

Seeking the Parents of Mary Edwards (1818-1882)

Doug Showalter dougshow@meganet.net

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MARY EDWARDS was born about 1818 in LA. She was living in Wilson Co., TN and about 15 or 16 years old when she married JOHN W. O'BRYAN in that county on 9 May 1834.

→ If Mary's family was listed in the 1830 Wilson Co., TN census, I think it is very likely that she was the daughter of **WILLIAM EDWARDS** there.

I say that because only four Edwards households in the 1830 Wilson Co., TN census had daughters the age of Mary: James Edwards, Nicholas Edwards, Sally Edwards, and William Edwards. Through research, I found reasons to think that very likely Mary was not a member of the first three of those households. That left me with William Edwards, who had two females of Mary's age in his household.

William Edwards died sometime between December 1833 and March 1834. Following his death, the Wilson Co. Probate Court noted that he had **10** living children as heirs. Most of their names are not known. **Unfortunately, neither the Archives in Wilson Co., TN nor I were able to find a record which confirmed that William was, in fact, Mary's father.** Nonetheless, I still think it is very likely that William was Mary's father.

The only other Wilson Co., TN connected Edwards I think could have been Mary's father was (WILLIAM) HOWARD EDWARDS (1782-1850). His household appeared in the 1820 census of Wilson Co. with one female the age of Mary in it. But then, he and his family left Wilson Co. in the 1820's and went to Carroll Co., TN, where they appear in the 1830 and later censuses.

If Mary was Howard's child, I suppose it is possible that she remained in Wilson Co. with other relatives or just returned to Wilson Co. sometime before her marriage in 1834. At the time of her marriage, court records indicate that she was a resident of Wilson Co. One thing I have noted is that the name HOWARD does seem to have been passed down in the O'Bryan line. For example, some believe that Mary and John W. named one of their sons: John Winfrey Howard O'Bryan. I will be doing more research on the above William Howard Edwards.

It still is a mystery, how it was that Mary Edwards, who married in TN, was born in LA. So far, I have found no likely LA parents for her. Apparently, some of the Wilson Co. EDWARDS fought at the Battle of New Orleans, but beyond that, I have not found a recognizable connection between 1818 LA and Wilson Co., TN.

The pages which follow contain my research in Wilson Co. probate records on William Edwards. I asked the Wilson Co. archives to check particularly the other county court records it

has access to, for the period during which William Edwards' estate was being settled. They found no references to her there.

William Edwards of Wilson Co., TN [b. 1781 - 1790]

I will note that the James Edwards [b. 1773, NC, d. 1850, Wilson Co., TN] who appears in the following records, might have been the father or an older brother of William Edwards.

I would like to express a special thanks for the LDS church's sponsorship of Familysearch.org, which has enabled me to check out Wilson Co., TN probate records, as noted below.

1804 Wilson Co., TN Tax List ~ Capt. Walter Carruth's District

~ Edwards, William

~ Edwards, James <http://files.usgwarchives.net/tn/wilson/taxlists/1804tax.txt>

1810 Wilson Co., TN Census [The county's census is missing]

1820 Wilson Co., TN Census

~ William Edwards Males: 1(26-44)
 Females: **4(under 10)**, 3(10-15),1(26-44)
 Slaves: 3 [p. 405]

~ James Edwards Males: 2(under 10), 1(10-15), 1(45 and over)
 Females: 1(under 10), 4(10-15), 4(16-25), 1(45 and over)
 Slaves: 6 [p. 408]

1830 Wilson Co., TN Census [p. 131]

~ William Edwards Males: 1(under 5),1(40-49)
 Females: 3(5-9), **2(10-14)**, 2(15-19), 3(20-29)
 Slaves: 5

~ James Edwards Males: 1(5-9), 1(10-14), 3(15-19), 1(50-59)
 Females: 1(under 5), 1(5-9), 1(10-14), 1(30-39), 1(100and +)
 Slaves: 9

William Edwards Died Sometime between the successive December 1833 and March 1834 terms of the Wilson Co., TN Probate Court.

Tennessee, Probate Court Books, Wilson Co. ~ Inventories, Wills, 1832-1834

https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.3.1/DGS-004770359_00176?cc=1909088&wc=M6QW-L36:179891901,180218701

1. **March Term 1834, pp. 363-364** ~ Image 171/202
William Edwards' Estate sale order.
It is noted that William Edwards has 10 living children as heirs

Tennessee, Probate Court Books, Wilson Co. ~ Inventories, Wills, 1834-1837

https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.3.1/DGS-004770359_00425?cc=1909088&wc=M6QW-2TG:179891901,180222801

1. **Index of Edwards entries** ~ Image 218/221
This Index indicates that the account of the sale of William Edwards' estate is on page 8 of this 1834-1837 book. However, the first 20 pages of this book are missing in the microfilm. ~ Image 3/221
2. **Sept Term 1835, p. 184** ~ Image 85/221
Supplemental inventory of William Edwards' Estate
JAMES EDWARDS and WILLIAM DUDLEY are listed as administrators of the estate.
A 1933 listing indicates that James Edwards was buried on the W. H. Waters place, one mile south of Trousdale Ferry Pike. His tombstone gives these dates: b. Oct. 27, 1773, d. Dec. 25, 1850. The 1850 census indicates he was born in NC.
William Dudley may be the father of Woodson Dudley who married James Edward's daughter Sedection in 1829, Wilson Co., TN.

March Term 1836, pp. 332-333

~ [Images 160-161/221] Settlement of William Edwards' Estate

March Term 1836, p. 333-334

~ [Image 161/221] Provision of William Edwards' Widow

Tennessee, Probate Court Books, Wilson Co. ~ Settlements, 1836-1841

https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.3.1/DGS-004770390_00067?cc=1909088&wc=M6QW-BZ9:179891901,180327401

- ~ [Image 5/253] Index of Edwards Entries
The entry for Helen Edwards here seems to have some mark beyond 326 &, but I can't decipher it. I suspect it indicates that the entry goes on to a second page.

~ [Image 29/253] March Term, 1836, page 30.
Noted that George H. Bullard was guardian for Helen and James Edwards,
heirs of William Edwards, deceased

~ [Image 62/253]

~ [Image 82/253]

~ [185/253] pp. 326-327

I'm still trying to decipher this one. It seems to have a lot to do with the guardian's expenses for Helen.

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