

Scotch-Irish Versus English Hardins in North Carolina

The “Knob Creek” and “Hickory Creek” Hardins of western NC and later Tennessee are not related to Benjamin Hardin and Sarah Stanley

The Scotch-Irish Hardins who came into NC from Pennsylvania with their German in-laws during the middle of the 18th century were a completely different group from the English Hardins who settled in tidewater Va during the 17th century. They associated with different groups of other families, had different migration patterns, different religions, and different approaches to the use of deadly force.

The Scotch-Irish Presbyterians came into NC through the Shenandoah Valley from Pennsylvania and married Germans (Kuykendalls, Hambrights). They were fierce Indian fighters and patriots (except when trying to set up their own State of Franklin).

The family of Ben and Sarah Stanley were English and possibly Quakers. They often hooked up with Indians for comfort and fulfillment rather than exterminating them. They tried to avoid violent conflict as best they could.

The connection of the Knob Creek Hardins to Ben & Sarah of Surry Co Va is based on conjectures made by Oran Hardin, the man who ran the family association for a number of years. He collected much information and wasn't shy about making conjectures. The trouble is that his conjectures were taken as facts by many who came after him. Other than the fact that both groups used the name Benjamin, the only other connection is that a guy named David Standley bought land from Ben and Catherine on the Catawba in 1758. However this Standley was German and not in any way connected to the family of Sarah Stanley. In addition, land records show the wife of Ben in NC to be Catherine.

References below show that Ben and a Joseph Hardin were in the Shenandoah Valley as early as 1737. Ben went to the Catawba River in NC near the SC border and his group became known as the Knob Creek Hardins. Joseph is probably the father of the Hardins who settled in Orange County on the Haw River in the 1750s and 60s before moving on to Rutherford County where they became known as the Hickory Creek Hardins. The two groups with many descendants share the same DNA.

Facts that support this position include the 1740's Augusta County records of Benjamin Hardin who “lived in a cow pasture” and had “gone to Carolina” when they tried to bring him into court. In addition, a Joseph Hardin and Benjamin Hardin are signers of a petition 29 August 1737 to establish a Presbyterian meeting house under Rev. William Williams. Augusta County at that time was everything west of the Blue Ridge and was rapidly being populated by Scotch-Irish and German settlers arriving from Pennsylvania by the Great Wagon Road. At that time, Presbyterians in America were almost exclusively Scotch-Irish. The Highland Scots, who poured into NC after the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charles at Culloden in 1746, were the other Presbyterians. The English tidewater residents were not migrating across the mountains in significant numbers during this period. Instead they followed a very different path of migration – into Southside Virginia, Granville County NC, Orange County NC, SC, GA and points west. Some of them left Orange County for Indiana.

Benjamin Hardin II, the son of Ben & Sarah, was involved in a court case in 1749 in Southampton County Va (formed from Surry where Ben Sr made his will). His wife Sarah Hooper can not be connected to the Knob Creek Hardins. The Hoopers at that time lived in tidewater Virginia and were English. A few of the family trees on the internet say she "was told she was Native American Indian." One tree gives her birth as: 1700 in Indian, Penobscot, Maine. Either way, there is no evidence that she was ever in NC.

Descendants of Ben & Sarah's son Solomon who lived in Sampson Co NC have a different DNA from the Knob Creek Hardins. In addition, I have traced others with the same DNA back to Ben and Sarah. I realize that there are many ways one family can pass down more than one DNA due to adoptions, daughters having out-of-wedlock sons who keep their mother's name, etc.

I also realize that these two groups were sometimes overlapped i.e. Orange County NC in the late 18th century. They also overlapped with a third group of Hardins -- the descendants of the Frenchman Mark Hardin. Hence there is much confusion and many errors that still need to be sorted out.

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