

Partin Cemetery

Aka Jack Partin Cemetery and Dotson Cemetery

Dotson Cemetery Road, Roark's Cove, Franklin County, Tennessee

GPS reading – N 35° 15.652 W 85° 55.550

Jackie Layne Partin (2012-2013)

Dear Reader, please let me say from the beginning that I am not at all an expert in genealogical research. I have been thanked by some for at least bringing my ideas out for discussion. However, I have been criticized by some because I don't get on my horse and ride to Virginia, New York, Canada, Utah or even travel overseas to find the origin of different families. To be perfectly honest with you, I do my little part of preserving local history right here in the corner of my kitchen between a steaming pot of pinto beans and the continuous opening and closing of the most-used door in our little house. My telephone and computer are my means of travel. I do not just sit down and use the good work of others. That's not fun. First, I try to do research on my own because it is fun. When I run into a brick wall, then I am not so vain as to not be willing to reach out to others for help. I have yet to read a perfect account of anyone's family heritage although I have come close to meeting a couple of researchers who think they have it *all* right, to the point that any input is not appreciated. A nudge in the right direction, or possibly an accounting for one missed bit of information, is all that I strive toward in helping others.

There have been many researchers trying to find out who the father of John Jackson "Jack" Partin, Sr. was. Most research states that John was born in 1780, in Orange County, North Carolina. Some claim his parents to be Charles and Frances (King) Partin. The birth date of Charles (ca. 1775) will not allow him to be the father of John J. Partin, Sr. if we assume John was born in 1780. Charles and Francis were not even married until April 29, 1798 in Orange County, NC, too late to be John's parents. We do know that John was born between 1780 and 1790 because of information from the 1830 Census record – one male between the age of 40 and 50 years. His birth year could have fallen anywhere in that range from being born in 1780 or any year up to and including 1790. I think some researchers may have grabbed the year 1780 and started from there. In cases like the Census years before 1850, I prefer to take the median date 1785 as a starter. Either way, both are just speculative ideas unless someone, hopefully, can come up with a document presenting the actual birth date.

In the **North Carolina State Census of 1784-1787**, I see the names of a Benjamin Parten, Blackburn Parten, William Parten and two John Partens. John's parents should be in that state at that time. None of these are our John Partin because he would have been a child or possibly unborn during those years. Only the heads of households were named. However, either could possibly have been his father if he truly was born in North Carolina between 1780 and 1790. In the 1880 Census, for the first time, the question as to where the person, the father and the mother were born was included in the record. Martha Ann Frances "Marthey", John's firstborn, answered that she was born in Alabama, her father was born in Georgia and her mother was born in Tennessee. That messes up our whole train of thought. However, in the same Census, Francis Marion answered that he, his father and his mother were all born in Tennessee. And to top all that, in the same year, John, Sr.'s daughter, America, and son John, Jr. answered that they were born in Tennessee, their father was born in South Carolina and their mother in South Carolina. So without official documents, who's to know who is right on the dates and places? Remember, I am pointing to ideas, not legislating material written in stone.

For less confusion, I have taken the liberty and given the elder John Partin the name of John Jackson "Jack" Partin, Sr. It seems plausible that he is actually a "Sr." making his son John, a "Jr.", but I have no proof.

Around 1823 at the age of 43 to 53, John, Sr. married Amy Gilliam in Laurens County, South Carolina according to Gilliam researchers. I think there is no doubt in looking at the Census record that Amy's brother Harris Gilliam was born in South Carolina and that his wife Nancy Reid was born in Tennessee. I have no documents to prove or disprove the Census records. I have searched for a birth record, a marriage license and a death record for Amy Gilliam/Partin in South Carolina to no avail. I have left queries in the county of Laurens about Amy Gilliam to no avail.

My husband's Aunt Charlotte "Lottie" (Partin) Bell (*deceased*) told me on a couple occasions to be certain that I kept in mind that there were two marriages for John, Sr., and her line came down from John and Anny/Annie (Reid) Partin. If Amy Gilliam was the first wife, then let's give her an identity. She was a daughter of Charles, Sr. and Sarah Ann (Smith) Gilliam. She would have had to die in childbirth, or soon afterwards, when her daughter Martha Ann Frances "Marthey" Partin was born in order for John to have had a second marriage so quickly, that is before his son Francis Marion Partin was born. It is my assumption that Amy died since John Partin kept his baby daughter with him. A divorce usually allowed the child to go with the mother or the maternal grandparents. One would assume that if the marriage took place in Laurens County, SC, then Amy's death and burial did also.

If there was a second marriage, Marthey was still a baby when John married Anna "Anny" Reid around 1826 while he and his child were still in South Carolina. My only source of reason for that statement is in 1870 Ann Partin was living alone and probably had no help in answering the question asked by the Census taker, that question being, "Where were you born?" She offered the answer, South Carolina. A marriage record of this couple has not yet been found by me. She was quite young, much younger than John, so I again assume that the marriage took place there. Actually if we accept John, Sr.'s birth date being 1780, he was forty-five when he married Amy Gilliam who would have been fifteen or sixteen-year-old at the time of her marriage.

Because of the difficulty in reading Census records, the names recorded for John's wife on the Census records go like this: 1850 – *Emmy*; 1860 – *Amy*; 1870 – *Ann*; and 1880 – *Anna*, and at her death – *Anny*. Now my eyes are not the best even with glasses, but it seems that the Census takers were writing what they were hearing and possibly not knowing exactly how to spell what was being spoken to them, or Amy/Anny's actual names were inclusive of Emmy/Emaline, Amy, Anna, and Anny.

I see researchers with Amy listed as a sister to Harris Gilliam who owned land and lived in Roarks Cove even earlier than John Partin, Sr. Drawing upon Census records, I have concluded that John Jackson Partin, Sr. married a lady born in South Carolina whose name was Anna *Emeline* Reid. John and Anna *Emeline's* son Francis Marion named his first daughter "Emeline" possibly after his mother. If this conclusion sticks, then it will cover the names *Emmy*, *Ann*, *Anna*, and *Anny*, but not the name *Amy*. Besides the 1860 use of *Amy*, it will be used again in John's will transcribed at the bottom of this document, except it has another spelling, *Amey*.

Now I have discussed the case of two marriages – one wife, being a "Gilliam," and one wife, being a "Reid." There is also the belief by other descendants that John Jackson "Jack" Partin, Sr. married only once and that was to the young girl named "Amy Gilliam" who was the mother of all the children. This may well be the correct thinking, but for the fact that there is a fieldstone with the name *Anny Reid Partin* etched on it and laying amongst the Partin graves in the Partin Cemetery. Then there's the fact that the Census records waned to the name *Anna* in 1880 when we last hear of her. I tend to believe that if there was one marriage only, then it was to Anna Reid. But I will humbly admit error when shown the facts. A good DNA project between a male "Francis Marion Partin" descendant and a male "Martha Ann Frances (Partin) Brannan" descendant might settle the puzzle for us.



This is an old stone that I had never seen before until after the last cleaning of the cemetery. One can tell by the soil on the right that it had been placed perpendicular to the ground instead of parallel as it was probably originally set.

I took the photo and turned the stone back down into the hole where I found it.

Whatever the previous circumstances were, John and Anna “Anny” (Reid) Partin, or *John and Amy (Gilliam) Partin*, ended up in Jackson County, Alabama which became a county in 1819. In the 1830 Census of said county, John, Anna/ Amy, Marthey, Francis Marion and an unknown male teen-ager were living in one household. Although the great injustice called the “Trail of Tears” movement had yet not started, Indian land was already available for the white man because of an act or treaty of 1820. John Partin acquired 101.9 acres June 1, 1831; 40 acres September 1, 1834; 40 more acres on September 4, 1934; and 37.65 acres on September 4, 1835.

According to some old pencil-written notes in my own handwriting that resurfaced recently, on January 20, 1834, John Partin sold the dowry rights of his wife Amy to Jackson County, Alabama. That possibly was the 101.9 acres above, (*he did not have that acreage upon death*). A little over six months later on August 6, 1834, he purchased land in Roark’s Cove from his brother-in-law Harris Gilliam, Amy’s brother. Now that was a failure on my part in my early days of researching genealogy, not jotting down my source. I remember where I was when I wrote those short notes, I think I remember the book was hardback and medium size, and I remember that I was not so interested in Partin history at the time, for I was researching my own ancestors. When I saw the name John Partin, I just quickly jotted it down in case I ever wanted to research my husband’s family.

My understanding of a dowry was something presented, usually land or money, to the marriage by the bride’s parents that would be kept for her care should her husband divorce her

or die. Another thought is that the wife could consent to the use of the dowry toward a joint effort. If John sold any dowry rights, it seems that his wife must have been dead or the land, assuming he did not sell *money*, would stay with her until her death. Was this land in Jackson Co., AL? Would Amy Gilliam's parents have owned land in Alabama around 1825 to use as a dowry for their daughter? Why would Anna Reid, if the dowry was for her, agree to sell land that she might well need down the road since her husband was much older than she? The same could be asked of Amy Gilliam if she was truly the only wife. I'm not an expert in the legal field, but these questions are helpful in following the family's history.

I believe that John had one thing on his mind and that was moving his growing family to Franklin County, TN. Around 1834 or 1835, he did just that. John Jackson "Jack" Partin, Sr., his wife Anna/Amy, and children at the time, Marthey, Francis Marion, possibly a son named William Harrison, John Jackson "Jack", Jr., Malinda and two slaves named Eliza and Henry moved to Tennessee and began building a homestead. Daughters Delitha and America were born in Roark's Cove. He, and later his heirs, owned several acres in and around the area where his body was later laid to rest. (*Note: it seems strange to me that John and Anny/Amy would name their first daughter **Frances** and their first son **Francis**. Just seems odd to me. Remember that Martha Ann **Frances** was Marthey's full name.*)

Note: Margaret Reed/Reid (b. ca. 1806), wife of John Partin, Jr.; Amy Reid (b. ca. 1809), wife of John Partin, Sr., and Nancy Reed/Reid, (b. ca. 1812), wife of Harris Gilliam, may well have been closely related.

John, Sr. did not get to enjoy the fruits of his labor in Roark's Cove too many years. He wrote his will on July 28, 1845. Carney Partin and James Brannan witnessed his mark on the will. Carney Partin could have been a younger brother of John, or a cousin. James Brannan's son Albert was soon afterwards to marry Marthey Partin. The will was registered in Franklin County on January 8, 1846, giving us a good idea of the date of John's passing. *Amey* and her son Francis Marion were listed as the executors of the will. Again the name "*Amey*" in the will brings up the bothersome spelling of John's wife's name. The will follows:

Will of John Jackson "Jack" Partin

Transcribed by Jackie Layne Partin

I, John Partin, do make and publish this as my last will and testament thereby revoking and making void all other wills by me at any time made.

First, I direct that my funeral expenses and all my debts be paid as soon after my death as possible out of any money that I may possessed of or may first come into the hands of my executors.

Secondly, I bequeath to my wife Amey one third part of the land I now live on to include the buildings and one third part of a fifty acre tract on the side of the Cumberland Mountain known as the Jerry Cobbin place, and my negro woman Elza, a bay mare called Phil, and all my stock of cattle, hogs, sheep and all species of stock I may be possessed of at the time of my death to have and to hold during her natural life provided she lives a widow, but provided she should marry, all and every part of this bequeath to be null and void, to belong to my children.

Thirdly, I give and bequeath to my son Marion Partin a gray mare, one sorrel sable filly, one yoke of oxen, and a muley cow and calf to have and to hold forever which is his full part of horses and cattle of the stock now on hand and the said Marion is to be charged fifty dollars for the above gray mare in settlement of the estate of heirs.

Fourthly, I give and bequeath to my daughter, Marthey Partin, one sorrel filly to have and to hold forever for which I charge her fifty dollars.

Fifthly, my sons are to live on my premises as long as they live single or become of age at which time either shall transfer, they are then at liberty to build on any part of my home track as they see proper and cultivate as they may see proper.

Sixthly, I am possessed of two forty acre tracts of land in Jackson County, Alabama, which if my executors think best be sold, and the price thereof be appropriated to the use of the family.

Seventhly, all my lands in Franklin County, Tennessee, and a negro boy named Henry and all of my stock except what is herein before named is to remain as it is now is for the benefit of my family.

Eighthly, at the death or my wife should marry, my will is that all of my property both real and personal shall be sold on a twelve months credit and the proceeds arising from said sales to be equally divided amongst and to each of my heirs monthly. I do hereby nominate and appoint Marion Partin and Amey Partin my executors without security in witness whereof I do to this my will, set my hand and seal this 28th day of July 1845. *Signed, sealed and acknowledged in presence of us {Carney Partin and James Brannan}*

John X Partin (X – his mark)

State of Tennessee, Franklin County, County Court, January term 1846; then the last will and testament was presented in open court for probate; whereupon came Carney (...) **rest illegible on the Xerox copy.**

End of Transcription of John Jackson "Jack" Partin's Will