

Sewell Family History

Especially relating to Levi Francis Sewell of West Georgia

Georgia - Outline of Early History

When the first Sewell's settled in Georgia before the Revolution, there had been a few settlements and an organized government within its borders for not more, and perhaps much less than fifty years.

According to a map of 1775 Georgia exercised jurisdiction over practically all of the territory now comprised in what we are wont to call "The Deep South," embracing the States of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. It extended from the Savannah River to the Mississippi. But twenty-five years later Georgia was bounded on the West by the Chattahoochee River, a strip of territory set off in 1798 and known as Mississippi Territory, of which Natchez was the chief town, and north of this strip was the territory north to the Tennessee Line and between the Chattahoochee and the Mississippi, designated as "Disputed by Georgia and the United States." In 1802 the territory was ceded to the United States by Georgia, after a long struggle. North was the State of Tennessee and on the South the Spanish possessions.

The settlement of Georgia was the direct result of investigations made by James Oglethorpe, a former army officer, who had become prominent by reason of efforts he had made toward ameliorating the conditions that existed among the poor, and particularly in efforts toward improvement of conditions of debtor's prisons. He was joined in this worthy program by several other wealthy and benevolent men and a Company was formed in 1732 for the purpose of settling the reserved Carolina tract under the name of Georgia, in honor of the king, George II. The name was at once euphonious and appropriate. The Company was given a charter under the name of "The Trustees for establishing the Colony of Georgia in America," and was granted all the land from the Savannah to the Altamaha. One writer has said, "Never was a colony founded upon motives more disinterested." It was to be, literally, "an asylum for the oppressed."

Oglethorpe, in November, 1732, headed as governor and general (serving without pay) the first expedition which was fitted out consisting of thirty five families, and in February 1733 selected a site for the first settlement on a high bluff overlooking the Savannah River and about ten miles from the sea. He made friends with the natives, signing a non-aggression pact with them, probably assuring the success of the venture.

A second settlement was made in 1734 by a band of persecuted German Protestant exiles from Salzburg, who "pitched their tents" at Ebenezer. These Germans proved to be a great asset, as they were energetic and thrifty and were, with the Highlanders, a stable influence in the colony, being the only two classes who were ever satisfied with anything. The men who were rescued from the debtor's prisons and for whom the Colony was founded to bring relief, proved to be a lot of idle and worthless malcontents.

The City of Augusta, on the Savannah, about midway between the mountains and the sea, was founded in the same year (1734) as a fur trade depot, and the center of the trade between the Carolinas, Georgia, and the West. In seven years the resident population of Augusta rose to 47 souls, but upwards of 125 white men of all kindred trades are said to have gained a livelihood from the traffic centering at Augusta station. The estimated annual trade was about fifty thousand

pounds.

Meanwhile, Frederica, at the Altamaha's mouth, had been settled in 1736. We will know more of Frederica later.

In the same year, General Oglethorpe led an expedition to the Southern limits of the English claimed territory.

Mention has been made of the rough and discordant elements in the colony, but three men were in Georgia in those early years, whose names have been emblazoned as among the greatest in the world's history. They were the Wesley brothers, Charles and John, and George Whitefield. Charles was secretary to Oglethorpe and John was a missionary to the Indians. John went back to England and was succeeded by Whitefield, one of the greatest of preachers. It was due to the efforts of these three men that the great Methodist Episcopal Church was organized.

In 1739 war broke out between England and Spain. To forestall any hostile movement from the Spanish at Saint Augustine, Oglethorpe lay siege to that city (1740) but the expedition failed, sickness having broken out in the camp, and the support was further weakened by desertions. General Oglethorpe withdrew and thereupon the Spaniards paid a return visit, but a British fleet appearing at Frederica, they were frightened into a hasty retreat.

In 1743, General Oglethorpe went back to England and never returned. The colony's development slowed up after that, but improved when the charter was revoked and Georgia became a royal province, with a government similar to that of South Carolina. This was in 1752.

Slavery was introduced into the colony in 1749. Free traffic in rum was allowed and restrictions removed from the acquisition of lands.

Georgia was the last of the original thirteen states and was one of the weakest until long after the Revolution.

The population of the colony in 1750 was less than 5,000.

The French-Indian War in 1763, resulted in great territorial gains for the British and consequent governmental adjustments, and it was at this time that the governor of Georgia was given jurisdiction over the entire Mississippi territory.

This was the "Empire State of the South," though not so called yet, at the time when the first Sewells settled there. It is a far cry from those days, and the weak young colony has developed into a giant in strength and stature and is on the threshold of an expansion undreamed of in days of yore, and marvelous to behold.

[from pages 80-82, History of the Sewell Families in America, printed 1955]

FRANKLIN COUNTY — JOHN SEWELL AND MAHY RICHMOND

John Sewell was born September 7, 1777 in Rowan County, North Carolina. He married Mary Richmond, born April 12, 1785, of the same county, on November 5, 1802. Together they went to Franklin County, Georgia. The exact date we cannot determine, but we know that their first child, Elizabeth, was born in North Carolina on July 1, 1805; and in Franklin County, Georgia, Deed Book R p. 117, there is recorded a deed given by Richard and Susannah Woods to John Sewell for one hundred and ten and one half acres of land, "bounded as follows, to wit, sic Beginning where the-----Thompson old line crosses the Grove fork of Broad River, then South five degrees west Nineteen Chains and seventy links to a post Oak Corner then South Eighty five degrees, East sixteen Chains to a post Oak Corner as it meanders to the mouth thereof then up the Hudson River as it meanders to the mouth of the Grove Fork then up the said Grove Fork as it meanders to the

place of Beginning."

This deal was consummated on January 24, 1806. The consideration was three hundred dollars. We therefore place the time of John and Mary's arrival in Franklin County at some time between July 1, 1805 and January 24, 1806, and their settlement to have been made on the one hundred ten and one half acre tract indicated in the above deed.

This tract of land was probably a portion of 450 acres belonging to the estate of John Sewell (who died in 1862) which was sold to Elizabeth Anglin, by Richard Sewell and Greenberry Sewell, excrs. on February 17, 1863, for \$6905.00 (Coweta County Book A p. 205).

John and Mary Richmond Sewell were blessed with a large family of children, eleven in number, as follows:

1. Elizabeth, b. Rowan Co., N.C. July 1, 1805; married Wm. Anglin on Jan. 17, 1828, d. in Banks Co. Ga. 1893.
2. Greenberry, b. Franklin Co. Ga. Sept. 18, 1807; married Jan. 1, 1831 Winifred Seegar, b. June 27, 1811; d. Jan. 17, 1884. Winifred d. Dec. 20, 1883.
3. Richard, b. May 6, 1808 m. Elizabeth Stephens (b. Aug. 19, 1816, d. Apr. 4, 1884) d. Apr. 28, 1887.
4. William, b. Feb. 18, 1810. m. (1) Amelie Stephens, Apr. 14, 1840 and (2) Mary King. Died Coweta Co. June 24, 1883.
5. Levi Francis, b. Mar. 28, 1812, m. Lucy Blackwell Jan. 31, 1833.
6. James A., b. Nov. 16, 1813, m. Cath. Burgess (b. Nov. 25, 1820, d. June 20, 1892) died Coweta Co. March 28, 1859.
7. Marion b. Nov. 23, 1815, m. (1) Pillina W. Davis, 12-3-1839, (b. Oct. 12, 1815, d. Feb. 24, 1888) (2) Sarah Polk, moved from Coweta Co. 1860 to Polk Co. d. Oct. 25, 1883.
8. Milton Newton, b. Nov. 16, 1817, m. Sarah Ann Davis (b. Oct. 9, 1860, d. Aug. 13, 1855) Dec. 3, 1839 - Died Coweta Co. Dec. 18, 1885.
9. Asbury, b. Jan. 10, 1820 m. Martha Polk (John Asbury).
10. Jane, b. Apr. 2, 1822; m. May 23, 1839, Stephen R. Hood, d. Franklin Co.
11. Pierce, b. Dec. 29, 1824; m. Jan. 6, 1846 (1) Elizabeth Rainwater (2) Sarah Hime. Died Coweta Co.

(Further information on this family will be found in Line Lists.)

*[[from pages 96-97, History of Some Sewell Families in America,
Levi Worley Sewell, printed 1955]*

LEVI FRANCIS SEWELL

Levi Francis, second child of John Asbury and Martha Polk Sewell, was born in Coweta County, Georgia, on November 15, 1840, soon after his parents had moved there from Madison County.

Records of that county show that his father purchased Lot 161, 8th District, 202K A., October 23, 1848, and Lot 252, 5th District, 100 A., was purchased by him on February 14, 1849. Again on August 1, 1851, he purchased Lot 225, 14, 4th and 5th Districts, containing 3033» acres, making a total of 6063* acres he now owned in Coweta County.

On January 2, 1865, just prior to the close of the (Un-) Civil War, Levi Francis, now a man grown of 25 years and a successful wooer, united in marriage to Miss Martha F. Morgan of Coweta, and three years later, on January 29, 1868, he bought Lot 53, 4th District, containing 101 5£ acres and became a landed proprietor in that county.

However, according to my father, James A. Sewell, who is still living, Levi F. Sewell, like all of the Sewells and most other people, was interested in bettering himself and in 1871 or 1872, he moved from Coweta to Randolph County, Alabama, where land was selling at \$1.00 per acre. My father, a few years ago, wrote a statement containing all he could remember in re the move from Georgia across the border into Alabama, which is so interesting that I am quoting it verbatim for the reader's benefit, to show what moving and travel was like, and what hardships were involved in so doing in those days.

I quote:

"My father, Levi F. Sewell, moved from Coweta County to Randolph County, Alabama, from a three room house on my Grandfather Sewell's farm, where I was born February 12, 1869. It must have been about 1871 or 1872.

"My father loaded all the household goods on a two mule or two horse wagon — Just poor, scrubby, slow-moving animals. It taken two days to make the trip to Alabama, about 25 to 30 miles. We camped the first night after passing through what is now Roofville, Georgia, at creek near Laurel Hill. We made it to Alabama, he had bought 80 acres of land at about \$1.00 per acre — part of it was bottom land. He told the folks when we left Coweta he was looking for cheap bottom land — it was very good land and first year he planted sorghum cane, corn and peas, and just a small part in cotton.

"When we arrived there was not any place to live except an old run down little shack, so the neighbors came in — helped build (a) log house — they built it in about two days — chimney and all — stop0ped cracks with mud and it was very comfortable. The wash place was about three hundred yards from house at spring. He made a very good crop of things to live off

"He returned in Newnan where he had a credit with Arnall and Farmer, then large supply merchants, and he brought his cotton over there, paid them up — told them he wanted to buy some more cheap land that was bottom land — asked them to come over — look at it

and see if they would not let him have money to buy it from old man Whit Hearin. I think he had to pay \$2.00 as acre, but they told him to go on, buy it, for when he got it paid for it would be worth much more then.”

“So he could not split rails and clear up the land – that is it would take time, so he bought a steer to plow to help the scrub stock – he built a house upon (the) public road – bought set of blacksmith’s tools – sharpened his own farm tools and for his neighbors – hired Frank James paying him \$10.00 a month and board.

“So he began to rent out part of his farm. Jim Maddox and his brother came to live on the foarm as share croppers. He bought him a little ground hog thrash – traveled around – thrashed wheat and oats and got a toll. So then we began to have biscuits for breakfast with sorghum syrup, coffee made out of parched wheat. He was to become the most prominent man in the community. They elected him Justice of the Peace. He held court at Lamar first month and performed marriage ceremonies.

“About this time Carrollton, Georgia got railroad built there and supply stores spring up there. Rhudy & Spurlock, and Horace Stewart’s father — C. B. Simonton and I think, L. C. Mandeville were all supply merchants.

“So I had typhoid fever — lost my right eye and Dr. Abner Calhoun told my father nothing could be done about it; for him to keep me out of the sun. My father opened a little store at Graham, Alabama.

“So my father sold out this and rented a store and got J. D. Sewell to come in. He and I run it for about one year, so my father left and moved to Carrollton; about 1886 my brother Willis took over the farm; then my father gave forty acres of land to all children, part of it in Alabama, and to my sister Sims of near Burwell, Georgia.”

The children of Levi Francis and Martha Morgan Sewell:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Columbus Willis, | b. Aug. 11, 1887; d. June 28, 1930; m. Willie Gay, b. Aug. 26, 1865, d. Oct. 23, 1953. |
| James A. Sewell, | b. Feb. 12, 1869; m. Aug. 4, 1889 to Lyda Ann Worley, b. Nov. 6, 1872; d. Mar. 29, 1947. |
| Sarah Elizabeth Sewell, | b. Feb. 28, 1871, d. Apr. 27, 1931; m. Wm. S. McCarley. Mar. 27, 1887, b. July 3, 1862; d. Apr. 30, 1942. |
| Emma Sewell, | b. Apr. 24, 1870; m. W. J. Sims, 12,-24, 1890, b. Apr. 24, 1873, d. Nov. 23, 1942. |
| Ellen Sewell, | b. Nov. 21, 1886; m. Wm. M. Johnson, July 23, 1893; b. March 28, 1868, d. Oct. 25, 1929. |
| Shelly Sewell, | b. Nov. 26, 1881; d. Sept. 20, 1953; m. Jan. 8, 1903, Anna Devedell, b. Aug. 26, 1882; d. May 25, 1949. |

Martha Morgan and Levi Sewell are buried at Bowden, Georgia.

*[from pages 97-99, History of Some Sewell Families in America,
Levi Worley Sewell, printed 1955]*

DERIVATION OF THE NAME SEWELL

"SEWELL". A Teutonic word. Old English *sigi*, Old High German, *sigi*. Gothic, *sigis* and means victory. The word is found in the old English writers, *Wold, waeld, weald, wold, woodland*. The woods where a victory was won, in some of the many fights in the time of the making and conquest of England. The *weald* in the southern part of England, the remains of the great woods that covered that part of the country still retains that name. *Sig* or *sigi* means in all Teutonic languages *conquest*, and is found in combination with other words to form surnames. The warrior was the man of worth. Odin was called *Sig fadier*, or conquering father.

There are several Sewell post offices in the United States. Sowell has been the Virginia pronunciation time out of mind, for the family name, and for the point at the mouth of the Elizabeth river. Sowell is found on Jefferson and Fry's Map of Virginia, in Jefferson's "Notes on Virginia," in Henning's "Statues at Large." The name Sowell is in the Richmond directory and belongs to people in Fluvanna. Sewoll is the New England form of the name, and was borne by one of the witchcraft judges. It is in the London Post-office Directory for 1901, Sewell, forty names, but no Seawell nor Sewall. The first syllable has no connection with "Ocean Sea," nor the last syllable any connection with "wall" (*vallum*), nor with "well," a place where water comes out of the ground. (Note: Words *in italic* were written in pencil in the account.)

We are deeply indebted to Mrs. Elizabeth Wingo for her very full and valuable additions to our history.

THE MIAMI SEWELLS

On the 14th day of November, 1893, Jeremiah W. Sewell, of County of Osceola, State of Florida, died, leaving an inheritance of a \$1000. life insurance, and other personal property valued at \$1000. more. Herbert Sewell, son of Jeremiah, applied for letters of Administration which were granted. Heirs were listed as Mary Albina, wife, Herbert, John, Jeremiah, and E. G. Sewell, sons.

John Sewell had first store in Miami, Florida.

E. G. Sewell was first Mayor of Miami, both came there from Kissimmee, Florida. They were brought to Kissimmee by their parents when children. John and E. G. Sewell walked from Kissimmee to Titusville and got jobs with the Florida East Coast Railway, then building to Miami. They worked on until they reached Miami, where they arrived before the city was incorporated, secured property for themselves, and became one of the most influential of all Miami pioneer families.

*[from pages 111, History of Some Sewell Families in America,
Levi Worley Sewell, printed 1955]*

LEVI FRANCIS SEWELL AND WIFE MARTHA F. MORGAN

Levi Francis Sewell was the fifth child of John and Mary Richmond Sewell. He was born November 5th, 1840 and lived to the ripe old age of 85, dying April 8, 1925. On January 2, 1865, he married *lisa* Martha P. Morgan, born 12-8-1846, died, 9-3-1914- Six children blessed this union, as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Born, 1-3-1867 Died, 6-28-1930 | Columbus Willie Sewell, | married 8-11-1887, Willie Gay, Born 8-26-1865, |
| Born, 2-12-1869 | James A. Sewell, | married, 8-4-1889, Lyda Ann tforley born 11-11-1872, died 3-29-1947 |
| Born, 2-28-1871 Died, 4-27-1931 | Sarah Elizabeth, | married Mar. 27, 1887, William S. McCarley, born 7-3-1862, died 4-30-1942 |
| Born, 4-24-1870 | Emma Sewell, | married 12-24-1890, W.J.Sims, born 4-24-1873,died 11-23-1942 |
| Born, 11-21-1886 | Ellen Sewell, | married July 23, 1893, Wm. M. Johnson, born - 28-1868, died 10-25-1929 |
| Born, 11-26-1881 Died, 9-20-1953 | Shelly Sewell, | married 1-8-1953 Annie (Anna) Dwedell, born 8-26-1882, died, 5-25-1949 |

Levi Sewell was born on the " old Sewell farm" about half a mile west of Rosco, Georgia, Coweta County. Soon after his birth, his father, Asberry Sewell, moved to Cherokee County, Alabama, where he grew up. His story of the journey from Coweta County, across into Cherokee County, Alabama, and subsequent experiences, will be found elsewhere in this history.

*[from pages 115, History of Some Sewell Families in America,
Levi Worley Sewell, printed 1955]*

THE SEWALL PAPERS SEWALLS OP CARTHAGE. MOORE COUNTY. NORTH CAROLINA

Some of the Sewells living in the southeastern part of Virginia along the coast, and in some North Carolina counties, as Wake, and Moore, spell their surname, SEAWELL, but according to a statement received from Mrs. Josie S. Daniels, Faison, North Carolina, the spelling was originally Sewell, the same as ours, and sometimes Sowell. We know this to be true, as I have several times come across these variations of spelling of the surname In searching through family history. Mrs.

Daniel's story is so interesting that I am quoting it in part, as follows:

" My father, *Dr.* Virgil Newton Sewell, told me years ago, that our name in the ' way back ages' was spelled Sewell and Sowell.

" Our folks are supposed to have been descendants of the ten brothers (Sewell) who landed at Seawell's Point, Virginia, in the 1600s ... the reason of change of name spelling was because King James III confiscated land in England and would not release (same) until those to whom the land belonged returned to England and changed the way of spelling the name. In the middle 1700s the name was spelled Sowell ... In an effort to get the Scotch to pronounce it So-well, but imagine their disgust when the Scotch said Sow-(female swine)ell. Joseph Sewell of Elkridge, Maryland came through North Carolina, 1766 from Pennsylvania to Alabama, heard of the Scotch pronunciation, so said, ' We of the close kindred will spell our name Seawell and pronounce it that way', but of course, only since World War II has it been pronounced "See-well" very often. In 1912 when my father and I went to Alexander City, Alabama to see our distant cousins there, cousin Richard Ivey told me that ' because we do not spell the name alike, is not any reason that we aren't any kin, for we are, and our folks a generation ago were closer than we are.' "

Sewell Papers. Land Grant Frauds - Lottery System.

Our narrative mentions the fact that there were Land Grant Frauds under the headright system. All Georgia counties created before 1802 were known as " head-right" counties, including the one where many Sewells held land— Franklin County. Millions of acres that did not exist were granted under the Land Grant Frauds. In 1931* recounting this system, the *Lavonia Times & Gauge*, *Lavonia Georgia*, remarked " A Dark Page in the County's History is Still in the Dark for Many Historians. Nothing Ever Done About It and very little Said About It." After 1785 the head-right system was abolished and the lottery system came in. Following is a list of Sewell family forerunners who received land under each system.

Land Granted Under the Head-Right System:

| Name | County | Book | Page | Acres | Year |
|----------------|----------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Charles Sewell | Franklin | P. P. P. | 301 | 1000 | 1788 |
| Charles Sewell | " | P. P. P. | 298 | 150 | 1788 |
| Lewis Sewell | " | P. P. P. | 300 | 3000 | 1788 |
| John Sewell | " | w-s | 280 | 32 | 18k8 |
| Henry Sewell | Wilkes | G.G.S. | 338 | 200 | 1785 |
| James Sewell | Elbert | EEEEEE | 391* | 91* | 1803 |
| James Sewell | Wilkes | P. P. P. | V? | 200 | 1783 |
| John Sewell | Franklin | Q 5 | 396 | k | 1831 |
| John Sewell | " | v 5 | 332 | 233 | isfe |
| John Sewell | " | V5 | 991). | 501 | 181*7 |
| Joseph Sewell | " | M 5 | 727 | 200 | 1820 |
| Joshua Sewell | Wilkes | G.G.G. | 500 | 200 | 1785 |
| Joshua Sewell | " | ff.W.W. | 37 | 200 | 1792 |
| Joshua Sewell | Franklin | M 5 | 502 | 150 | 1819 |

| | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|---|------|----|--------|---|
| Henry | Sewell | Baldwin Co. , D. Chandlers, Franklin Co. | 5k | 5 | Coweta | n |
| Green | Sewell | Hudson, Franklin, Co | .231 | 3^ | Lee | n |
| Jesse | Sewell | » n | 159 | 8 | n | n |
| William | Sewell | R.S.Hudson, " | 143 | 18 | n | n |

Name

1832 Lottery Cherokee Land

Lot Dist. Section Drew In

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|----|----|---|-------------------|
| John Sewell | 271 | | 13 | 4 | DeKalb Co. |
| Nicholas Sewell | 146 | | 6 | k | Franklin " |
| Oliver Sewell | 135 | | 27 | 2 | n |
| Christopher Sewell | (Soldier, Indian War) | 68 | 10 | 4 | Ha be r sham " |
| Isaac Sewell | 159 | | 5 | k | Morgan " |
| Isaac Sewell | 261 | | 6 | 3 | n n |
| James L. Sewell | 201 | | 6 | 3 | H n |

1832 Lottery Cherokee Gold

| Name | Residence | District | Land Drawn | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------|------------|-------|-------|
| | | | Lot | Dist. | Sect. |
| Samuel Sewell, | Franklin County | Sewells | 642 | 19 | 3 |
| Green B. " Jr. " | " | " | 519 | 3 | 1 |
| Samuel Sewell | " " | " " | 1260 | 2 | 2 |
| Green B. Sewell | " " | Davids | 329 | 4 | 3 |
| James Sewell | | Sewells | 1079 | 3 | 4 |
| William Sewell | " " | Davids | 1118 | 20 | |
| Joshua S. Sewell | " " | Sewells | 513 | 14 | 1 |
| Green B. Sewell Jr. | " " | " | 82 | | 3 |
| Green B. Sewell Sr. | " " | " | 112 | 15 | 1 |
| Joshua Sewell, Sr. | " " | " | 342 | 5 | 1 |
| Joshua Sewal | Madison County, Jones | | 598 | 15 | 2 |
| James Sewell, | Merlwether Co., | Curreys | 1142 | 20 | 3 |
| " " | " " | " | 473 | 2 | 1 |

Land was first granted under Head Right System; then followed Lotteries:

1806 Land distributed in Baldwin and Wilkinson Counties

1820 Land in Appling, Early, Gwinnett, Haberaham, Hall Irvin,
Rabun, Walton.

- 1821 Land in Dooly, Fayette, Henry, Houston, Monroe.
- 1827 Official Register of Land Lottery in Georgia Land in Carroll, Coweta, Lee, Muscogee, Troup
- 1832 Cherokee Gold and Land Lotteries.

We are indebted to Ben W. Fortson, Jr., Secretary of State, Atlanta, Georgia, 1949. for confirmation of the land grants to a number of above, including Joshua, William, and James, Sewell who served in " Captain Barnett's Company," during the Revolution.

[from pages 122 - 124]