

JAMES WASHINGTON MATHIS (MATTHEWS) 1834-1893

James Washington Mathis was born in 1834 in Lowndes County, Ga., youngest son of James Mathis (1786-1859) and Rhoda Monk (1792-1863). James Mathis, born 1786, was a son of Edmund Mathis, Jr. and grandson of Edmund Mathis, Sr., Revolutionary Soldier of Duplin (now Sampson) County, North Carolina. Rhoda Monk Mathis was the daughter of William Monk (1763-1825) and Jerushia Parrish (1773-1857).

There seems to have been a mix-up on the spelling of the surname "Mathis" for the last several hundred years. Records have been found where a person spelling his name "Mathis" at one time spells it as "Matthews" another time. It is also spelled "Matthis". When James and Rhoda Monk Mathis were married in Bulloch Co., Georgia, the county records show the name as "Matthews" but census & other info give it as "Mathis". When James W. Mathis' first wife remarried, the name "Mathis" was used but later when their daughter married, the name "Matthews" was given on the marriage record. According to family tradition, the correct usage is "Matthews" but most of the children of James W. Mathis use "Mathis".

James W. Mathis married Mary Ann Williams in Columbia County, Florida about 1856. She was born in 1842 in Columbia County, daughter of Rowland Williams (1812-1867) and Nancy Ann "Annie" Sweat (1816-1908). (See sketch on Rowland Williams in Issue #1). James & Mary Ann Mathis had two children:

1. Emily Augusta "Gussie" Mathis (Matthews), born May 25, 1857; married in Manatee County on January 13, 1873, Eley P. Brannan, son of David Brannan and Susan Whidden, grandson of Maxfield Whidden and Sophia Crews.
2. Margaret B. Mathis, born April 15, 1859; married 1st, John Brooker, about 1875. He was born 1856. She married 2nd, \_\_\_\_\_ Miller.

The Mathis family moved to south Florida in the late 1850's along with the Rowland Williams family, settling in Manatee County in the vicinity of Brownville. James returned to Columbia County apparently because of family problems for Mary Ann Mathews & the two girls are shown in the 1860 Manatee County census living with Henry and Jane Whidden Langford. Mary Ann filed for divorce and the following legal ad appeared in the June 30, 1860 issue of the Florida Peninsular of Tampa:

Bill of Divorce

Circuit Court, State of Fla, Southern Circuit  
Manatee County

Mary Ann Mathews

vs

James Mathews

Bill in Chancery

For Divorce

It appearing that the bill in the above entitled cause, has been filed and by the affidavit that the said James Mathews resides out of said circuit, to wit, in the County of Columbia, in said state, it is ordered that the said James Mathews do appear and plead, answer or demur to said bill.

June 2, 1860