

MICHAEL GLAVES

The Pioneer

Michael Glaves was not content to remain in Augusta County, Virginia. By the year 1784, he appeared in court records in Lincoln County, Kentucky. It appears that he remained in the area for several months. For some reason he decided to move south.

North Carolina still claimed most of the area which later became the state of Tennessee. Michael Glaves was awarded a land warrant of 640 acres from North Carolina in the area of what is now Old Hickory, Davidson County, Tennessee. It was there that Michael brought his wife, Rachel, and there that they reared at least eight children.

It is not known if Michael was married more than once, but it seems very likely that he was. At least two of the children, Mary Dorcas and Elizabeth, were born before moving to Tennessee. It is possible that Rachel was their step mother. No record of marriage for Michael and Rachel is known, but she is named in his will and in a family Bible.

Life in the territory South of the Ohio was filled with perils on every side. The British still encouraged the Indians to harass the settlers. The area was rife with wild animals such as bears, wild boars, wildcats – ‘panthers,’ rattlesnakes, etc. As a result, Michael and his family stayed inside the confines of Mansker’s Fort at night and rowed across the river each morning to clear the land for a home for farming.

Just when did Michael come to Tennessee? The first date that has been documented for his appearance in Davidson county is of the Tax List of Davidson County of 1787. In 1788, an apprence was assigned to Michael. Thomas Dunbar, an orphan of 14, was to be taught ***“the art of weaving if capable of learning the Same or if not To give the sd. Apprentice at the Expiration of Term a horse and saddle Such as now Trade amongst us for five Second Rate cows and calves and Read and write In some Tolerable Degree, Or Otherwise Six months Schooling with a Suit of Freedom Clothes”***¹

From these two evidences we learn that Michael Gleaves was a person of good standing in the community. It is also shown that weaving was a trade that Michael had. At that time, weaving was often done by the men. Whether

¹ Dennis Glaves, compiler, *The Descendants of Matthew Gleaves, the Glaves/Gleaves Family in America* (The Gleaves Family Association, 2005), 80; Davidson County Minute Book page 214

this was something that Michael did himself or if Rachel was the weaver is open to inspection.

In the early part of the 1790, Michael was appointed as Road Overseer for the road between Shaw's ferry and Mansker's station. Usually the overseer lived near the road and was responsible for seeing that it was cleared and in repair for use. On July 14, 1790, Daniel Williams, Jnr. Was given the job. This might have been when Michael and Rachel moved to their home in Jones Bend and were no longer living near the road.²

Just down the lane from his home which was called ***Breezewood*** was the farm of Andrew Jackson who would become President of the United States. Jackson and Glaves shared a love of horses and horse racing. Horseracing was legal in Tennessee at that time. The race course used most frequently was in an area called Clover Bottom. In his Will of 1811, Michael Glaves lists horses which came from Jackson's racehorses: "***the gray Diomedé filly***" and "***the Truxton colt.***"³

As neighbors Michael and Andrew were not always friends as reported in this affidavit of 1800:

State of Tennessee Davidson County

June 15, 1800

Whereas a report has been in circulation that I Michael Gliavs (sic) of the County and State aforesaid Should have, on the sixth Day of June in the Year of Our Lord Eighteen hundred and at the House of John Bosley utter and speak the following words of his honor Judge Jackson (to wit) As hones a man as Andrew Janckson was called he had stolen his Bull and he could prove it. I do therefore certify that if I did Speak the above words they wer (sec) groundless and unfounded, and further I do certify that I never did suspect Andrew Jackson of a dishonest act in my life

Given under my hand this fifteenth Day of June 100

Test Saml. Donelson

Michel Gleaves

Josiah Payne and John Hays Junior attested that the above was true.⁴

Michael Glaves was wealthy for the time. Michael's great grandson, James Miller Turner, wrote in 1921: ***He built the house we all knew in the latter part of 1788-9. In looking through the recorder's office I find Mike Gleaves bought in 1792, 640 acres near Nashville and paid cash for the same \$2700, and in what is now East Nashville bought 320 acres, paid cash \$3600. And I have often wondered at such a time where he got all that money – but***

² Dennis Glaves, compiler, *The Descendants of Matthew Gleaves, the Glaves/Gleaves Family in America (The Gleaves Family Association, 2005)*, 81; *Davidson County Minute Book* page 372

³ Dennis Glaves, compiler, *The Descendants of Matthew Gleaves, the Glaves/Gleaves Family in America (The Gleaves Family Association 2005)*, 81; *The Flowering of the Cumberland*

⁴ Sam B. Smith, Harriet Chappell Owsley, Editors, *The Papers of Andrew Jackson, volume 1, 170-1803* (Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press), 231-232

*I have been told that each year after he became settled that he would build a huge flat boat and buy from his neighbors everything they produced, bacon, cotton, tobacco, lard, etc and float down to New Orleans, and being the case 'tis is easy to see how he did it.*⁵

*In 1812 William Gleaves raised a company of soldiers, built a boat at Paines Landing on Cumberland river and floated down the river and joined Gen. Jackson at Natchez and went with Jackson to the Battle of New Orleans.*⁶

“Albert Gleaves, Jr., a great grandson of Michael and Rachel, received an appointment to the United States Naval Academy of at Annapolis. As Admiral Gleaves during World War I, he was honored for escorting the troops to Europe without losing a ship. After his death in 1937, the Navy built a destroyer in Albert’s honor. The USS Gleaves, a Benson Class Destroyer, was commissioned on June 14, 1940 ...she saw her first action in World War II while on convoy duty south of Iceland in 1941. A convoy of supply vessels was attacked by a German submarine wolf pack and the Gleaves helped drive them off.”⁷

Michael Glaves: an American Revolution soldier; a frontiersman, an entrepreneur, citizen of Jones’ Bend/Haley’s Bend/Old Hickory, Davidson County, Tennessee, Unites States of America

⁵ The Gleaves Family as Remembered by James Miller Turner dictated to his daughter Mrs. W. Finley Campbell and Betty Hooper Turner, 1921. Copied, 1960 by Mrs. E.R. Hudgings (Virginia McLemore Turner) daughter of John B. Turner, a brother of James Miller Turner, the author; for Kenneth C. Thomson, Jr. Transcription of handwritten copy by Virginia W. Melton, 2005

⁶ The Gleaves Family as Remembered by James Miller Turner.

⁷ Dennis Glaves, the Descendants of Matthew Gleaves, 82