
A Family for William Gray of New Madrid County, Territory of Missouri

By Melinda Daffin Henningfield

William Gray left a few records in a disaster zone, but they seemed useless for connecting him with his kin. His eastern migration bucked the tide of westward movement. Only an exhaustive search defines the geographic reach of his Southern family with a common surname.

Multiple men of common first and last names often surface in midlife, challenging researchers to sort them out. What factors make one person different from others of the same name? What characteristic combinations do more than narrow the field?

A case from an era of sparse records presents numerous problems. Multiple Gray families defy identification. Tying together evidence from seven counties in four states permits one William Gray to step out from the shadows of many.

WILLIAM GRAY OF NEW MADRID COUNTY, TERRITORY OF MISSOURI

William Gray was in New Madrid County by late 1812, as the community struggled to recover from five months of unprecedented earthquakes.¹ Resident Eliza Bryan described the traumatic events:

On the 16th of December, 1811 . . . we were visited by a violent shock of an earthquake, accompanied by a very awful noise . . . followed in a few minutes by the complete saturation of the atmosphere, with sulphurous vapour, causing total darkness. The

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1. New Madrid Co., Territory of Missouri, Deeds 5:147–48, William Gray, judicial appointment, 10 December 1812; Recorder of Deeds, New Madrid. This book is a copy made “in conformity with an Act of the Legislature approved March the 3rd 1849.” The current location of the original Deed Book 5 is unknown. See *ibid.*, unnumbered first page.

screams of the affrighted inhabitants running to and fro, not knowing where to go, or what to do—the cries of the fowls and beasts of every species—the cracking of trees falling, and the roaring of the Mississippi . . . formed a scene truly horrible. . . . The inhabitants fled in every direction. . . . From this time [23 January until 4 February 1812] the earth was in continual agitation, visibly waving as a gentle sea.²

The town of New Madrid, the local center of justice, slumped into the Mississippi River and washed away in the “spring floods.”³ Pre-1816 county records disappeared in earthquakes, frequent moves, repeated flooding, and fire.⁴

Amid the damage, William left few New Madrid County records.⁵ In October 1812 he received territorial appointments as a judge of New Madrid County courts of Common Pleas and Quarter Sessions of the Peace and as a Tywappity Township justice of the peace. These four-year terms, expiring in 1816, suggest William was literate and respected.⁶ He took his oath of office on 23 March

2. Lorenzo Dow, *History of Cosmopolite; or the Four Volumes of Lorenzo's Journal, Concentrated in One: Containing His Experience and Travels, From Childhood, to near His Fortieth Year; Also, His Polemical Writings* (Philadelphia: Joseph Rakestraw, 1816), 340–42. Dow says most New Madrid inhabitants left.

3. David Stewart and Ray Knox, *The Earthquake that Never Went Away: The Shaking Stopped in 1812 . . . but the Impact Goes on* (Marble Hill, Mo.: G. R. Publications, 1996), 24.

4. Marion M. Ohman, “New Madrid County Courthouse,” *University of Missouri Extension* (<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/UED6071>). County records predating 1816 were lost in earthquakes and floods. The seat of justice moved away from the river in 1814 and returned to New Madrid in 1822, where flooding forced more relocation. A 1905 fire destroyed the 1875 courthouse.

5. For extant pre-1816 records, see “Local Records Inventory Database,” *Missouri State Archives* (<http://www.sos.mo.gov/CountyInventory/default.asp>). Following the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, New Madrid was in the District of Louisiana as of March 1804. In 1805 the District of Louisiana became the Louisiana Territory, part of which became the Territory of Missouri on 4 June 1812. For the formation of the District of Louisiana and then the Louisiana Territory and the Missouri Territory see U.S. Congress, *The Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America, 1789–1873*, 17 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1845), 2:287, 26 March 1804, “An Act Erecting Louisiana into Two Territories, and Providing for the Temporary Government thereof” and 2:331, 3 March 1805, “An Act Further Providing for the Government of the district of Louisiana”; digital images, Library of Congress, *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774–1875* (<http://memory.loc.gov>). The District of New Madrid became New Madrid County on 1 October 1812. For a timeline of the establishment of the Territory of Louisiana, the Territory of Missouri, and New Madrid as one of the five original counties, see “Timeline of Missouri History: 1800–1820,” *Missouri Digital Heritage, Missouri Secretary of State* (<http://sos.mo.gov/archives/history/timeline/timeline2.asp>).

6. New Madrid Co., Deeds 5:147–48 and 153–54, William Gray, judicial appointments, 1812. Also, Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, 28 vols. (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1934–75), 14:648–51, particularly pp. 650 (for the County of New Madrid for Judge and Township Justice, “in commission” by 1 April 1813) and 704 (Township Justice of the Peace for “Tywappity”). Also, *ibid.*, 14:792–95 and 15:44–47. William Gray appears on rosters of Tywappity justices in 1814 and 1815, but they do not show he was present.

1813, but served only until September 1813, when the territorial governor made completely new appointments.⁷

In October 1813, shortly after his last judicial appearance, William paid Charles Lucas \$850 for five hundred arpents of land in Tywappity Township, where both parties lived.⁸ A month later William sold one hundred acres there to John Cotton Gray for “one dollar . . . natural love [and] parental [sic] affection.”⁹ In 1813 William sold three hundred arpents in Tywappity, “including the plantation the said Gray now resides on near John Tuckers,” to Thomas Phillips for “fifteen Shillings . . . and for natural and paternal affection.”¹⁰

Before early 1816 William headed northeast. He was of Livingston County, Kentucky, when he sold one hundred arpents in Tywappity to Thomas Phillips for one dollar. It included “the improvements of Drakeford Gray . . . near John Tuckers.”¹¹ This deed distributed the last of William’s 1813 land purchase. If William was married at the time, his deeds failed to mention a wife or an examination apart from her husband, common practices for the time and location.¹²

In 1822 William provided thirty-seven weeks of board for Jenkins Phillips, minor son of the late Samuel Phillips of New Madrid.¹³ William’s original signature appears on the receipt for Jenkins’s board. See figure 1.

Other Grays lived or conducted business in the District of New Madrid. On 25 April 1811 Presley Gray entered into a contract with Charles Lucas, likely the man who sold William his Tywappity land.¹⁴ Drakeford and John Gray were

7. New Madrid Co., Deeds 5:148, oath of office, William Gray, 1813. Also, New Madrid Co., Circuit Court Record: 1805–1821, pp. 311–15, 23 March–27 September 1813; microfilm c4803, box 25, Missouri State Archives (MSA), Jefferson City. Also, Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, 14:701–2. The territorial governor replaced all judges effective on 30 September 1813.

8. New Madrid Co., Deeds 5:184–86, Lucas to Gray, 7 October 1813.

9. *Ibid.*, 5:198, Gray to Gray, 9 November 1813. For the conversion of arpents to acres, see United States Congress, *U.S. Statutes at Large*, vol. 18 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1875), 16, “An act to confirm certain land titles in the State of Missouri.” One acre was about 1.1755 arpents.

10. New Madrid Co., Deeds 5:197–98, Gray to Phillips, 3 December 1813.

11. *Ibid.*, 10:416–17, Gray to Phillips, 21 February 1816. The witnesses were Stillwell Heady, Drakeford Gray, John C. Gray, and Harriett Gray.

12. *Ibid.*, 5:138–96. These pages contain twenty-three deeds, which the author examined. Women signed nine of them, and only one was not examined away from her husband. Either William had no wife, he believed she had no rights in the property, or the 1849 copyist accidentally omitted her signature or examination.

13. “Missouri’s Judicial Records,” *Missouri Secretary of State* (<http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mojudicial>), digital image of Richard Phillips guardianship account, 14 November 1825, p. 5 of collection 1, Samuel Phillips file, 5 pp.; New Madrid Co., probate case files.

14. District of New Madrid, Deed Book 11:55, Lucas to Gray, 25 April 1811. Enoch Murray witnessed this contract.

early settlers of Wolf Island. David Gray was another early settler.¹⁵ District and county records do not show their relationships, if any, to William.

New Madrid records portray William as a literate, esteemed, middle-aged man with at least two adult children, who moved to Livingston County, Kentucky, in 1813–16. What they omit is confounding. No New Madrid document names his father or wife. No census locates him, with or without a family, before 1820.¹⁶

WILLIAM GRAY IN LIVINGSTON COUNTY, KENTUCKY

William's move can be narrowed to between December 1813, when he sold Tywappity land, and January 1814, when he paid Livingston County tax on a poll, nine slaves, and four horses, but no land.¹⁷ In March 1814 he bought four hundred acres on Clay Lick Creek from Jonathan Ramsey.¹⁸ In 1815 William with wife Nancy sold one hundred thirty-eight of those acres to Enoch Murray for five hundred dollars.¹⁹ William patented one hundred acres of land on Clay Lick Creek in 1819.²⁰ He appears sporadically in Livingston County tax lists through 1833.²¹

Other Grays lived nearby. In 1810 John Gray owned land in Livingston, Logan, Christian, and Hopkins counties.²² Beginning in 1818 Presley and Nathaniel Gray appear occasionally in Livingston tax books.²³

15. *History of Southeast Missouri: Embracing an Historical Account . . .* (Chicago, Ill.: Goodspeed Publishing, 1888), 290 (“David Gray was from Massachusetts; his wife, Dinah”) and 304 (“John and Drakeford Gray and Thomas Phillips were pioneers of Wolf Island Township”) Also, “New Madrid Archives, 1791–1804,” unpaginated typescript, for enumeration of landowners in and around New Madrid, 6 January 1797, David Gray; Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis; microfilm 974,421, item 6, Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City. The enumeration's headings are in French.

16. Missouri territorial censuses taken in 1814 and 1817 do not survive. Of many state censuses taken for New Madrid, only 1840 survives. See Missouri Secretary of State, “Census Records: Missouri Census Records,” *Missouri Digital Heritage* (www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/census.asp).

17. Livingston Co., Ky., Tax Assessment Book for 1814, alphabetized by first letter of surname, William Gray; Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort; microfilm publication 7,002,091, Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA), Frankfort.

18. Livingston Co., Deeds B:483, Ramsey to Gray, 27 March 1814; County Clerk, Smithland.

19. *Ibid.*, C:121, Gray to Murray, 15 August 1815.

20. Livingston Co., Plat Book C, 1807–1819, pp. 433–34, William Gray, 18 May 1819; County Clerk.

21. Livingston Co., Tax Assessment Books for 1815–18, probably 1820, 1819 or 1821, 1823–25, and 1830–33, alphabetized by first letter of surname, for William Gray. William is not in the 1810–12 volume, the 1813 book is missing, and the post-1815 volumes are in disarray, with missing or disordered pages and volumes mislabeled or missing.

22. *Ibid.*, Book for 1810, for John Gray.

23. *Ibid.*, Book for 1818, 1819 or 1821, and 1832, for Nathaniel Gray. Also, *ibid.*, for probably 1820, 1819 or 1821, 1823–25, 1830–33, for Presley Gray.

In winter 1832 William wrote his will in his own hand. He said he was in his sixty-fifth year, meaning he had passed his sixty-fourth birthday. He named his wife, Nancy, and children Nathaniel and Presley Gray, Jemima Murray, Drakeford Gray, John C. Gray, and Elizab[e]th P[h]illips. Because the last two were deceased, William directed their portions to their children. The will was proved on 2 January 1837.²⁴

Numerous connections link the Kentucky heirs to New Madrid. William's daughter Jemima (1788–1844) married Enoch Murray, purchaser of William's Clay Lick Creek land in 1815.²⁵ William's deceased daughter, Elizabeth Phillips, likely married Thomas Phillips, whom William had deeded land for "natural and paternal affection."²⁶ Son Drakeford Gray witnessed William's deed to Phillips and made improvements on that land. Deceased son John's middle name, Cotton, is written out in William's "parential [sic] affection" 1813 New Madrid deed.

William's identity emerges from New Madrid and Livingston County probate and land records, but other records reveal more about his family.

WILLIAM'S FAMILY BIBLE RECORD

A hand-written copy of family entries in a Gray family Bible begins "William Gray and Nancy Cotton were married June 27, 1787." The transcription lists eight children's births:

Jemma Gray April 1, 1788
 Henry Gray April 1, 1789
 Sarah Gray Oct 29, 1790
 Drakeford [*the final letter d has a circle around it*], Aug 15, 1791
 John C Gray Oct 9, 1793

24. William Gray, will, 10 November 1832; box 1, Livingston Co., Wills, 1823–1863, loose papers, chronologically arranged; accession L1314, KDLA. This holographic will, written on both sides of a dark brown, almost oily paper, survives in nine pieces, broken and perforated at the folds. It is signed by two witnesses and it contains a small notation, in a different handwriting, that the "enterlining" occurred before the witnesses signed the will.

25. William S. Bryan and Robert Rose, *A History of the Pioneer Families of Missouri* (St. Louis: Bryan, Brand, 1876), 355. This work, written in Jemima's sons' lifetimes, says "Enoch was born in 1779. He married Jemima Gray, of Virginia." For Jemima's dates of birth and death, see *Findagrave.com* (<http://www.findagrave.com>), memorial 30551461, for "Tina," digital image, New Bloomfield Cemetery (New Bloomfield Twp., Callaway Co., Mo.), Jemima Murray (1788–1844) and Enock Murray gravestone, 13 October 2008.

26. The author's search in Kentucky and Missouri marriage records for Thomas Phillips and Elizabeth Gray was negative. For an undocumented but credibly detailed work's claim that Thomas Phillips, son of Samuel and Elizabeth Ross Phillips, married Elizabeth Gray, see Stephen Ben and Mary Amanda Medley Hunter, *The Joseph Hunter and Related Families: Beckwith, Sikes, Bird, Riley, Byrd, Phillips, and Medley of Southeast Missouri* (Cape Girardeau, Mo.: Ramfre Press, 1959), 330–31.

Elizabeth Gray was born July 4 1795
 Nathaniel Gray was born Nov the 15 1797
 Presley Gray b. Nov 1 1797²⁷

Other births in the Bible record include “William L. Gray son of Drakeford and Harriet Gray born Dec 11, 1807” and “Nancy Gray daughter of John C Gray and ? [sic] Susan 2/17/1815.”²⁸ Among the deaths are, “William Gray died 11/16 /1836” and “Nancy Gray Consort of Wm Gray died 11/6 /1847.”²⁹

Comparing the Bible family entries to records from two counties strengthens the case for William’s identity:

- The Bible record says William died on 16 November 1836. The will of William of Livingston County was proved on 2 January 1837.
- Drakeford, Harriet, and John C. Gray witnessed the 1816 deed from William Gray of Livingston County to Thomas Phillips of New Madrid County. The Bible record suggests Drakeford and John C. were William’s children and Harriet was Drakeford’s wife.
- Henry and Sarah Gray appear only in the Bible record. Otherwise, the family Bible and the will list the same Gray children.
- John Cotton Gray received William Gray’s 1813 New Madrid deed. The Bible record says William’s wife was a Cotton.
- In 1856 Susan Gray of Mississippi County, Missouri, deposed she was wife of John C. Gray and mother of Nancy (Gray) Parks, who was born on 17 February

27. Presley Gray, although listed after Nathaniel, is recorded as born fourteen days earlier. Perhaps they were twins and *fifteen*’s second digit was faded or the date incompletely copied, as the next generation included twins, “James B and Jefferson C Gray [sons of Nathaniel Gray], b 12/19/1830.” See William Gray Family Bible Record, 1787–1928, family pages transcribed by John Robert (Rob) Gray Jr., Tulsa, Oklahoma. Births. Rob Gray hand-copied the family pages in the 1980s from the Bible in the possession of Ollie (Neeley) Nolen (1907–1999), in Delight, Arkansas. Both Rob and Ollie descend from William and Nancy Gray. Rob did not copy the Bible’s title page and printing date, and its current location is unknown. Rob’s hand-written notes are used here with permission. For Ollie’s death, see *Findagrave.com* (<http://www.findagrave.com>), memorial 62,682,402 for “CHB,” digital image of Bowen Cemetery (Pike Co., Ark.), Ollie Nolen (1907–1999) gravestone, photographed 7 December 2010. For Ollie’s death notice, see “Delight,” *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, Little Rock, 20 October 1999, page B8, col. 5.

28. William Gray Family Bible Record, 1787–1928, Births.

29. *Ibid.*, Deaths. Widow or relict might have been more accurate, rather than “consort.” See Paul Drake, *What Did They Mean By That? A Dictionary of Historical and Genealogical Terms Old and New* (Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 2000), 68.

1815.³⁰ This independent record matches the Bible birth date of Nancy Gray, daughter of John C. and Susan Gray.

WILLIAM GRAY OF NELSON COUNTY

William Gray married Nancy Cotton in Nelson County, Virginia (later Kentucky), on 26 June 1787. William was of legal age to marry, but Nancy needed the consent of her father, John Cotton.³¹ This Nelson County record matches the date and names in the Bible record.

On 23 January 1809 a Nelson County judge ordered John Cotton's estate appraisal recorded. Nathaniel Cotton and William Gray were Cotton's administrators.³² William Gray was the largest purchaser at the 17 July 1809 estate sale. Other buyers included Enoch Murray, Thomas Heady Jr., Thomas King, and five Cotton men—Nathaniel, Henry, Temple, Ralph, and Robert.³³

In 1809 William and Nancy sold one hundred acres in Nelson County to John L. Medley. The land was "part of a five hundred and Seventy Seven acre Survey which the said William Grays Father Drakeford Gray purchased from Jacob Myers."³⁴

30. Missouri, Superior Court Case Files, box 226, location 16A/6/3, folder 5 [old box 78, old folder 13] (1857), John Givens v. John C. Gray, George Parks, Nancy Parks, deposition of Susan Gray, p. 39, Supreme Court of Missouri, 1802–1884, MSA. Deponent Susan says, "John C. Gray was my husband . . . and was father to . . . Nancy Parks. . . . Nancy Parks was born of said marriage on the 17 day of February in the year eighteen hundred and fifteen."

31. Nelson Co., Ky., Marriage Bonds G, 1785–1810, loose papers, Gray and Bullett bond for Gray-Cotton marriage, and John Cotton, consent for daughter Nancy Cotton to marry, 26 June 1787; KDLA microfilm 9,666. Their marriage date varies: the register states the 23rd, the bond and consent are dated the 26th, the family Bible records the 27th, and William Taylor's return says the 28th and names the bride *Anne*. Nancy is a nickname for Anne. See Christine Rose, *Nicknames Past and Present* (San Jose, Calif.: CR Publications, 2007), 2. For the marriage register see, *FamilySearch*, "Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954," digital folder 4705582, image 46, Nelson Co., "Marriage Register," Gray-Cotton, 23 June 1787. The register was copied many times. It is likely a three could be mistaken for an eight. Also, *FamilySearch*, "Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954," digital folder 4705582, image 9, Nelson Co., "Marriage Register," notation inside the front cover. Also, William Gray Family Bible Record, 1787–1928, "Marriages." It is unknown how long after the fact the entry was made. For the marriage return, see *FamilySearch*, "Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954," digital folder 4705521, image 348, Nelson Co., marriage returns of William Taylor, William Gray to *Anne* Cotton, 28 June 1787. William Taylor returned three pages of returns on 27 October 1788, more than a year after William and Nancy's marriage. The marriage likely took place on or soon after the date of the marriage bond.

32. Nelson Co., Will Book B:160–61, John Cotton estate appraisal, 23 January 1809; County Clerk, Bardstown.

33. *Ibid.*, B:176–79, John Cotton estate-sale account, 17 July 1809.

34. Nelson Co., Deed Book 6:823–24, Gray to Medley, 28 June 1809.

In November of 1812, without a release or mentioning his wife, William Gray of New Madrid District sold 321 acres to Peter Brown of Nelson County for two dollars. The land was divided into a 279-acre parcel and another of 42 acres.³⁵ John Fookes sold William Gray the 42-acre parcel in 1807.³⁶ The 279-acre parcel adjoined land that Drakeford Gray bought from Nicholas Paul in 1796.³⁷

William of Nelson County was also William of New Madrid. Both named children Presley and Drakeford. In 1815 John Cotton's heirs were eight sons and ten daughters, the latter group including Barbary (deceased), wife of "Pressly" Gray, whose heirs were John Gray and Betsy Gray, wife of Jessee Connel, and Nancy, wife of William Gray.³⁸ Had sisters married brothers? In William's generation, Presley Gray was Drakeford Gray's son.³⁹ An 1809 deed says Drakeford was William's father. Identifying Drakeford's children as William's siblings would more fully describe William's family.

DRAKEFORD GRAY

Drakeford Gray of Fairfax County, Virginia, had a son William. There, on 15 June 1768, Henry Fitzhugh leased Drakeford Gray 158 acres of a larger tract called Ravensworth. The lease was "for . . . the natural lives of the said Drakeford, Jemima Wife of the said Drakeford & William his Son and the Survivor of them."⁴⁰ Three-lives-leases sometimes named the lessee and his wife

35. Nelson Co., Deed Book 8:344–47, Gray to Brown, 28 November 1812. William Gray and Peter Brown have no known relationship.

36. *Ibid.*, 6:497–98, Fookes to Gray, 2 January 1807.

37. *Ibid.*, 7:22–24, Paul to Gray, 31 October 1796.

38. Nelson Co., Chancery Court, June 1815 session, John Cotton's Heirs v. Edward Worthington's Heirs, loose papers; County Clerk's Office, Bardwell.

39. Corn Creek Baptist Church Cemetery (Trimble Co., Ky.; from Bedford, Ky., go north on Hwy 421, turn left on Old Bedford-Milton Turnpike, Church and cemetery are on the right in 1.4 miles), Drakeford Gray marker; photograph by author, 7 June 2011; author's files. The inscription reads in part, "Drakeford Gray, Father of Presley Gray." Also, *Todd County, Kentucky, Family History* (Paducah, Ky.: Turner, 1995), 192 ("[John Gray] was born in Fairfax County, VA, Nov. 30, 1771, son of Drakeford Gray. They settled on Corn Creek, Gallatin County, KY where the father died"). Also, J. H. Battle and W. H. Perrin, eds., *Counties of Todd and Christian, Kentucky: Historical and Biographical* (Chicago: F. A. Battey, 1884), 127 ("He [John Gray] came with his father, Drakeford Gray, to this State in an early day. The latter [Drakeford Gray] settled on Corn Creek in Gallatin County, where he died"). This history also says John Gray "was born on the eastern shore of Maryland."

40. Rezon Wilcoxon to justices, loose deed, 9 July 1803, in Fairfax Co., Va., July Court 1803, case no. 27; drawer X; Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Office, Fairfax. This deed recites the 15 June 1768 lease from Henry Fitzhugh to Drakeford Gray. The lease was recorded in Liber H, now missing. This deed was recorded in Liber D2: 494, also missing. Also, Fairfax Co., Court Order Book, 1768, p. 37, Fitzhugh to Gray lease, ordered certified, 29 September 1768. Drakeford's father, John Gray, and his wife, Elizabeth, named Drakeford in a 1750 lease for three lives. Henry Fitzhugh made the earlier lease, for one hundred acres in Ravensworth, Truro Parish, Fairfax Co. See Fairfax Co., Deed Book C1:143–45, Fitzhugh to Gray, lease, 13 April 1750.

and eldest son, but no laws governed who would be named.⁴¹ The lessee “hoped . . . [those named] were healthy and would live for a long time.”⁴² Desiring a long-term lease and to avoid infant mortality, lessees often chose a young child’s anticipated life span as the lease’s term.⁴³

Poll and property tax records help determine approximate ages for William and Presley. In 1782–84 Drakeford Gray paid his own tax in Fairfax County. William Gray—age sixteen and under twenty-one, thus born in 1763–68—paid personal property tax there in 1784. No Presley Gray appears in the 1782–85 Fairfax County tax lists.⁴⁴ In 1785 on the Cox’s and Simpson’s Creek list in Nelson County four tithables were Drakeford Gray, “Son William,” Glading Goreing, and George Mockley. Independently, Presley Gray was one tithable.⁴⁵ The following year Drakeford Gray and “Son Will^m” were two tithables.⁴⁶

Drakeford’s land in Nelson County eventually reached the hands of William and John Gray. In 1789 Jacob Myers of Lincoln County, Virginia (later Kentucky), sold 577 acres in Nelson County to Drakeford Gray of Nelson County.⁴⁷ Eleven years later, on 27 June 1800, Drakeford Gray of Gallatin County, Kentucky, bought 292 acres there on the waters of Corn Creek, a branch of the Ohio River.⁴⁸ On the same day Presley Gray of Gallatin County bought land on Corn Creek.⁴⁹ On 10 December 1800 Richard Stephens and Thomas Lewis conveyed to Drakeford Gray the land he had bought in June 1800 but described it as containing 642 acres.⁵⁰

41. Carol McGinnis, *Virginia Genealogy: Sources and Resources* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 2005), 96. Also, Patricia Law Hatcher, *Locating Your Roots: Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Betterway, 2003), 38.

42. Hatcher, *Locating Your Roots*, 38.

43. For the possible age of the youngest lessee, see Barbara Vines Little to author, “Three lives lease,” e-mail, 29 December 2011; author’s files. Barbara is quoted here with permission: “it was most likely a child who had survived the first three to five years of life since infant mortality was so high.”

44. Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts, Personal Property Tax Lists, Fairfax Co., 1782–1784; for Drakeford Gray in 1782, unpaginated; 1783, Richard Chichester’s list, p. 3; 1784, Richard Chichester’s list, p. 2; and for William Gray in 1784, Richard Chichester’s list, p. 2; Library of Virginia personal property tax microfilm reel 106. The author did not find Presley Gray in the 1782–85 lists.

45. Nelson Co., 1785 Tax Lists, unalphabetized, unpaginated entries, Cox’s Creek and Simpson’s Creek list, Drakeford Gray and son Will^m; FHL microfilm 9,670.

46. *Ibid.*, 1786, David Cox’s list, Drakeford Gray and son William, 1786.

47. Nelson Co., Deed Book 2:88–89, Myers to Gray, 30 May 1789.

48. Gallatin Co., Ky., Deed Book A-1:89–90, Patton to Gray, 27 June 1800; County Court, Warsaw, Ky.

49. *Ibid.*, A-1:91–92, Patton to Gray, 27 June 1800.

50. *Ibid.*, A-2:12–14, Stephens to Gray, 10 December 1800.

On 7 March 1803 Drakeford Gray of Gallatin County deeded about 101 acres to William Gray, of Nelson County, for “5 shillings. . . [and] for natural love parental affection.”⁵¹ On that same day Drakeford Gray, of Gallatin County, deeded 103 acres to John Gray of Logan County, Kentucky, for “5 shillings. . . [and] for natural love parental affection.”⁵²

Drakeford died intestate by November 1804.⁵³ Among many items, Drakeford Gray’s estate inventory listed a large Bible, a small Bible, two testaments, and a Baptist Confession of faith.⁵⁴

The foregoing records suggest that:

- Drakeford Gray’s son William was as much as five years older than the sixty-four-year-old 1832 Livingston County, Kentucky, testator.
- In 1768 William Gray may have been Drakeford and Jemima’s eldest surviving son for the purposes of a three-lives-lease.
- William was between sixteen and twenty-one in 1784. Presley and William were twenty-one or older in 1785. They may have been twins or close in age.
- William Gray of Nelson County and John Gray of Logan County, Kentucky, were Drakeford’s sons.
- Drakeford and Presley Gray were of Gallatin County by 27 June 1800.
- Drakeford Gray was likely a Baptist.

Drakeford Gray’s Children

Virginia and Kentucky records yield a list of Drakeford and Jemima’s children. All but the youngest were likely born in Fairfax County, Virginia:

- William Gray was born in 1763–64.⁵⁵
- Presley Gray was born on 23 December 1764. He died on 19 February 1838 and is buried in the Corn Creek Baptist Cemetery.⁵⁶ He married (1) on 3 September 1783, Barbara Cotton, who died in 1787.⁵⁷ He married (2) on 18 May 1790,

51. Nelson Co., Deed Book 6:491–92, Gray to Gray, 7 March 1803.

52. Nelson Co., Deed Book 6:234–35, Gray to Gray, 7 March 1803.

53. Gallatin Co., Will Book A:35, bond for “Jemimy” Gray and Jesse Gray to administer Drakeford Gray estate, 25 November 1804; County Court.

54. *Ibid.*, A:31, inventory, Drakeford Gray, 21 November 1804.

55. Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts, Personal Property Tax Lists, Fairfax Co., 1784, for William Gray. William was sixteen and under twenty-one years old. Also, Nelson Co., 1785 Tax Lists, for William Gray. William is a tithable, i.e., at least twenty-one years old.

56. Corn Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Presley Gray marker; photograph author, 7 June 2011; author’s files.

57. Membership application, Martha T. New, National no. 392234, on Presley Gray (1764–1838, Virginia); National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), Office of the Registrar General, Washington, D.C. Barbara Cotton’s marriage and death dates are undocumented.

Agnes Singleton. Agnes died on 30 September 1829 and is buried in the Corn Creek Baptist Cemetery.⁵⁸ Presley served four months in the Revolutionary War, volunteering from Fairfax County, Virginia, when he was only sixteen. In 1784 he came to what would become Kentucky and “fell Immediately into the Indian War.” He was in the service of the United States for thirty-three years.⁵⁹ As a Lieutenant Colonel in 1814 he commanded the 13th Kentucky Regiment protecting Louisville.⁶⁰

- John Gray was born on 30 November 1771.⁶¹ He married Betsey Edwards soon after 31 October 1806.⁶² Betsey died on 30 January 1833, and John died on 19 November 1833, both in Todd County, Kentucky.⁶³ On the same day Drakeford gave land to both John Gray and William Gray.⁶⁴
- Mary “Molly” Gray was born in 1772. She married Thomas Chalfant on 20 May 1790 in Nelson County. Thomas died in 1833 and Molly in 1863.⁶⁵

58. *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org>), “Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954,” digital folder 4705521, image 369, Nelson Co., “Marriage Returns Old,” William Taylor return, Gray-Singleton, 18 May 1790. For Agnes’s date of death and and place of burial, see Corn Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Agnes Gray marker; photograph author, 7 June 2011; author’s files.

59. *Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files*, microfilm publication M804 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1974), roll 1115, alphabetically arranged, for Presley Gray to the Honorable Richard French, letter, 8 October 1836, in Presley Gray (Pvt., Major Ramsey’s Alexandria volunteers, Va.), pension application R4226.

60. “General Orders,” *Western Courier*, Louisville, Ky., 26 October 1814, page 3, cols. 2–3.

61. William T. Turner, “Major John Gray,” *Todd County, Kentucky, Family History*, 192–93. Also, J. H. Battle and W. H. Perrin, eds., *Counties of Todd and Christian, Kentucky: Historical and Biographical* (Chicago: F. A. Batter, 1884), 127. Also, 1820 U.S. census, Todd Co., Ky., p. 126, John Gray; microfilm publication M33, roll 26, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The likely candidate for John Gray was forty-five and older or born before 1776. See 1830 U.S. census, Todd Co., Ky., p. 358, John Gray; NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 41. The likely candidate for John Gray was born in 1771–80. The two censuses make John Gray’s 1771 birth date likely.

62. *FamilySearch*, “Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954,” digital folder 4705518, digital image 195, Nelson Co., Marriage Bonds, Gray-Edwards, 31 October 1806.

63. For death dates of John Grey and Elizabeth Edwards, see Membership application, Eloise Medley Allison, National no. 671919, on Benjamin Edwards, (1753–1829, Maryland); NSDAR. Also, *Todd County, Kentucky, Family History*, 193. William T. Turner writes, “Major Gray died Nov. 19, 1833 . . . “Betsey” Edwards Gray died Jan. 30, 1833, and they are both buried in the stone fence enclosed graveyard northwest of their old home.” Also, “Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory,” *Kentucky Historic Resources* (pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NRHP/Test/87000146.pdf), individual inventory, p. 2. The John Gray Springhouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This PDF has a map showing a cemetery northwest of the springhouse.

64. Nelson Co., Deed Book 6:491–92, Drakeford Gray to William Gray, 7 March 1803. Also, *ibid.* 6:234–35, Drakeford Gray to John Gray, 7 March 1803.

65. For Molly’s date and place of marriage, see *FamilySearch*, “Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954,” digital folder 4705518, image 195, Nelson Co., “Marriage Returns Old,” William Taylor return, Chalfant-Gray, 20 May 1790. For Mary and Thomas’s dates of death, see *Findagrave.com* (<http://www.findagrave.com>), memorial 74624975 for “Bunnygirl,” digital image of Chalfant Cemetery (Trimble Co., Ky.), Molly Chalfant (1772–1863) and Thomas Chalfant gravestone, 8 August 2011.

- Sarah Gray married Asa Coombs in Nelson County on 23 December 1794.⁶⁶ Sarah probably died before 26 November 1798, when Asa married Zilphia Hackley in Franklin County, Kentucky.⁶⁷ In 1808 William Gray was appointed guardian of Asa and Sarah's minor son, Samuel.⁶⁸
- Catharine Gray married Gabriel Roach on 9 February 1801 in Gallatin County.⁶⁹ Catherine died reportedly on 20 October 1832.⁷⁰ In 1807 William Gray sold Gallatin County land to Gabriel Roach.⁷¹
- Anna Gray was born on 3 April 1783. She married Elliott Vawter on 11 October 1804.⁷² In 1807 Elliott purchased land from William Gray.⁷³ Anna died on 15 July 1856, and Elliott on 28 March 1863.⁷⁴

66. *FamilySearch*, "Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954," digital folder 4705521, image 10, Nelson Co., "Marriage Returns Old," Joshua Carman return, Coombs-Gray, 23 December 1794.

67. "Combs &c. Research Group," *Records of Asa and Zilpha Hackley* (<http://www.combs-families.org/combs/bible/asa-zilpha-hackley-combs.htm>). Carolyn Wimp transcribed the Combs Family Bible in the Combs Family File at the Kentucky Historical Society. Asa and Zilpha's marriage date is transcribed as 26 November 1898, an error for 1798. For a marriage bond for Zilpha Hackley, see "Early Marriage Bonds of Franklin County,^[1] Kentucky," *Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society* 7 (January 1909): 122. Undated, the bond's transcription appears between bonds of 30 October and 14 November 1798. No groom's name is given.

68. Nelson Co., Court Order Book, November 1808–August 1811, p. 8, William Gray, guardian of Samuel Coombs, infant orphan of Asa Coombs, 19 December 1808.

69. Gallatin Co., Marriage Bonds A–Z, 1799–1803, loose papers, Roach-Gray, 9 February 1801; County Court; FHL microfilm 509,037. The bond says Cate Gray was "Daughter of Drakeford Gray of Gallatin County." Jesse Gray was a bondsman. Also, Battle and Perrin, *Counties of Todd and Christian, Kentucky*, 176: "Gabriel Roach . . . [and] Elliott Vauter . . . married Maj. John Gray's sisters."

70. "Public Member Trees," *Ancestry.com* (<http://ancestry.com>), for "Roach–Satterfield Family Tree," Catherine Gray entry.

71. Gallatin Co., Deed Book A-1:505–6, Gray to Roach, 28 December 1807.

72. For Anna Gray's dates of birth and marriage to Elliot Vawter, see membership application, Mabel Louise Dickson Pazzo, National no. 799522, on David Vawter (1720–1785, Virginia); NSDAR. For the couples' calculated ages, see 1850 U.S. census, Todd Co., Ky., population schedule, District 1, p. 217B, Elliot Vawter; NARA microfilm publication M432, roll 219. Elliot is enumerated as sixty-eight, born in Virginia, and Ann is recorded as sixty-seven, born in Kentucky.

73. Gallatin Co., Deed Book A-1:501–2, Gray to Vawter, 28 December 1807.

74. For Ann Vaughter's date of death, see "Kentucky, Death Records, 1852–1953," *Ancestry.com* (<https://ancestry.com>), search for Ann Vaughter, Graves Co., 1856. The record confirms that she was seventy-two or born in 1783–84 and that her father's surname was Gray. For Elliot's death date, see membership application, Mabel Louise Dickson Pazzo, National no. 799522, NSDAR. For Anna as a sister to John Gray, see, Battle and Perrin, *Counties of Todd and Christian, Kentucky*, 176 ("Gabriel Roach . . . [and] Elliott Vauter . . . married Maj. John Gray's sisters"). Anna married Elliot Vauter.

- Jesse Gray was appointed an administrator of the estate of Drakeford Gray, deceased, on 26 November 1804.⁷⁵ Jesse married Katrin Connel in Gallatin County 21 February 1809.⁷⁶
- Constance Gray married James Kindel in Gallatin County on 29 December 1808.⁷⁷

Some of Drakeford's heirs appear in a Gallatin County deed. In the month before he died, Drakeford deeded two acres to the Baptist Church on Corn Creek in Gallatin County for five shillings. Drakeford signed the deed, but it was not witnessed or recorded. In order to record the deed, in July of 1804 it was "produced in Court and proved by the oath of Presley Gray, David Owen, Jesse Gray, Jesse Connell Sen^r, and Phileman Vawter to be the hand writing of the said Gray."⁷⁸

Drakeford's legal representatives sold an acre adjoining the Corn Creek meeting house to the Corn Creek Academy's trustees for five shillings. His sons Presley, William, and Jesse Gray, single daughter Conney Gray, and Molly Gray's husband, Thomas Chalfin, signed the deed. Witnessing the signatures were James R. Gray; Anna Gray's husband, Elliott Vawter; Mathew Wise; Daniel Wise; Catherine Gray's husband, Gabriel Roach; Jesse Gray; and Presley Gray.⁷⁹ Jesse Gray and Presley Gray both signed and were witnesses to others' signatures. James R. Gray was Presley Gray's son.⁸⁰ The Wises and Grays have no known relationship. Sarah (Gray) Coombs likely died before November 1798. John Gray inexplicably failed to participate.

Three More Nelson County William Grays

In June 1785 inhabitants of Beard's Town, Nelson County, complained about "a certain William Gray." He was "daily troubled with Fits . . . and is . . .

75. Gallatin Co., Will Book A:33, administrator appointment, 26 November 1804.

76. Gallatin Co., Marriage Register 1:9-A, Gray-Connel, February 1809. They were married by Rev. John Taylor. Also, Gallatin Co., Marriage Bonds, 1804–1809, loose papers, Gray-Conel, marriage bond and consent from her father, Jesse Connell, both dated 21 February 1809.

77. Gallatin Co., Marriage Bonds, 1804–1809, loose papers, Gray-Kendall, license and return by Philemon Vawter, 29 December 1808. For Conney Gray's relationship to her brother, John Gray, see Battle and Perrin, *Counties of Todd and Christian, Kentucky*, 136 ("In 1818 Maj. John Gray . . . hired his brother-in-law, James Kendal").

78. Gallatin Co., Deed Book A-1:311–12, Gray to Corn Creek "Papist" Church, 6 April 1804.

79. *Ibid.*, B:7–8, Gray estate to the Trustees of the Corn Creek Academy, 27 December 1808. Also, Gabriel Slaughter, ed., *Acts Passed at the First Session of the Twenty-Eighth General Assembly for the Commonwealth of Kentucky . . .* Chapt. 61 (Frankfort, Ky.: Government Printers, 1820), 936–37, "An Act incorporating the Trustees of the Corn Creek Academy in Gallatin County, 11 February 1820." Presley Gray was one of the trustees.

80. Corn Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Agnes Gray marker. The headstone lists Agnes and Presley Gray's children.

[a] horrid Spectacle to those who behold him. he is dreadful when among our Children, and terrifying to several Women.”⁸¹ On 27 September 1785 the court ordered the sheriff to “provide for the maintenance of William Gray, a poor infirm person by contracting with any persons willing to support him.”⁸² He likely was not Drakeford’s son, who was about twenty-one and living near his father in Cox’s and Simpson’s Creek tax district, not Beard’s Town.⁸³

In 1795 William Gray purchased 108 acres on Stewart’s Creek.⁸⁴ In 1796 he paid Nelson County tax on that land and 650 acres in Hardin County.⁸⁵ On 24 November 1808, he gave his son, William Gray Jr. of Shelby County, Kentucky, power of attorney to convey Breckenridge County land.⁸⁶ His activities do not fit the timeline of William and Nancy Gray, who had no son William.

Nelson County Tax Records

Annual tax records, although sometimes missing or in disarray, help differentiate and track same-named men. Nelson County’s tax records enumerate Presley, Drakeford, and William Gray on the same day in 1792. Drakeford had 177 acres, and William and Presley each had 100. Twenty-four days later a landless William Gray was taxed.⁸⁷

Nelson County land tax records for 1792–1809 help distinguish Drakeford Gray’s son William from three other William Grays.⁸⁸ Two

81. Nelson Co., Judgment Court, 1785, loose papers, June 1785, “Baird Town” v. John Murray concerning William Gray, petition; County Clerk.

82. Nelson Co., Order Book 1785, 29 June 1785, 1:39, dismissal of complaint against William Murray for bringing William Gray into the country; County Court. Also Nelson Co., Order Book 1785, 27 September 1785, 1:70, sheriff ordered to provide for William Gray, chargeable to the county.

83. Nelson Co., 1785 Tax Lists, for Drakeford and William Gray. Drakeford and William are listed on the Cox’s Creek and Simpson’s Creek tax list.

84. Nelson Co., Deed Book 5:196–97, Glen to Gray, 1795.

85. Nelson Co., Tax Assessment Books for 1796, John Bullock, commissioner, second book, unpaginated, partially alphabetized, William Gray; KDLA; FHL microfilm 8,178. Drakeford Gray, three William Grays, and Jn^o Gray are listed.

86. Nelson Co., Deed Book 6:790, William Gray to William Gray, Jr., power of attorney, 1808.

87. Kentucky Tax Assessor, Tax Books, Nelson Co., Tax Assessment Book for 1792, all Grays on Gabriel Cox’s list, p. 5; KDLA.

88. All four William Grays appear in the 1805 and 1807 tax books. See Kentucky Tax Assessor, Nelson Co., Tax Assessment Book, 1805, Henry Cotton’s list, pp. 16 (two William Grays) and 17 (William Gray and William Gray “sen”). Land tax books for 1798 and 1799 cannot be found, although Samuel Brown’s personal tax list for 1799 shows three William Grays. See *ibid.*, 1799, Samuel Brown’s list, under G, 16 May and 21 June 1799 (page numbers are marked out). For 1794 only A. Hubbard’s list survives and no William Grays appear on it. See Kentucky Tax Assessor, Tax Books, Nelson Co., Tax Assessment Book for 1794, A. Hubbard’s list, p. 5.

were landless.⁸⁹ Drakeford's son, however, paid tax on 100 acres in 1792–97 and acquired additional land in Gallatin and Nelson counties in 1800–1807.⁹⁰ A fourth William Gray owned land on Stewart's Creek and in Breckenridge County.⁹¹

Gallatin and Montgomery Counties' Tax Records

Drakeford Gray received a Virginia treasury warrant for 461 acres in 1779 in Fayette County (later Clark and then Montgomery County), patented in 1786, and a second for 219.25 acres in 1783 that was never patented nor taxed to Gray.⁹²

Drakeford Gray paid taxes on this patented land in 1797 and 1800–1802.⁹³ After his death, in 1804, youngest son, Jesse Gray, and widow, Jemima, administered Drakeford's estate.⁹⁴ In 1805 Jesse began paying taxes on all of

89. A distinctly different and landless William Gray appears in 1800. See Kentucky Tax Assessor, Tax Books, Nelson Co., Tax Assessment Books for 1800, list of Samuel Brown, p. 19; 1802, list of Samuel Brown, p. 15; 1803, list of Samuel Brown, p. 14; 1804, list of Samuel Brown, p. 14; 1805, list of Henry Cotton, p. 16; and 1807, list of Henry Cotton, p. 16. A second landless William Gray Jr. appears in 1802. He is possibly the son of the William Gray who owned land on Stewart's Creek. See, *ibid.* for William Gray Jr., in 1802, list of Samuel Brown, p. 16; 1803, list of Samuel Brown, p. 14; 1804, list of Samuel Brown, p. 15; 1805, list of Henry Cotton, p. 17; 1806, list of Henry Cotton, p. 16; and 1807, list of Henry Cotton, p. 16. Those years the two landless William Grays paid personal property tax.

90. Nelson Co., Tax Assessment Books, 1792–95 (one list with a column for each year), commissioner not identified, perhaps Anthony Foster, p. 13. Also, *ibid.*, for William Gray in 1796, John Bullock, commissioner, second book, alphabetically arranged by surname; 1797, John Hobbs's list, p. 12; 1800, Samuel Brown's list, p. 19; 1801, Samuel Brown's list, p. 16; 1802, Samuel Brown's list, p. 15; 1803, Samuel Brown's list, p. 14; 1804, Samuel Brown's list, p. 15; 1805, Henry Cotton's list, p. 16; 1806, Henry Cotton's list, p. 16; and 1807, Henry Cotton's list, p. 16.

91. *Ibid.*, for William Gray in 1796, John Bullock, commissioner, second book; 1797, John Hobbs's list, p. 12; 1800, Samuel Brown's list, p. 17; 1802, Samuel Brown's list, p. 16; 1803, Samuel Brown's list, p. 14; 1804, Samuel Brown's list, p. 15; 1805, Henry Cotton's list, p. 17; 1806, Henry Cotton's list, p. 16; and 1807, Henry Cotton's list, p. 17. William Gray is "Sr. or Sen." in 1804–7.

92. Virginia Land Office, warrant no. 707, 15 October 1779; survey, 12 May 1780; and patent no. 6922, 10 February 1791; digital images, "Non-military Registers and Land Records, Virginia Treasury Warrants," *Kentucky Secretary of State Land Office* (<http://appos.sos.Ky.gov/land/nonmilitary/LandOfficeVTW/>). For the Virginia treasury warrant that was never patented, see *ibid.*, search for Virginia Treasury Warrant no. 19089.

93. Nelson Co., Tax Assessment Books, for Drakeford Gray in 1797, John Hobbs's list, p. 12. Also, Kentucky Tax Assessor, Gallatin Co., Tax Assessment Books for Drakeford Gray in 1800, John Grimes's list, p. 4; 1801, John Van Pelt's list, p. 3; 1802, under letter G, 12 June 12 1802; FHL microfilm 7,985.

94. Gallatin Co., Will Book A:35, administrator's bond for Drakeford Gray estate, 1804.

Drakeford's land in Gallatin and Montgomery counties. In 1810 Jesse paid tax only on the Montgomery County land, and William Gray paid tax on the Gallatin County land.⁹⁵

WILLIAM GRAY OF GALLATIN COUNTY

William Gray continued to appear with members of Drakeford's family in Gallatin County. On 2 December 1800 William purchased 300 acres there from Richard Stephens and Thomas Lewis.⁹⁶ Just eight days later William witnessed Drakeford and Presley Gray's re-purchase of their Gallatin County land from Stephens and Lewis. They originally purchased the land from James Patton.⁹⁷

In 1807 William Gray sold his three hundred acres in three parcels to Gabriel Roach, Elliot Vawter, and Philimon Vawter.⁹⁸ Philimon, a Baptist minister at Corn Creek Church, was Elliot's father.⁹⁹ The Corn Creek meeting house stood on land Drakeford Gray had deeded to the church in 1804.¹⁰⁰

In November 1816 William and Nancy Gray, of Livingston County, Kentucky, sold 640 acres on Corn Creek to George Jewell.¹⁰¹ No deed shows how William acquired the property—the land Drakeford Gray bought from Stephens and Lewis.¹⁰² Drakeford's widow, Jemima, may have wanted William to have it. In 1812 she asked her attorney, Presley, to handle her interest "in the farm George Jewel now lives [on]" and to:

95. Kentucky Tax Assessor, Gallatin Co., Tax Assessment Books, for Jesse Gray taxed on Montgomery and Gallatin Co. land in 1805, W. S. Waller's list, p. 7; 1806, p. 4; 1807, p. 6; 1808, p. 4; 1809, list no. 3, p. 5. Also, *ibid.*, for Jesse Gray taxed on Montgomery Co. land only in 1810, p. 5. Also, *ibid.* for William Gray taxed on Gallatin Co. land in 1810, p. 5.

96. Gallatin Co., Deed Book A-2:5–6, Stephens to Gray, 2 December 1800.

97. For Drakeford, see Gallatin Co., Deed Book A-2:12–14, Stephens to Gray, 10 December 1800. William Gray was a witness. For Presley, see Gallatin Co., Deed Book A-2:10–12, Stephens to Gray, 10 December 1800. William Gray was a witness. Land speculation and lawsuits "entangled almost every tract [of land] in Central Kentucky." See Stephen Aron, *How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 82. Perhaps Drakeford and Presley wanted to ensure a clear title to their land.

98. Gallatin Co., Deed Book A-1:501–2, Gray to Vawter, A-1:503–4, Gray to Vawter, and A-1:505–6, Gray to Roach, all on 28 December 1807.

99. For Elliot as son of Philemon Vawter and Anna Gray as Elliot's wife, see membership application, Mabel Louise Dickson Pazzo, National no. 799522; NSDAR. For Philemon as a Baptist minister, see John Taylor, *Baptists on the American Frontier: A History of Ten Baptist Churches of Which the Author Has Been Alternately a Member*, 3rd ed. (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1995), 314.

100. Gallatin Co., Deed Book A-1:311–12, Gray to Corn Creek "Papist" Church, 6 April 1804.

101. *Ibid.*, C:349–50, Gray to Jewell, 21 November 1816.

102. *Ibid.*, A-2:12–14, Stephens to Gray, 10 December 1800.

Settle with William Gray Senior when he comes, as full and Complete as if I myself was present, & See to the S[how?]ing my Support of William Gray in any way he, or my attorney, may think Right.¹⁰³

William was planning to return from New Madrid County, where he was no longer a judge. Perhaps when William came, Jemima silently passed him the farm as an inheritance that he and Nancy could sell to Jewell in 1816. If so, that further connects Drakeford and William Gray of Livingston County as father and son.

CENSUSES

Do censuses contradict other evidence that William Gray of New Madrid County and Livingston, Nelson, and Gallatin counties, Kentucky, was the same man? Kentucky's 1790 and 1800 censuses are lost. The first federal census for Missouri in 1810, as part of the Territory of Louisiana, and the second census in 1820, as part of the Territory of Orleans, cannot be found.¹⁰⁴ A Kentucky federal census does exist for 1810, when at least fourteen William Grays lived in that state.¹⁰⁵ The family composition of the 1810 Gallatin County William Gray fits the Bible record of William Gray.

The Bible record and 1810 census differ somewhat. The census has a female born before 1765. Perhaps she was Drakeford's widow, Jemima, living with William, her son. Drakeford Gray, who had married in 1808, likely headed his own household.¹⁰⁶ The Bible record says "William L. Gray son of Drakeford and Harriet Gray born Dec 11, 1807."¹⁰⁷ Perhaps Drakeford and Harriet married after their son's birth.

The 1820 Gray household includes a female about Drakeford's age. Perhaps it was Drakeford Gray's wife and their children. See table 1.

103. Gallatin Co., Deed Book B:245–46, Gray to Gray, power of attorney, 19 October 1812.

104. Anne Bruner Eales and Robert M. Kvasnicka, *Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives of the United States*, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2000), 33 (Kentucky) and 40 (Virginia). The authors err regarding 1810 and 1820 Missouri. See, Jedidiah Morse, *The American Universal Geography, or, A View of the Present State of All the Kingdoms, States and Colonies*, 6th ed., 2 vols. (Boston: Thomas and Andrews, 1812), 591–92. Totals survive for the 1810 census taken of the Territory of Louisiana (now Missouri and Arkansas). Present-day Louisiana was called the Territory of Orleans. Also, Richard L. Forstall, *Population of States and Counties of the United States, 1790 to 1990, From the Twenty-one Decennial Censuses* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1996), 96–97. Totals survive for the 1820 federal census taken in the Territory of Missouri. Although the totals for both 1810 and 1820 extend to age ranges and sexes, the schedules showing individual entries were lost or uncollected before the microfilming of NARA publications M252 and M33.

105. "1810 United States Federal Census," *Ancestry.com* (<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=7613>), search for "William Gray" and "Wm Gray" in Kentucky.

106. Nelson Co., Marriage Bonds 1801–1816, A–L, no. 653, Gray to Elliott, 23 February 1808; County Clerk.

107. William Gray Family Bible Record, 1787–1928, "Births."

Table 1

**William Gray Enumerations in
Gallatin County, 1810, and Livingston County, 1820 and 1830,
Compared to the William Gray Family Bible Records**

BIBLE RECORD ^a		1810 ^b		1820 ^c		1830 ^d	
NAME	BIRTH	SEX	BIRTH	SEX	BIRTH	SEX	BIRTH
		female	before 1765				
William		male	1766–84	male	before 1775	male	1761–70
Nancy		female	1766–84	female	before 1775	female	1761–70
Jemima	1788	female	1785–94				
Henry	1789						
Sarah	1790						
Drakeford	1791						
John C.	1793	male	1785–94				
Elizabeth	1795	female	1795–1800	female	1795–1804		
Nathaniel	1797	male	1795–1800				
Presley	1797	male	1795–1800				
				male	1805–1810		
				male	1811–1820		

a. William Gray Family Bible Record, 1787–1928, Births. Rob Gray hand copied the family pages in the 1980s. The title page and the printing date of the Bible were not recorded. The Bible was in the possession of Ollie (Neeley) Nolen in Delight, Arkansas. Both Rob Gray and Ollie Nolen descend from William and Nancy Gray. Ms. Nolen has since died, and the Bible's current location is unknown.

b. 1810 U.S. census, Gallatin Co., Ky., p. 187, William Gray household; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) microfilm publication M252, roll 6.

c. 1820 U.S. census, Livingston Co., Ky., Salem, p. 7, Will Gray household; NARA microfilm publication M33, roll 26.

d. 1830 U.S. census, Livingston Co., Ky., Smithland, p. 30, William Gray household; NARA microfilm publication M19, roll 39.

RELIGION

Kinship often shares not only blood and marriage but also a common faith. William Taylor, a Baptist preacher, married William and Nancy in 1787.¹⁰⁸ In 1784 Taylor “had settled on Cox’s Creek and was preaching in the cabins of the settlers.”¹⁰⁹ Early church books are missing, but marriage returns identify Grays and Cottons as Cox’s Creek Baptist Church members. Gladen Goren, a 1785 tithable in Drakeford Gray’s household, was married by William Taylor in 1787.¹¹⁰ In 1790 Taylor married Presley and Mary “Molly” Gray, Drakeford’s children.¹¹¹ William Taylor performed marriages for nine Cottons: John, Henry, Edmund, Temple, Zachariah, Nancy, Elizabeth, Frances, and Susanna.¹¹²

John Taylor, another Baptist preacher, began to visit the Corn Creek community in 1795.¹¹³ He recalled ministering to and eventually baptizing Presley Gray and his wife.¹¹⁴ Corn Creek Baptist Church was organized on 14 October 1800.¹¹⁵ The first church members were “Drake Ford Grey,” Jemima Grey, David Owen, Mary Owen, Jesse Connell, Ann Connell, Polly King, and Elizabeth Wise.¹¹⁶ In 1814 the Church took up the case of “John Gray the Sone [sic]

108. *FamilySearch*, “Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954,” digital folder 4705521, image 348, Nelson Co., “Marriage Returns Old,” William Taylor “8th Return,” Gray-Cotton, 28 June 1787.

109. Ray H. Wright and Elsie Southwood Wright, *History of Cox’s Creek Baptist Church* (Cox’s Creek, Ky.: L. S. Chambers, 1935), 1–2. Minutes 1785–1795 are missing.

110. *FamilySearch*, “Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797–1954,” digital folder 4705582, image 348, Nelson Co., Marriage Register, alphabetically arranged by first letter of groom’s surname and thereunder chronologically, Gladen-Hinch, 22 November 1787.

111. *Ibid.*, digital folder 4705521, image 369, Nelson Co., “Marriage Returns Old,” William Taylor return, Gray-Singleton, 18 May 1790; and digital folder 4705518, image 195, Chalfant-Gray, 20 May 1790.

112. *Ibid.*, digital folder 4705521, image 348, Nelson Co., “Marriage Returns Old,” “8th Return,” Gray–(Anne) Cotton, 28 June 1787, and (Henry) Cotton–Harrald, 29 June 1787; and “12th Return,” King–(Elizabeth) Cotton, 24 May 1788. Also, *ibid.*, image 349, (Temple) Cotton–McDonald 16 October 1788; image 359, (John) Cotton–Brown, 10 March 1796; image 363, William Taylor return, Tichenor–(Frances) Cotton, 3 September 1797; image 366, (Edmond) Cotton–Dorsey, 12 December 1797; image 370, Heady–(Susannah) Cotton, 19 February 1801; and image 372, (Zachariah) Cotton–Purcel, 18 February 1800.

113. John H. Spencer, *A History of Kentucky Baptists: From 1769–1885 Including More than 800 Biographical Sketches* (Cincinnati: J. H. Spencer, 1886), 54–62.

114. Taylor, *Baptists on the American Frontier*, 268–69, 273, and 275–77.

115. Minute Books of the Corn Creek Baptist Church, Trimble County, Kentucky, 1800–1832, chronologically arranged, photocopy of original minutes at the Southern Baptist Seminary Library; Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort. The book begins in 1813 but the first two pages were copied from a prior book that disappeared between 14 October 1814 and 3 May 2012.

116. Minute Books of the Corn Creek Baptist Church, p. 2. Page two appears out of order at the back of the book.

of William Gray,” whom they dismissed because of his long absence with no letter of dismissal. Presley served as church clerk that day.¹¹⁷ Drakeford deeded land to the Corn Creek Baptist Church before his death in 1804. Baptist ministers performed marriages for two of Drakeford’s children: Jesse Gray, by John Taylor in 1804; and Conney Gray, by Philemon Vawter in 1808.¹¹⁸

William Gray’s faith is unknown, but he apparently was a religious man. Elected to the Kentucky House of Representatives in 1819, he served on its committee of religion to “take under consideration all matters and things relating to religion and morality.”¹¹⁹ His 1836 estate appraisal bill includes a family Bible.¹²⁰

WILLIAM GRAY SIGNATURES

Five original William Gray signatures date from 1787 in Nelson County to 1833 in Livingston County. See figure 1. The same person likely wrote them all. The 1833 signature shows some deterioration in the writing, possibly reflecting the writer’s advancing age.¹²¹ Seven characteristics are consistent:

- The capital *W* always stands alone and always begins with an upstroke.
- The initial letter *i* begins with a downstroke in each signature.
- The medial letter *a* is a circle. The writer makes a loop before writing the bowl and stem above the loop.
- The capital *G* has a large loop as its initial stroke in all signatures except the 1833 one.
- The same style *r* is used in each signature. Three out of five times it is connected to the *G*.
- The *y* as a terminal letter ends beneath the line with a loop. The slant of the loop of the terminal *y* is slightly greater than the slant of the loop beneath the line of the capital *G*.
- The *a* and the *y* of *Gray* are above the baseline in each signature. The baseline is a line formed at the bottom of the *Wi*.¹²²

117. Minute Books of the Corn Creek Baptist Church, entry for First Saturday in July 1814.

118. For Jesse, see Gallatin Co., Marriage Bonds A–Z, 1804–1809, return of John Taylor, Gray-Conel, 21 February 1809. For Conney, see Gallatin Co., Marriage bonds A–Z, 1804–1809, return of Philemon Vawter, Kendall-Gray, 29 December 1808.

119. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Kentucky: Begun and Held in the Town of Frankfort, on Monday the Sixth Day of December, 1819, and of the Commonwealth the Twenty-eighth* (Frankfort, Ky.: Kendall and Russells, 1819), pp. 4 (For William’s installation as a representative from Livingston Co.) and 8 (William’s assignment to the committee of religion).

120. Livingston Co., Inventory Appraisal Sale Bills Book C:119, William Gray estate appraisal, 16 December 1836; County Clerk.

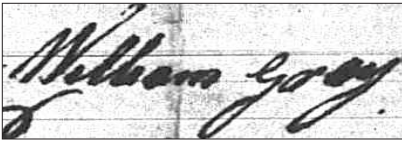
121. Roy A. Huber and A. M. Headrick, *Handwriting Identification: Facts and Fundamentals* (Boca Raton, Fla.: CRC, 1999), 217.

122. To compare the signatures, the author used guidelines in Katherine M. Koppenhaver, “Master Pattern,” in *Forensic Document Examination* (Totowa, N.J.: Humana Press, 2007), 97–111.

Figure 1

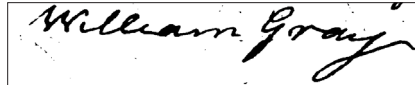
William Gray Signatures

1787 Marriage Bond



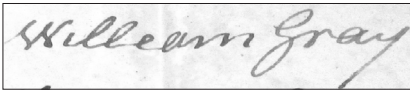
“Kentucky County Marriages: 1797–1954,” *Family Search* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/V5ZX-XJ4>), digital image of Nelson Co., Ky. [Va.], marriage bonds and consents, Gray-Cotton, 1787.

1822 Receipt



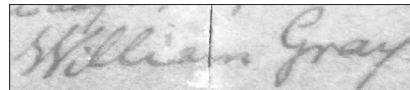
“Missouri’s Judicial Records,” *Missouri Secretary of State* (<http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mojudicial>), digital image of guardianship of Jenkins Phillips, 1822, pp. 3, 4, and 5 of collection 1, Samuel Phillips file, 5 pp.; New Madrid Co., Mo., probate case files. Used with permission of the Missouri State Archives.

1828 Promissory Note



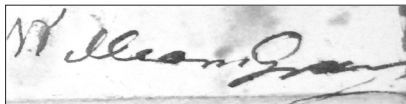
Williams and Hodge to William Gray, promissory note, 13 May 1828; in box 41, “Mar 1829–June 1829,” of Livingston Co., Ky., Circuit Court, “Equity, Ordinary, and Com’t’h Cases,” 142 boxes arranged by court term, accession A1986-289; Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA), Frankfort. Used with permission.

1832 Will



William Gray, will, 10 November 1832; box 1 of Livingston Co., Wills, 1823–1863, loose papers, chronologically arranged; accession L1314, KDLA.

1833 Promissory note



R. W. Allcon to William Gray, promissory note, 1 June 1833; in “Judgments September 1833 A to G,” fourth bundle in box 47, “Sept. 1832–Mar 1834,” of Livingston Co., Circuit Court, “Equity, Ordinary, and Com’t’h cases”; KDLA. Used with permission.

Forty-six years separate the earliest and latest signatures. The 1822 signature ties William of Nelson County to William of Livingston County, who wrote the last three signatures.

ONOMASTICS

Unique and repeating family naming patterns “may add to other evidence that a family of otherwise unknown origin belongs to a known family of the same surname.”¹²³ While Drakeford and Jemima Gray did not name children after themselves, William and Presley Gray both named a son Drakeford. William named a daughter after his mother, Jemima. Drakeford and William had sons named Presley Gray. William and Nancy Gray named their son John Cotton Gray after Nancy’s father. Other, more common names such as Nathaniel, Jesse, and Henry also occurred in both the Gray and Cotton families.¹²⁴

CONCLUSION

Multiple pieces of evidence link William Gray of New Madrid County, Territory of Missouri, to the Kentucky counties of Livingston, Nelson, and Gallatin, and to Fairfax County, Virginia. Despite his common first and last name, evidence distinguishes him from others of the same name and connects him to his wife, children, siblings, and father. The combined evidence in records of three states and five counties reveals only one candidate for William’s father. William Gray of New Madrid County, Territory of Missouri, was son of Drakeford Gray.

123. Eugene A. Stratton, *Applied Genealogy* (n.p.: Ancestry, 1988), 75.

124. For William’s children Jemima, Drakeford, Presley, and Nathaniel, see Livingston Co., Wills 1823–63, will of William Gray. For Presley as son of Drakeford, see Corn Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Drakeford Gray marker. For Jesse as son of Drakeford, see Gallatin Co., Will Book A:33. For Jesse as a child of Presley, see Corn Creek Baptist Church Cemetery, Agnes Gray marker. For William’s son Henry, see William Gray Family Bible Record, 1787–1928, “Births.” For Cotton as the middle name of William’s son John, see New Madrid Co., Deeds 5:198. For John Cotton’s children Nathaniel and Henry, see Nelson Co., Chancery Court, June 1815 Session, Cotton’s Heirs v. Worthington’s Heirs, loose papers.