probably on her way to Missouri about the time secessionists in South Carolina fired on Fort Sumter.



**Bleeding Kansas >>> Rebecca Vaughan Roller's family ~~~ Martha Vaughan Davis's family ~~~**



Looking Off the Top of Newman's Ridge  
Submitted by Sherie Corbett

**Hillside pasture in the unique Hilly Knobs of Hancock County**

The 1850's found brother George Washington living near Nashville—or so the Vaughans believed, and Beverley had been seen in Arkansas. James L. had earlier come home from Texas for a visit, but he had left by the time of his mother's death. In their mother's 1858 pension application, Benjamin states that his sister Rebecky had moved to Missouri, and then, on the eve of the war, Benjamin, himself, took his family to Texas in 1860. They left behind their Tennessee siblings—Martha Jane, Mary Polly Gilliam, Nancy Hickman, John, Jr., and Samuel N. The nomadic Vaughan children were following the American migration west toward cheaper lands which the earlier frontiersmen had inspected for them fifty years earlier. Since they already owned lovely farms in Virginia and in Tennessee, they weren't looking for a bargain; they may have simply been looking for places where their families could live in peace. If so, in Martha Jane's case, it was a matter of jumping out of the frying pan and into the fire.

Missouri burning and Martha's arrival in that state happened at just about the same time. . . .

A piece of the explored lands from the Louisiana Purchase had become the State of Missouri in 1821. Because slave-holders boating up the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers settled the area, Missouri entered the Union in 1821 as a slave state as agreed in the Missouri Compromise of 1820. By 1850, however, Missouri's southern hordes began to be replaced by a diversified population—especially German immigrants whose fierce loyalty to the United States was well-known. Most of these new folks, such as her sister Rebecca Roller's German husband, ran small family farms and did not keep slaves. By 1860, with war approaching, a majority of Missourians wanted to stay out of the conflict--remaining in the Union, but as a neutral state.

In a statewide convention of February 1861, Missouri voters elected delegates who overwhelmingly rejected secession by a vote of 89-1. Secessionist forces refused to accept the will of the pro-Unionists, and immediately began to fight for political and military control of the state. By June, guerrilla warfare scoured the state with violence in much the same way it would plague Martha's birthplace in East Tennessee. In local conflicts, citizens regularly faced the perils of bushwhacking, sniping, and merciless guerilla warfare. It was said that Missouri was in "an improvised war of a deadly guerrilla nature, where local citizens took up arms against their neighbors—a war without a front, without formal organization, and with almost no division between the civilian and the warrior." The most vengeful of these guerrilla forces was made up of Quantrill's Raiders. Family lore has it that a Vaughan or two may have ridden with Quantrill, or with his lieutenants—the James brothers. Indeed a James Vaughan attended the funeral of Jesse James. ([See, James L. Vaughan in Texas](#))

*The Evening Light, San Antonio, TX*  
04-09-1882

**FUNERAL OF JESSE JAMES.**

St. Louis, April 6.

—A special dispatch states that at the funeral of Jessie James, at Kearney, Mo., today, an immense crowd on horseback and on foot and in wagons attended. The pall bearers were Sheriff Timberlake, Deputy Reed, Charley Scott, J. B. Henderson, J. D. Ford, Ben Flanders and **James Vaughan**. After the body was carried into the church the services began with the hymn, "What a Friend I Have in Jesus." Rev. Mr. Jones followed in a prayer, after which, "Where Shall Rest Be Found?" was sung.

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One reason secession lacked support in Missouri was that of patriotism. When Martha's father died in 1842, mourners at the funeral were heard bemoaning the sad truth that he was one of the last of the Revolutionary soldiers. In East Tennessee--anywhere the old Artillery Sergeant and his fellow patriots had lived--the veterans' war stories had left a proud legacy. As a boy during the Revolution future president Andrew Jackson had witnessed the 1780 Battle of Hobkirk's Hill in which Martha's father, serving in the Continental Artillery, had fought. John had lost his cannon to the British, and then rushed into the fight of his life to take it back. Fourteen year old Jackson, a prisoner in a British jail up on the hill, witnessed the battle and may have had a vista view of the heroics of the nineteen year old. Thus the Revolution was not just a war story to many Americans. It was fresh and real. Some refused to choose to divide a nation which the 1776 Rebels had united under the lofty principles of liberty and equality and individual worthiness. Western Virginians felt so keenly about it, they seceded from Virginia and became West Virginia.

The new Missourians opposed secession for the same reason—they loved the United States. Some of them, such as Martha's brother-in-law, John Roller, were family members of whole communities of German immigrants who felt blest to be citizens of such a great nation. The fierce loyalty of recent Irish immigrants made them excellent warriors and faithful soldiers—as the Rebels soon learned.

**Scene from Battle of Hobkirk Hill**  
**Rescuing a cannon out of the chaos of the Battle of Hobkirk's Hill, the American Revolution.**



Following the firing on Fort Sumter, April 12-14, 1861, the call for war in both the North and South took over. President Abraham Lincoln, newly sworn in, immediately called for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the rebellion, and with a huge pool of immigrants to appeal to, he easily got them. In the fog of war that surged out of South Carolina, the Civil War began. As soon as he was old enough, one of Martha's sons enlisted. The enlistment paper for William Wesley Davis says he was twenty, but that would not be so for another two years:

*Entitled to Bounty*  
**VOLUNTEER ENLISTMENT.**

STATE OF Indiana TOWN OF Indianapolis

I, Wm W Davis, born in Illinois, in the State of Illinois, aged 20 years, and by occupation a Farmer, Do HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE to have volunteered this 6 day of March, 1861, to serve as a Soldier for one YEAR unless sooner discharged by proper authority: Do also agree to accept such bounty, pay, rations, and clothing, as are, or may be, established by law for volunteers. And I, Wm W Davis, do solemnly swear, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies or opposers whomsoever; and that I will observe and obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to the Rules and Articles of War.

Signed and submitted to me at Indianapolis this 6 day of March, 1861.  
Witness my hand and seal of office this 6 day of March, 1861.  
Capt & Br Mas G West  
Major

I CERTIFY, ON HONOR, That I have carefully examined the above named Volunteer, agreeably to the General Regulations of the Army, and that, in my opinion, he is free from all bodily defects and mental infirmity, which would in any way disqualify him from performing the duties of a soldier.  
W B Harney  
Sergeant  
EXAMINING SURGEON.

I CERTIFY, ON HONOR, That I have minutely inspected the Volunteer, previously to his enlistment, and that he was entirely sober when enlisted; that, to the best of my judgment and belief, he is of lawful age; and that, in accepting him as duly qualified to perform the duties of an able-bodied soldier, I have strictly observed the Regulations which govern the recruiting service.  
This soldier has Blue eyes, Brown hair, Fair complexion, is 5 feet 7 1/2 inches high.

L B Bradford  
Br Mas G West  
Regiment of Volunteers  
REGIMENTAL OFFICER.

Certificate for the Signature of the Mustering Officer, Commissary, or Assistant Commissary of Mustering, as the case may be. Mustered length of service of the United States, for one year, or longer as may be required in the County of Indianapolis, in the State of Indiana. 1861.  
Mustered on the 6 day of March, 1861, at Indianapolis.  
Not enlisted in the County of Indianapolis, in the State of Indiana.  
Bounty paid at time of Mustering 135.00  
U. S. Bounty 135.00  
Local Bounty 0.00

(A. O. No. 14 & 15.)



William's paper describes him as blue-eyed with brown hair and a fair complexion. His portrait, **(right)** favors his father. Records through 1862 place the Davis clan in Tennessee. Since there is a record of military service for one of her sons, Martha's family may not have been able to maintain its neutrality by moving, and, unfortunately, the war did not stay out of Missouri. But even as far away as Missouri the legacy of her Revolutionary father carried on when young William Wesley chose to fight for his country. All of Martha's children had been born by 1860, and though born in Tennessee, most of them had become Missourians. After the war they would call themselves, Americans.

Her Missouri grandchildren, though, would not know the idyllic childhood she and her siblings had known growing up in the pristine meadows and woods alongside a creek curling through the Clinch Mountain ridges and valleys of Hawkins County, Tennessee.

***Right, Portrait of William Wesley Davis***



### **Knoxville, 1860**

For some reason, the Davises appear twice on the 1860 census in Tennessee, pages 179 and 180 for Blares Crossroads Post Office and Woodborn Post Office, both in Knox County.

At age forty-five Martha's 1860 residence was District 4, Knox, Tennessee. Post Office: Blares Crossroads; Value of personal estate--\$225. This census lists four new members of her family: Campbell, Tennessee, Napoleon, and Martha Leona. Their brother John, age twenty-one, married a girl named Eliza, and the young couple came to Knoxville with the family:

*1860 Census About Martha Davis:*

*Wilson Davis 45, Martha Davis 44, Amanda 22, Rosa 14, Benjaman 16, William 11, Campbell 9, Tennessee 7, Napoleon 5, Martha Leona. John Davis 21, and Eliza Davis 18.*

On the same day, the same enumerator on the next page again registers the family, but he runs out of room and leaves off Napoleon and Martha Leona, as well as the young married couple. Value of personal estate is \$800 at Woodborn Post Office.

Sarah Ellen and George had moved on—Sarah Ellen into the first of several marriages and George to apparent bachelorhood, but both of them eventually made it to Missouri.

1860 Census #1, Blares Crossroads, Knox County

Page No. 179

SCHEDULE 1. Free Inhabitants in H Post in the County of Knox State of Tennessee enumerated by me, on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of June 1860. W. H. K. Marshall Ass't Marshal. Post Office Blares Crossroads.

1	2	3	DESCRIPTION.			7	VALUE OF ESTATE OWNED.		10	11	12	13	14
			4	5	6		8	9					
Dwelling-house numbered in the order of signature.	Family numbered in order of inhabitant.	The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.	Age.	Sex.	White or Colored.	Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.	Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
1341/141		Andrew Graham	47	M		Farmer	3000	1000	Tennessee				
		Hilley	48	F									
		Abigail	16	F									
		Samuel	14	M							1		
		John	13	M							1		
		James	8	M							1		
		Alice	8	F									
1342/142		Claborn Saunders	41	M		Farmer	1500	2000					
		Abigail	36	F									
		Lucinda	15	F							1		
		Sarah	13	F							1		
		James	11	M							1		
		John	9	M							1		
		Mary	7	F							1		
		James	5	M									
		Lidney	3	M									
		James	1	M									
		Mary Childs	38	F									
1343/143		Thomas Sautner	33	M		Farmer	3000	200					
		Larry	18	F									
		John	1	M									
1344/144		William Davis	25	M		Farmer		2250	Tennessee				
		Martha	14	F								1	
		Amanda	22	F									
		Sarah	14	F							1		
		Benjamin	16	M									
		William	11	M							1		
		Campbell	9	M							1		
		Tennessee	7	F							1		
		Harbor	5	M									
		Martha	2	F									
		John Davis	21	M							1		
		Eliza	18	F							1		
1345/145		Lechick Cowan	51	M		Farmer	1000	500	Virginia				
		Lechick	51	F								1	
		Hester	26	F								1	
		Martha	21	F									
		Sarah	20	F									
		John	17	M							1		
		Lydia	12	F									

No. white males 18 No. colored males No. female free No. Male No. Male

1860 Census #2, Woodborn, Knox County

Page No. 480

SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in Woodborn in the County of Knox State of Tennessee enumerated by me, on the 27th day of June 1860. T. A. H. Marshall Ass't Marshal. Post Office Woodborn

1	2	3	4			7	8		10	11			14
			Age	Sex	Color		Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate		Married within the year	Attended School within the year	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict	
1	1346	1448	William Coran	82	M		Farmer		Tennessee				
2			Henderson	27	M								
3			Sarah	21	F								
4			Infant	1/2	F								
5	1347	1447	Henry Frost	54	M		Farmer	750					
6			Sarah	42	F								
7			Sam	20	M								
8			Sarah	17	F								
9			William	17	M								
10			Sarah	16	F								
11			John	12	M								
12			W. Riley	7	M								
13	1348	1448	William Engler	33	M		Farmer	1000 300					
14			Sarah	34	F								
15			Rachel	11	F								
16			John	10	M								
17			Ellen	5	F								
18			Joseph	2	M								
19			Sarah	1/2	F								
20			James Amatt	22	M		Texas hand						
21	1349	1449	Elizabeth Cooper	77	F		Farmer	3000 1000	Virginia				
22			Henry	44	M								
23			William	39	M			1000					
24			George	30	M								
25			Richard	33	M			1500					
26			Ananda	22	F								
27	1350	1450	Mary Jones	55	F		Farmer	2000 2000	Tennessee				
28			Evelyn	29	F								
29			Rosanna	20	F								
30			Joseph	20	M								
31			Rachel	17	F								
32			Sam	14	M								
33	1351	1451	Wesley Davis	45	M		Farmer	800					
34			Martha	46	F								
35			Ananda	29	F								
36			Rosanna	15	F								
37			Byron	16	M								
38			William	14	M								
39			Campbell	12	M								
40			Tennessee	7	F								

No. white males, 18 No. colored males, — No. foreign born, — No. blind, —  
 No. white females, 22 No. colored females, — No. deaf and dumb, — No. insane, —  
 No. paupers, — No. convicts, —

6000 6675

On these two papers there are obvious differences, but their likenesses are unique to this family, leaving no doubt they are the same folks. One can only wonder about the circumstances that put them on pages 179 and 180 of the Knox County census. But, the family clearly was still in Tennessee on June 27<sup>th</sup> 1860.

Another record that may place them in Tennessee past 1860 is that of their daughter Amanda Jane's marriage license. Amanda Jane was still at home at age twenty-two, in 1860. In 1862 she married her cousin, James K. Vaughn, Martha's nephew, a son of her brother, John, Jr. in Hancock, County. It's interesting that Amanda Jane Davis's family moved from Hawkins to Knoxville in the mid '50's but she married James K. in Hawkins, 1862.

*Tennessee State Marriages, 1780-2002: about Amanda J Davis.*

*Name: Amanda J Davis;*

*Spouse: James Vaughn;*

*Marriage Date: 4 Sep 1862;*

*Marriage County: Hawkins.*

If Martha and Wilson took their family to Missouri any sooner than 1862, they left their daughter behind. Amanda and James K. moved to Canada in the 90's and returned to the U.S before the turn of the century. In Missouri, Amanda died in a house fire and a few years later, James K. was mysteriously murdered in Texas.

An old 1900 abstract shows the widower, James K., along with his daughters Della and Mary Lily transferred ownership of 40 acres to his son, J. E. Vaughn age 23:

*The transfer was exclusive of rights to a "griss-mill" which were retained by James K. I presently own a farm in what is known as "Vaughn Holler". I believe some members of the Vaughn family died in a winter of 1900 fire in the original house. Lonnie Randolph, [LVRJR@centurytel.net](mailto:LVRJR@centurytel.net)*

Two years later the children's father was dead. A family story tells how James K. went to Texas to check on property he owned there. His family in Madison, Missouri never heard from him again. One day, they got a message that there was a delivery from Texas for them at the train station. When the Vaughan children went to pick up the delivery, they discovered it was a coffin with their father inside and a note that said he had been murdered. James K. was killed about 1902.



Through a descendant's dogged search for the history of eldest daughter, Sarah Ellen, more of Martha's past turned up:

*Sarah often told family history. They would sit on the front porch, Sarah, nearly blind, smoking her little clay pipe, had a willing audience for the family tales. Sarah was bedridden and totally blind in the final years of her life. Each day she expected to be fully dressed in her black silk dress with a little caplet of embroidered lace on her white hair. The state of Missouri had no record of her death. In 1995, I tracked down the funeral parlor that had her wake and burial, and this is where they found the death certificate. In finding her death certificate, we discovered her parent's names were Wilson and Martha Davis. **Written by Barbara Thompson, 03/31/08 Ancestry.com. Edited for this story.***

**Sarah Ellen Davis at 85**



*Map of Iron County, Missouri*

**1870**

In 1870 Martha was fifty-five, living in Iron County, in East Missouri. However long they had been there, the Davis family had not prospered, possibly suffering from the effects of the Civil War. Most folks did. The value of Wilson's personal property was down to \$100--down from the \$225 and \$800 listed at his last two Knox, Tennessee residences. Only a daughter, Tennessee, and her father claim to be able to read and write, and none of the kids are in school.

*1870 US Census, abt Martha Davis, Age: 55: Residence, 1870; Township 31, Range 4 East, Iron, Missouri: Wm N Davis 56, Martha Davis 55, Campbell Davis 19, Tennessee Davis 17, Martha Leona Davis 13.*

Napoleon, who would be fifteen, is no longer with the family and there are no further records for him. Martha Leona was the youngest child, and as she had been born in Tennessee, there are no census dates in the future that would mark the family's arrival in Missouri. [Pictured, below: Martha Leona Davis.](#)

*Martha Leona Davis*







By 1880 the Davis family, down to four members, had moved south to the adjoining county of Wayne. Their residence is listed in Logan, Wayne County, Missouri. No holdings, for them or anyone else, are enumerated. Martha is unaware that her mother was born in Virginia and that her father was from Ireland:

*1880 US Census, abt Martha Davis: 65, b.1815, TN. Spouse: W. N. Davis, Father's Birthplace: VA, Mother's Birthplace: NC, W N Davis 66, Martha Davis 65, Tenny Davis 24, Martha L. Davis 20.*

Martha Jane, only sixty-five, on the frontier and settled in Missouri, became a bystander to progress as railroads and trails to Oregon and the Pacific Ocean opened up and moved the next generation toward the western horizon. Teamsters who drove the wagons, stage drivers who taxied the travelers, pony express riders and telegraphers who kept lines of pioneer communication open, and finally railroad men who laid rails all the way to Thomas Jefferson's other shining sea—all continued the western voyage on which Martha had been an earlier traveler. When her son William Wesley made the trip to Oregon he was one of the first Vaughans to reach the Pacific Ocean.

Like her mother before her, Martha, the mother of eleven, also lost one child when her son named Napoleon did not make it to his sixteenth birthday. Other children grew up in Tennessee and Missouri, and at one time or another all made Missouri their home. Many of them lived and died in a cluster of East Missouri counties neighboring Iron and Wayne. Missouri attracted a host of her nieces and nephews and a lot more of her kin. Her Aunt Dicey Callicott Vaughan Ford, an elderly widow, went all the way to Cass County with her daughter's family. Martha's sister Rebecca Vaughan Roller settled in Barry County in the far southeastern corner of the state, and she died there. Yet, having a sister on the other side of Missouri in 1880 may not have counted for much; it was probably like having a sister on the other side of the world.

Many, many of her closest relatives actually lived nearby; still, there is hardly a word of Martha in any records after the 1880 Wayne County Census. As with her own parents, John and Nancy Callicott Vaughan, none of her children saw to it that she was remembered with a marker for her grave—at least not one that weathered time.

Theoretically Martha and Wilson N. Davis could have lived into the twentieth century, but if they did, they were not living with any of their neighboring offspring, and no census taker counted them, even once, after 1880.

**The End**



## Timeline

Born 1815 2 Jul Hawkins County, TN, USA  
 Marriage to Wilson N Davis1834 Age: 19 Hawkins County, TN, USA

Residence 1830, Age: 15, Hawkins, TN  
 Birth, daughter-Sarah Ellen Davis1833  
 Birth, son-George Davis1835 –

Residence1836 Age: 21 Hawkins County, TN, USA  
 Birth, daughter-Amanda Jane Davis 1836  
 Birth, son- John N. Davis1838 – 1860

Residence 1840, Age: 25, Hawkins, TN

1842: Death of John Vaughan, father

Birth, son- Benjamin Franklin Davis1844 –  
 Birth, daughter-Mary Roseanna Davis1845 – 1919  
 Birth, son- William Wesley Davis1847 – 1935

Residence1850 Age: 35 District 9, Hawkins, TN  
 1850 US Census, abt Jane Davis, 25, B 1815, TN , Home in 1850: Dist 9, Hawkins, TN, Wilson Davis 36, Martha Jane Davis 25, Ellen 18, George 15, Jane 13, John 12, Benjamin 7, Mary 5, William 3. Middle name: Jane

Birth, son- Campbell D. Davis1852 – 1918  
 Birth, daughter-Nancy Ann Tennessee Tenny Davis1853 – 1947  
 Birth, son- Napoleon Davis1855 –  
 Birth, daughter-Martha Leona Davis1858 – 1960

1858: Death of Nancy Callicott Vaughan, mother

Residence1860 Age: 45 District 4, Knox, TN (one of two 1860 residences; Napoleon is missing from the 2<sup>nd</sup> census)  
 1860 US Census, abt Martha Davis: 44, 1816, Wilson Davis 45, Martha Davis 44, Amanda 22, Rosa 14, Benjamin 16, William 11, Campbell 9, Tennessee 7, Napoleon 5, Martha 2. John Davis 21, Eliza Davis 18--John's wife.

Residence1870 Age: 55 Township 31 Range 4 East, Iron, Missouri  
 1870 US Census, abt Martha Davis: 55, 1815, TN, Wm N Davis 56, Martha 55, Campbell 19, Tennessee 17, Martha Leona 13.

Residence1880 Age: 65 Logan, Wayne, Missouri, United States  
 1880 US Census, abt Martha Davis: 65, 1815, TN, Spouse: H. N. Davis, Father's Birthplace: VA, Mother's Birthplace: NC , W N Davis 66, Martha Davis 65, Tenny Davis 24, Martha L. Davis 20.

Death: aft 1880, Missouri, Last appears on 1880 census; theoretically she cld have lived into the next century

Parents: John Vaughan1762 – 1842 & Nancy Callicott1777 – 1858

Spouse: Wilson N Davis1815 – 1900

Children:

Sarah Ellen Davis1833 – 1923

George Davis1835 –

Amanda J Davis1838 –

John N. Davis1838 – 1860

Benjamin Franklin Davis1844 –

Mary Roseanna Davis1845 – 1919

William Wesley Davis1847 – 1935

Campbell D. Davis1852 – 1918

Nancy Ann Tennessee Tenny Davis1853 – 1947

Napoleon Davis1855 –

Martha Leona Davis1858 – 1960

## Sources

*Sergeant John Vaughan, a Soldier of the American Revolution*

*Mother's Daybook record, Nancy Callicott Vaughan's Day Book, p 3*

*1830 Census of Father, John Vaughan.*

*Tax/Voter list for 1836 election w/Wilson and father.*

*1840, Hawkins, TN Census of husband, Wilson N. Davis*

*1842 Will of John Vaughan*

*1850 US Census, abt Jane Davis, 25, B 1815, TN , Home in 1850: Dist 9, Hawkins, TN, Wilson Davis 36, Martha*

*Jane Davis 25, Ellen 18, George 15, Jane 13, John 12, Benjamin 7, Mary 5, William 3. Middle name: Jane*

*1858 Pension Application of Nancy Callicott Vaughan*

*1860 US Census, abt Martha Davis: 44, 1816, Wilson Davis 45, Martha Davis 44, Amanda 22, Rosa 14, Benjamin*

*16, William 11, Campbell 9, Tennessee 7, Napoleon 5, Martha 2. John Davis 21, Eliza Davis 18--John's wife.*

*1860 Census, 2<sup>nd</sup> residence.*

*1870 US Census, abt Martha Davis: 55, 1815, TN, Wm N Davis 56, Martha 55, Campbell 19, Tennessee 17, Martha*

*Leona 13.*

*1880 US Census, abt Martha Davis: 65, 1815, TN, Spouse: H. N. Davis, Father's Birthplace: VA , Mother's Birthplace:*

*NC , W N Davis 66, Martha Davis 65, Tenny Davis 24, Martha L. Davis 20.*

<http://www.childresscousins.org>

Family stories of Linda Pelz, descendant of Martha Jane Vaughan

Ancestry.com

## County Map of Missouri

