

May 5, 2003

McNEILL

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Dear Rev. Peoples,

A few years back we exchanged several letters primarily concerning the parentage of Henry McNish of Beaufort District (@1777-1831). I had located an article by Eugenia Howard, based on records from the Federal District Court of Georgia, that indicated he was the eldest son of John McNish and Mary Catherine Keel/Keel - the other two children being John McNish and Mary Catherine McNish. I sent you transcriptions of some of these records with the idea of forwarding you copies of the originals when they were obtained. I finally got around to ordering these from the National Archives S. E. Region in Atlanta and have enclosed the pertinent ones relating to Henry McNish. The answer submitted by Henry McNish was originally to be a joint one with his brother John. This was altered as John McNish soon tried to claim the entire McNish share for himself. His claim was based on a Note signed by his mother years before assigning all her rights in the inheritance to John. The final decree of the court ignores this issue and divides the McNish share into three equal parts.

The other reason for my letter concerns the Miles family article you wrote that was published in the South Carolina Historical Magazine in 1965-1966.

2)
Recently, I have had two occasions to make use of it. About five years ago, I helped a lady named Olive Nabors trace her family back to the 1767 marriage of Edward Griffith and Martha Miles. I heard from her again a few weeks back which caused me to revisit my Griffith notes and your article. Olive descends from Thomas Jones Griffith, the youngest child of that marriage - and the only one of five children to leave descendants. Your article states that the second husband of Martha (Miles) Griffith was "a McNeill" and that is correct. His name was John McNeill and they were married 4 July, 1783. I know little about him other than he was referred to as Captain John McNeill and was associated with a business called John McNeill & Company. (The company belonged to another John McNeill who was probably his father.) He died in Indian Land - Prince William Parish - Not long after this marriage and Martha then married his cousin Captain Ralph McNeill on 28 December, 1784. (Ralph had recently returned to Charleston after the signing of the treaty ending the Revolutionary War. He had been banished by the British after being captured as an officer on the Salem, an American privateer. Why he was not hung with the rest is not clear but is the subject of some interesting legends.) Anyway, Ralph McNeill

3) was the guardian of Thomas Jones Griffith and apparently their relationship was a close one. The first of three sons born to Thomas Griffith was named Ralph and the three boys referred to as Ralph McNeill or "Father McNeill" after Thomas died in 1817 in Prince William Parish. Enclosed is the lost will of Martha (Miles) McNeill which I thought you would like for your files or the Heritage Library you once mentioned. The original is of course long lost with the rest of the Beaufort District records prior to 1865.

The other reason I had to consult your Miles family article concerns the Dupont family of Beaufort District. Recently, the old Dupont cemetery in Jasper County was restored by various descendants and a monument erected. (Some of the dates on the monument are probably incorrect as the dates in places were hard to read after decades of neglect.) During the cleaning, the broken part of the marker for Charles Dupont, husband of Susannah Baker Cater, was found and returned to its proper place. Also markers for Thomas *Carter and Rachel *Carter were located and restored to visibility. Your article indicated that this Rachel Cater would be Rachel Miles, daughter of Silas Miles, who married Thomas Cater. Was their daughter the Susannah Baker Cater that married Charles Dupont, son of Charles Dupont and Sarah

*Cater, not Carter

4) Coochman? Was the Thomas Cater buried in this cemetery the brother of Mary Baker Cater who married the first Charles Dupont the 16th of March, 1769? *NO - first cousins.*

My cousin, George McNeill of Maryland, and myself have done a considerable amount of research the last few years on the Dupont family - both those of Beaufort District and the others that later moved to Florida. If anyone is ever interested in these people, I am always glad to share what I know. The same is true of George.

I hope this letter finds you well and enjoying the spring weather. The winter in North Carolina was long and ugly so the arrival of warmer days is certainly welcome here.

Yours sincerely,
Paschall

By any chance are you acquainted with anyone who is descended from Dr. Thomas Edward Sweeney who married Cornelia McNeill? For years I have searched for such a person who would be interested in family history. I feel there are areas we could work on together that would prove productive. Thomas Sweeney and Ralph McNeill were close friends and Ralph is buried in the Sweeney family plot in Grahamville. They both married daughters of Henry McNeill.