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PAGE, JOHN, 1766-1859.  
PAPERS, 1784-1880.

Accession numbers 959 and 1779

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Location IV-D-4

The Rev. John Page (1766-1859) was a pioneer Methodist Episcopal, circuit-riding minister who resided in Sumner County, Tennessee, from ca. 1790-ca. 1804, when he was listed in Smith County. His papers were loaned for copying by the owners, \*Ila Douglass Page and Lewis Page, Lebanon, Tennessee, relatives of Mr. Page.

Linear feet of shelf space occupied: .42  
Approximate number of items: ca. 300 (Xerox copies)

Single photocopies of unpublished writings may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

\*Ila Douglas Page: deceased 1969

Library of Congress card no.  
MS 68-494

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John Page, 1766-1859

Popular circuit-riding Methodist Episcopal minister, often forced into controversy; ranked among the best preachers of the day; John Carr says in his Early Times in Middle Tennessee, "The Church was under stronger obligations to John Page than to any man I knew of his day."

- 1766            born November 22 - Fanquier County, Virginia
- 1791            married Cealia, daughter of Elmore Douglass (d. 1819); Col. Edward Douglass and his sons, of whom Elmore was one, had moved to Sumner County, Tennessee, in 1785, and Elmore Douglass is listed as a pioneer in both Sumner and Smith Counties
- Rev. Page is listed among early ministers from both Sumner and Smith Counties, and is known to have preached at Cage's Bend, Sumner County (later Smith County), a place of Methodist worship since 1791 or 1792
- 1792            admitted on trial as a traveling preacher; stationed on the Lexington Circuit (Kentucky) of the Methodist Episcopal Church; traveled various circuits in Kentucky and Virginia until 1799
- 1792-1859      name appears on Tennessee Conference rolls of the Church except for the period of 1804-1825, when Mr. Page served as a local preacher
- 1795            appointed a deacon in the New River Circuit (Virginia) by Bishop Francis Asbury (1745-1816)
- 1795            appointed to the Green Circuit in East Tennessee
- 1796-99        traveled various circuits in Kentucky and Virginia
- 1799-1803      Mr. Page served on the Cumberland Circuit, which included all of Middle Tennessee and the southern part of Kentucky
- 1800            conspicuous in the religious revival of that year; briefly on the Holston and Russell Circuits (Kentucky) and on the New River Circuit (Virginia)
- 1802 or 1803    appointed presiding elder of the Cumberland Circuit
- 1804-25        served as a local minister but traveled throughout his life as he was a believer in the circuit-riding system of the Church

- with Alexander Anderson was leader in carrying on work at Union campground
- 1808 name first appears on Smith County records (in 1799 Smith County was erected from parts of Sumner County and the area in which Mr. Page resided may have been incorporated at that time as Smith County)
- 1815 associated with the Rev. Thomas Logan Douglass (1781-1843) as a book agent for the Church. The Rev. William McKendree (1757-1835) supplied the volumes sold
- 1820, 1830, and 1850 listed in census of Smith County
- 1822 acting justice of the peace for Smith County
- 1825 readmitted to the Tennessee Conference of the Church
- 1826 appointed to the Nashville District, which comprehended all of Middle Tennessee south of the Cumberland River and extended into North Alabama between the Tennessee State line and the Tennessee River
- ca. 1829-? owned a general store in Carthage, Tennessee, called John Page & Sons. At least one son, William M/Kendree7 Page, and probably others, were partners.
- ca. 1833 discontinued preaching regularly; had amassed considerable property which allowed him to live comfortably until his death
- 1849 grand-nephew, the Rev. Leroy H. Cage (d. 1873?), proposed buying the mill and equipment which Mr. Page wished to sell

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Biographical sketch based on WPA Smith County records; the manuscripts in this collection; John Berry McFerrin, Methodism in Tennessee, 3 v. Nashville: v.1, A. H. Refford, Agent; v. 2 and 3, Methodist Publishing House, 1875; I, 218-27, and passim; and on John Carr, Early Times in Middle Tennessee, Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1857, pp. 70-71, 74-75.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains correspondence (1798-1844) of the Rev. John Page (1766-1859), pioneer Methodist Episcopal, circuit-riding minister who resided in Sumner County, Tennessee, from ca. 1790-ca. 1804, when he moved to Smith County (or perhaps the area where he lived was incorporated in Smith County when it was erected in 1799). Included in the collection are his diary (ca. 1797-ca. 1851); his legal documents and those of a few members of his family (1795-1880); writings of two unidentified members of the Page family (n.d.) and a few letters from family members (1815-69); papers (1784-1849) regarding the estate of Elmore Douglass (d. 1819), surveyor, merchant, and landowner of Sumner and Smith Counties and father-in-law of Mr. Page; two prescriptions (n.d.); and a clipping from the Hartsville (Tenn.) Plaindealer, January 26, 1861, regarding the Secession convention.

The largest item comprises the estate papers of Elmore Douglass, over which there was much litigation. Court action continued from 1819, when Douglass died, until 1849, and there are notations of no less than ten legal suits. Two of the most troublesome were Pinkston vs. Page and Hooks (1809-23) and Peyton vs. administrators of the Douglass estate (1794-1823). Moses Pinkston and Isaac Hooks were sons-in-law of Elmore Douglass; and Ephriam, John, and later Balie Peyton disputed the ownership of several sizeable plots of land in Smith County, especially some land owned by Col. William Martin (1765-1846) of Smith County. In the papers appear early settlers and families of Sumner and Smith Counties. Representing Sumner County are the names of James Winchester and the Douglass and Cage families. For Smith County some of the early settlers mentioned are Wilson Cage, Elmore Douglass, the Rev. John McGee, Ephraim and John Peyton, Moses Pinkston, and Peter Turney.

Writings of the Page family include an ambitious work of some sixty small pages, "A Dialogue between a Presbyterian, a Methodist and a Christian on Various Points," probably by Mr. Page (n.d.); an incomplete play script for Act 2 of an untitled play (n.d.); and two love poems (n.d.).

The diary of Mr. Page details activities of a Methodist minister from ca. 1796-ca. 1851. Mr. Page recorded places where he preached and Bible citations from which sermons were prepared at each location; baptisms and funerals at which he officiated; remunerations which he received, if any, for his sermons and offices; and snatches of sermons and cautionary paragraphs. The meeting places of the Holston Circuit in 1813 are listed, together with the number of members at each.

Some other items of interest to students of the Methodist Episcopal Church are the 1795 appointment of Mr. Page as deacon to the New River Circuit (Virginia), signed by Bishop Francis Asbury (1745-1816); the documents recounting the expulsion in 1814 of Clark and Ward (first names not stated) from the Society of Malones of the Methodist Episcopal Church; an account of the church trial in 1826 of William Potts at a

"camp meeting at Winrous"; an undated letter of the Rev. John McGee (1761-1836) remonstrating with Mr. Page for his denunciation of a group of Methodists; and an undated letter (probably in the late 1700's) from Bishop Asbury containing a note of encouragement to Mr. Page from Asbury's assistant, the Rev. Richard Whatcoat (1736-1806), who was ordained bishop in 1800. There are also letters of a business nature from well-known Methodist ministers, all of whom began their ministry in Sumner County: Thomas Logan Douglass (1781-1843) to Mr. Page, 1815, regarding sale of religious books for the Methodist Church, in which both were engaged; Leroy H. Cage (d. 1873?) to Mr. Page in 1849 offering to buy his mill and appliances; and a note of acknowledgement from John Berry McFerrin (1807-1887) to "Mr. Bates, " 1841, thanking him for forwarding a communication from Mr. Page. Other correspondents include members of the Page family: sons--Norvell Asbury Page, Thomas Wilkerson Page, and William McKendree Page; sons-in-law--N. L. Norvell, Richard Stratton, and S. W. Greer; and granddaughter--Eliza M. Donnell.

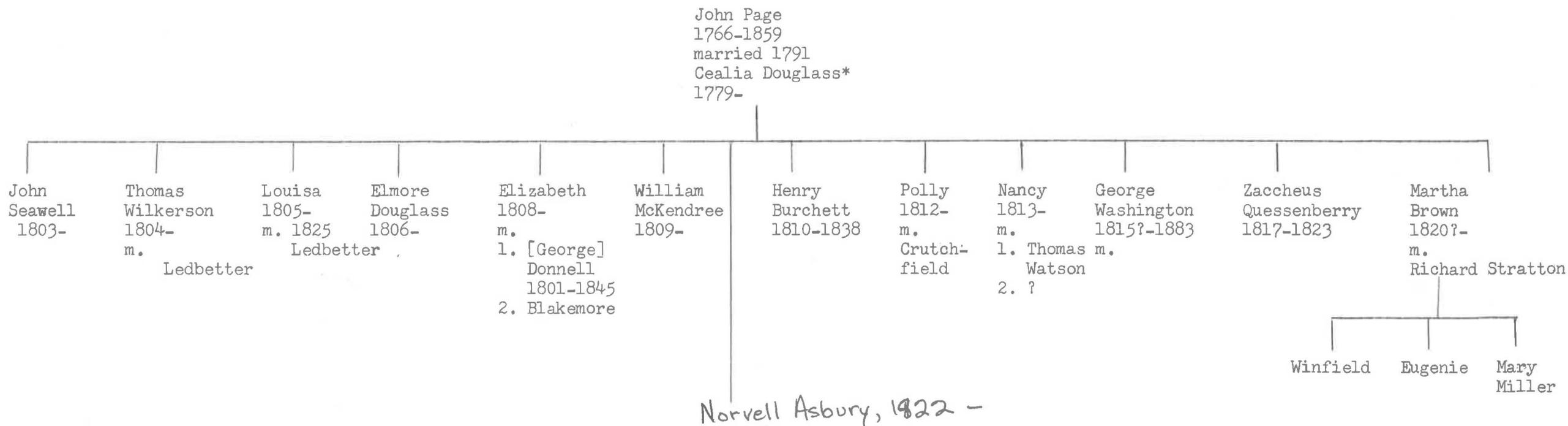
## CONTAINER LIST

### Box 1

1. Correspondence--General, 1802-1849; undated
2. Correspondence--John Page, 1798; undated
3. Correspondence--Relatives of John Page, 1815-1869
4. Correspondence--John Seawell Page (son of John Page), 1845; Norvell Asbury Page (son of John Page), 1849
5. Correspondence--Thomas Wilkerson Page (son of John Page), 1851 to father; incoming, 1850
6. Correspondence--William McKendree Page (son of John Page), incoming, 1824-1843
7. Correspondence--Richard Stratton (son-in-law of John Page), 1848-1851
8. Diaries, memoirs, etc.--Diary of John Page, ca. 1797-ca. 1851
9. Documents, 1795-1880
10. Receipts (debits and credits) and statements, 1802-1858
11. Writings--Dialogue between a Presbyterian, a Methodist and a Christian on Various Points, undated; no signature
12. Writings--Play script, Act II (incomplete; undated); poetry, undated
13. Estate of Elmore Douglass--Documents of Elmore Douglass, 1784-1816
14. Estate of Elmore Douglass--Documents, re: litigation, 1819-1846
15. Estate of Elmore Douglass--Correspondence, 1839-1849
16. Estate of Elmore Douglass--Notations, 1819-1824; undated
17. Estate of Elmore Douglass--Peyton vs. administrators of Elmore Douglass, 1794-1823
18. Estate of Elmore Douglass--Pinkston vs. Page and Hook, 1809-1823
19. Miscellaneous--Clipping, 1861; two prescriptions, undated; genealogical note, re: William Corley, undated

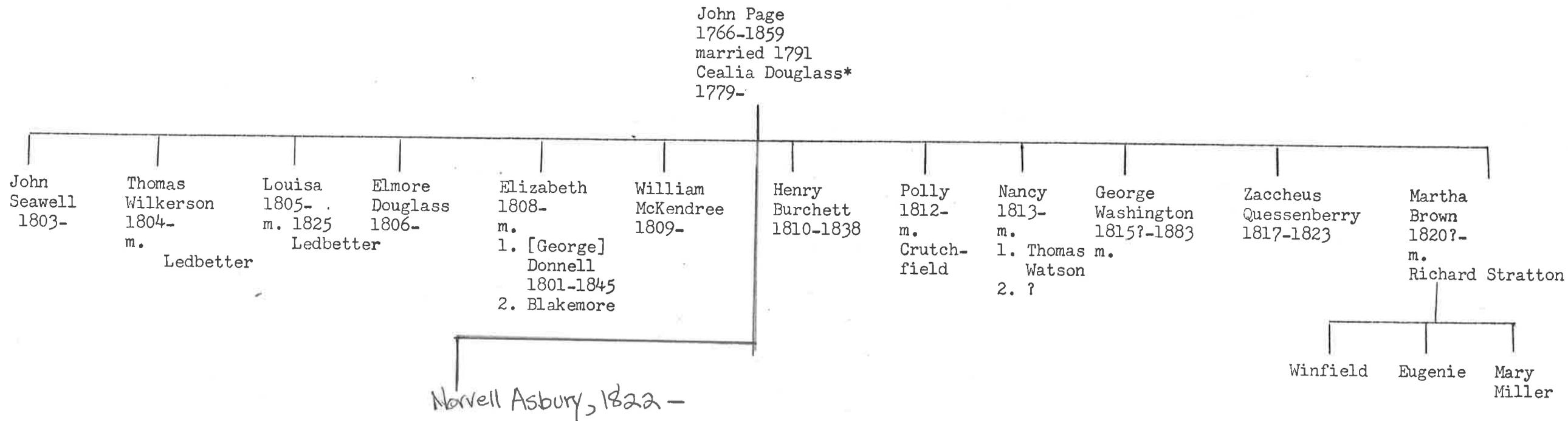
## NAME INDEX

- Asbury, Francis - f. 1, letter (n.d.) to the Rev. John Page; f. 9, appointment of Mr. Page as deacon, 1795
- Bidford, J. H. - f. 1, letter (1841) to William M. Page
- Cage, Leroy H. - f. 1, letter (1849) to Mr. Page
- Corley, William - f. 1, birth and death dates noted
- Donnell, Eliza M. - f. 6, 2 letters (1851) to Mr. Page
- Douglass, Burchett - f. 14, receipt (1814)
- Douglass, Elmore - f. 13, will (1806)
- Douglass, James - f. 14, signature (1811)
- Douglass, Thomas Logan - f. 1, letter (1815) to Mr. Page
- McGee, John - f. 1, letter (n.d.) to Mr. Page
- McFerrin, <sup>John</sup>William Berry - f. 1, letter (1844) to "Mr. Bates"
- McKendree, William - f. 3, letter (1815) of Thomas L. Douglass to Mr. Page, mention of; f. 8, notations of number of books received from in diary of Mr. Page
- Martin, William - f. 17, land of source of controversy in Peyton vs. administrators of Douglass
- Greer, M. A. - f. 3, letter (1869) to Miss Jennie White; letter (n.d.) to L. Page
- Greer, S. W. - f. 3, fragment of letter (n.d.) probably to Mr. Page
- Hooks, Isaac - f. 18, defendant in Pinkston vs. Page and Hooks (1809-23)
- Norvell, N. L. - f. 6, letter (1841) to William M. Page
- Page, Elmore D. - f. 9, mention of in lawsuit Watus vs. Page (1839)
- Page, John Seawell - f. 4, letter (1845) to Mr. Page
- Page, Norvell Asbury - f. 4, letter (1849) to Mr. Page
- Page, Thomas Wilkerson - f. 5, letter (1851) to Mr. Page
- Page, William M(cKendree) - f. 6, three letters to (1824-43); f. 9, mention of in lawsuit Watus vs. Page (1839)
- Peyton, Ephraim - f. 17, deed signed by (1798); mention of in lawsuit Peyton vs. administrators of Douglass (1794-1823)
- Pinkston, Moses - f. 18, complainant in Pinkston vs. Page and Hooks (1809-23)
- Potts, William - f. 9, account of church trial of (1826)
- Stratton, Richard - f. 7, four letters (1848, 1850, 1851) to Mr. Page
- Turney, Peter - f. 17, bill of sale (1794) to Ephraim Peyton
- Watus, Mortimer - f. 9, complainant in Watus vs. Page (1839)
- Whatcoat, Richard - f. 1, note (undated) to Mr. Page
- Winchester, James - f. 13, two documents signed by (1816)



\* daughter of Elmore Douglass (d. 1819), pioneer of Sumner and Smith Counties, Tennessee

Sources of chart: Mss. in this collection and Bible records in possession of the Page family.



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