

Woods' Family Myths and the Real Facts

By Cecilia Fábos-Becker (2020-08-03)

Myth 1: Trooper John Woods came with Cromwell to Ireland and Meath. Wife: Isabella Bruce.

Myth 2: the Woods' who emigrated to Pennsylvania in the 1720's and 1730's were children of John Woods of Rossmead/Rossmidhe and Elizabeth Worsopp.

First the problem with long-standing myths is by indulging in and accepting them for a very long time, is that clinging to myths prevents family history students and researchers from learning about the realities of families and their individuals and enjoying the families as they really were. Also, the more that serious researchers in the U.S., Ireland, Scotland and the rest of the UK know of the truth, especially with more documents being found there and added to archives or slowly coming on line. The more the real researchers find and present, the more ridiculous and child-like the myth-holders and promoters of myths appear to many people. It's hard to be taken seriously and regarded as an intelligent, rational adult, if you believe in, and keep promoting fantasies that have been proved, several times, to have no basis in reality--facts and documents. Many descendants of the several Woods' who first emigrated to Pennsylvania in the 1720's and 1730's and who are increasingly being found to be related to one another, though not all as brothers, have been putting real families into unsupported fantasies for generations. This monograph attempts to finally put an end to these and show something of the real story of the Woods and encourage further research into forgotten real places and people.

The reality for the first two myths: In summary, using all the records shown after this paragraph, **there was no such person as "Trooper John" or "Captain John" Woods, married to an Isabella Bruce who came from Yorkshire to Ireland and obtained land in County Meath. Also, John Woods of Rossmead, son of John Woods of Garclony, and grandson of RICHARD Woods, a Cromwellian emigrant, and John's wife Elizabeth Worsopp, had NO children, and therefore are NOT the ancestors of the Woods of PA and VA.**

Additionally, Samuel and Michael Woods were both born before 1690. A family monument is in the St.

Paul Episcopal churchyard at Ivy in Albemarle County, VA, erected after the Civil War to replace a much older one that had been destroyed in the war, stated he was born in 168__ (part of his stone had survived but only three numbers of the year of birth).

Elizabeth Worsopp, as per her brother's will, was still single as of December, 1690. Here are two links.

The first is to the [letter from Hibernia Research Ltd.](#) who found the wills that showed the reality of John Wood(s) and Elizabeth Worsopp which should have

(Transcriber/researcher note: Rossmead related websites created by Irish government entities indicate that **John Wood of Garclony and Rosmead was born in 1628/9** "he was 82 years old when he died in 1710"--actually when he wrote his will; he died in May, 1711) and his son John Wood of Rosmead was born in 1654.)

John Wood of Rosmead/Rosmead, Barony of Delvin, County of Westmeath, will dated 9th March, 1723, proved 24th April, 1730 (he died April, 1730). Identifies **wife as Elizabeth daughter of Sir Thomas Worsopp**. (Hibernia Research notes Sir Thomas Worsopp's will of 1690 names daughter Elizabeth as yet unmarried, so she married John Wood just after 1690. Other sisters were married already and so indicated.) John names also a **sister Elizabeth married to Simon? Nicholson, sister Mary married to John Widman. Nieces and Nephews named: Hans Widman of Houstown(?)**, whose son becomes **John Widman Wood** (surname change a condition of the will to inherit the estate of Rosmead), **Christopher Nicholson** of Balrath in Meath, who married Elinor Pepper; **John Nicholson** and **Thomas Nicholson**. Betham notes that Hans Widman formally took the surname Wood to inherit his uncle's estate 9 March, 1735 and he was married to a Margaret ___ with an event date of 6 September, 1734 (event is a scrawl). **Wife, Elizabeth (nee Worsopp) Wood** left will dated 7 May, 1741, proved 17 November, 1741. Betham notes **her relatives and heirs were: Richard Toler, Esq., Daniel or David Mulledy and his son John** (actually relatives of her Elizabeth's late husband), **Mrs. Worsopp Lauren (?- should be Bushe), Patrick Mulledy, Thomas Nicholson, Malcolm? Nicholson** (Nicholson's were also relatives of her late husband), **Elizabeth Davison, Mary Forst, George Fenham? Fisher?, Elizabeth Stephens, Christian Cooley, James Cooper, Elizabeth Chapman, Elizabeth I ___ and Anthony Chapman of Dublin.**

John Widman Wood was heir to his father **Hans Widman** in ownership of Rossmead, 25 July, 1742, and married to **Winifred**, wife (relict) of ___ Carden. (John Widman Wood married a widow.)--Betham's pedigree notes.

(Transcribers additions from Records found at the Registry of Deeds, in Dublin, Ireland): Records of Leases owned by **John Wood and Elizabeth Worsopp Wood** as new leases and as memorials of changes to older leases were registered, as required by the terms of the leases which list relatives and describe relationships to clarify names aforementioned in the wills:

40-517-27191, entry, no. in the Registry of Deeds, registered 11th February, 1724 by **John Wood, Esq. and Elizabeth Wood otherwise Worsopp, his wife, of Rosmead, John Worsopp Bushe, and Henry Webb**, both of Dunshaughlin, a lease made 21st March 1723, to **James Clinch** (Clynch in other records), of County Meath, farmer. Lands at Johnstown amounting to 230 acres and lands at Dunshaughlin totalling 20 acres for 31 years for rents totalling 122 pounds and 10 schillings per year. Witnesses **John Tandy of Drewstown, Esq., and William Tanner (Henner?)**, of Dublin, gentleman. (Note: James Clynch is related to the Woods (with an s) family of County Meath as seen in two wills.)

52-144-37978, entry no. in the Registry of Deeds, registered 11th February, 1726, by **John Wood and Elizabeth Worsopp, his wife**. Memorial for Indenture of Lease bearing the date of 4th April, 1724 between Wood of Rossmead and his wife and **Henry Webb**, both of Dunshaughlin (for Wood it's the property of the lease, not where he was actually residing) of the first part and **Rowland Cooke, farmer, second part**. Lease reciting that the **Right Honorable Richard, Lord Viscount Rosse, Baron of Oxmantown**, deceased, by his **Deeds of Lease and Release** presented bearing dates, respectively, of

buried this myth at least 45 years ago. This second link is to the typed transcription of [Betham's pedigrees and notes from the abstracts for original wills](#).

I will show that **the best evidence of the Pennsylvania emigrants' father is that of a John Woods who lived in north County Down** and that he was the son of another John Woods who lived in Antrim, in the Shankill district of Belfast--and wisely left that district long ago. This Woods' family was already in Ireland by the 1630's first on Hamilton of Abercorn lands, then on Hamilton of Clanboye lands as tenants and later some purchased land in the 1680's and 1690's. **DNA analysis also shows a Woods to Woods (about 3rd or 4th cousin) marriage, just before the emigrant generation** indicating Rev. McClenaghan was correct about such a marriage--but wrong about the degree of cousins. There is no evidence that the emigrants were born in Meath, but, depending upon which Woods line was that of their mother, they may have spent some time in Meath.. The DNA analysis was done on the DNA test results of a well-documented male descendant of Michael Woods who still bears the surname Woods. The test was done by the only company that does a full Y-DNA test and identifies for the client a full haplogroup, not just the clade, FTDNA (FamilyTree DNA). The analysis was done using a specialized database from families of farmers whom records show were in Ireland for many hundreds of years and still have descendants in those areas, by Dr. Tyrone Bowes, of "Origenes" which has three divisions now: "Irish Origenes," "Scottish Origenes," and "English Origenes." He has also researched medical genetics and taught a few years at the National University of Ireland at Galway. See the link to this Woods case study for more details. <https://americeltic.net/case-studies/>

The second Woods line, as shown by DNA analysis, is connected to a separate Woods line that was earliest, and still has descendants, in the **Monaghan-Cavan area**. Where the myth might still have a glimmer of reality is that the Woods' in Meath who appear by the documents to connect to Sir Thomas Woods and Anne Hoey (daughter of Jane Parsons and Sir John Hoey) are originally out of Monaghan also, as was the Hoey family before moving south to Kildare, Wicklow, Offaly and Dublin. The Hoey, Parsons, and Sir Thomas Woods, among them had extensive holdings, and this included property in County Meath.

There remain two possibilities for the Woods' wife of John Woods, the real father of the emigrants (at least some--he may have been uncle to others). One would have been a child of a **William Woods, "gentleman"** (his grandfather may have been knighted), of **County Cavan** whose family held lands in both Cavan and Monaghan and is on Catholic Irish Parliament of James II's "list of attainted" in 1689 as head of family, and landholder., The other possibility would be a child of **Sir Thomas Woods and Anne Hoey who were married in 1658/9** and were on the 1659 hearth rolls as married with no children yet, but did have at least two sons as shown by land records, and archivists believe more than two, and several daughters. **Sir Thomas Woods' main "seat" estate was at Kilmeage, near Naas in County Kildare**. He also had a home in Dublin and other properties in Dublin, and properties in Offaly, near what is now Birr, and in Wicklow, near the Hoey family's properties there. Either way, **John Woods' wife was born about 1660**. IF, and that's still a big unproven IF, "Elizabeth" (probable name, not 100% certain as yet) Woods, was out of the Sir Thomas Woods and Anne Hoey marriage, she had dower lands that came to her in Meath from her father and maternal grandmother that they were documented as owning (**Sir John Lodge's pedigrees showed Patents for the Parsons in his first edition**; the obituaries and other records related to Sir John Hoey and his father and mother describe their lives in detail and Sir John's holdings at the time of his death. His son's and Sir Thomas' son's deeds of sales further indicate the holdings each owned, including one that was co-owned by Thomas Woods Esq., and William Hoey. There was also a second smaller village in Meath called Parsonstoun that existed into the mid 1800's and disappeared by 1900. This was on some of the Parsons' original holdings obtained during the last decades of the reign of Elizabeth I.

First, the main Sources about who was in Cromwell's army and received grants are principally, ***The Irish and Anglo-Irish Landed Gentry: When Cromwell Came to Ireland*** by, John O'Hart, compiled and published in 1892, from original, primary sources, as a supplement to his ***Irish Pedigrees*** and ***The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*** by John P. Prendergast, Esq. in 1868, Barclay Street. Other sources are mentioned throughout this article. First the title of John O' Hart's book is misleading: his book actually has many Scots-Irish families in there, and today the Norman-Irish would not call themselves Anglo-Irish and were not calling themselves anything but Irish in the late 1500's and 1600's. Many had retained their Catholic religion as the Tudors and Stuarts and the English parliament was attempting to force Ireland to become Protestant, under mostly "the Church of Ireland--a division of the Church of England, headed by the English king (or queen).

Prendergast discussed in some details that O'Hart did not, in particular, how much land was acquired by some individuals and where it was acquired. For example, Richard Wood was the only Woods shown to have acquired land in and around Dublin, including a small parcel called Garclony, in a remote area of Meath not far from the Westmeath county line. The closest actual town to his property was Kells. **Richard Woods**, was from Yorkshire, and served as Marshall and Quartermaster in Col. Richard Axtell's regiment under Cromwell and the Commonwealth. Another key figure was named Middleton, who was a Colonel, and also from Yorkshire. As York is in the North of England, and most of Cromwell's strongest supporters were from the south, they mistrusted these men from York as well as those from Wales. When Parliament drew up the first lists of officers for the entire "New Model Army," the southerners insisted on striking out the men from the north. However, Cromwell, Coote, Axtell and others then added men from Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Cumbria as officers to the "New Model Army" that was to invade Ireland, getting them out of England, and away from potential Scottish influence. Some members of parliament had even referred to the men from the north as "Scots," and did not want them joining the Scots who still supported the Stuarts as Scottish kings, if no longer English kings. The Parliamentarians had already engaged the Scots at the battle of Preston in August, 1648. This is why you will find more of these northern officers, whom some members of Parliament labeled "Scots," in Ireland at the end of 1649. The invasion of Ireland was also after Cromwell and other generals had begun to need to add more men and officers.

On pages 137-8, Prendergast discussed how it took so long for Parliament to issue grants for service that **by 1652, men were selling out their interests** to officers for ready cash to use to go home and resume their lives. In one particular instance, 28 soldiers (all named, many of whom were clearly Welsh), in Lt. Col. Richard Stephens' Company in the Regiment of Foot belonging to Col. Daniel Axtell, agreed to sell their grants to Richard Woods for 136 pounds sterling. They deposed to the Parliament that every one of them was paid fairly and the funds distributed by Ensign Arnold Thomas, on Woods' behalf. **The deposition was dated 26th day of June, 1656.** Note that most of the time Prendergast calls Axtell, Lt. Col. or Col. Daniel Axtell and only once does he call him Richard Axtell. I believe the latter is a typographical or transcribing error by Prendergast.

Axtell's regiment is well described in other materials about the Commonwealth and Cromwellian warfare, as is Axtell, himself, and had been in the south central areas of Ireland, including Dublin and Meath Counties and had occupied Dublin. Richard Woods acquired many houses and other properties in Dublin City, and Dublin County, and properties in adjacent counties, notably Meath and Westmeath.

Richard Woods had one son, only, John, who moved his residence to Rossmead/Rossmidhe in Westmeath and sold the modest property next to a swamp that he had in Meath, called Garclony, before 1700. (wills, estate records of Rossmeade/Rossmidhe. Rossmeade is now an Irish historic park.)

Although Richard Woods was a grown and mature man, there is no evidence that his son, John served with or under him in Ireland. The Woods' family became parishioners of St. Michan's church in Dublin and this church's register shows that **Richard Woods married Grizell (Grace) Fitzgerald in this church, the 16th day of the 10th month of 1657**. Whether this was his first or second wife is not stated. However, Betham, who worked for the College of Arms in Dublin, claims that "Richard Woods was previously married in Yorkshire to a lady surnamed Smith of Shea Hall in Yorkshire," and that his son, John is by his first wife. His son, John Woods of Garclony (and Rossmeade) died, about May 1, 1711. **His will was written 15th August, 1710 and proved 16th May, 1711**. It was a prerogative will registered in Dublin city. It named his wife, Mary, and **son John, grandchildren John and Winifred Widman**, and (no forenames given), grandchildren surnamed Nicholson and Mulready.

The **will of Richard Woods, of Dublin, was proved, 20th February, 1674** and named son John, grandson John, daughter Susanna Masterson, an unnamed daughter (Elizabeth, as per Betham's research) who was wife of Thomas Gibson, and unnamed grandchildren.

The pre-1800 parish registers found by **Hibernia Research Co., Ltd.** in the 1970's show a number of Woods' families in Dublin City itself, most of modest means. There is as yet no evidence that any moved to County Meath by 1680. Some did not arrive in Dublin, until the Williamite war period of 1689-90, AFTER James II and his most fanatic Catholic supporters had been run out of Ireland. As most Woods' Protestant, it's very likely these later, working class Woods families, did not move to Dublin and the nearest counties until 1690--after William had defeated James II at the Battle of the Boyne and James II fled Ireland for France--for good. One interesting set of records was that of John Woods who married Joan Woods by banns 29th day, 12th month, 1671 at St. Michan's. Her burial in Dublin is noted in 1695, on the 2nd day of the 5th month of 1695, as "burial of Joan, wife of John Wood, car-man." (coachman?) This shows two things: the family continued to live in Dublin as she died there, and that they were of modest means. It also shows Wood and Woods were used in these church records interchangeably. 'On the 22nd day of the 11th month of 1674, was baptized, John Woods, son of John Woods, merchant, and Alice his wife'. There were no subsequent records for this family in this parish.

A separate Woods' family which DID go to Meath but whose head also LEFT NO SONS, was a **John Wood(s)** (went by both surname) of **DUBLIN**, gentleman, who **married widow, Anne Bedlow** and **had only two surviving daughters** in his own will found by both McClenaghan and Betham. Those daughters were **Sarah who married James Clynch** and Grace who married ___Dutton.

Some time between 1700 and 1760, when he died, this John Woods moved to County Meath, and owned a parcel of land, but also leased lands near Trevet Grange. What has caused confusion for researchers is that **John Wood of Rossmeade leased land to James Clynch, son in-law of John Wood(s) of Meath near Dunshaughlin in 1723**. This record shows that Clynch was in the Dunshaughlin area where he married Sarah Woods by 1723, and since he was leasing land he was expecting to grow a family--and probably already married. John Wood of Rossmeade may have been the person who leased land to John Woods, at Trevet Grange, but this was done before leases were required to be registered in 1707. A few were and are not in the Registry of Deeds, but the national archives, instead, abstracted on index cards. Unfortunately, the Trevet Grange lease which, by his will, we know that John Woods had, is not among those.

What is not explained is who was the **George Woods** who **witnessed the will of the above John Woods, who died in 1760**. We know that he is the grandfather of the George Woods who had a legal dispute over the Economy lands of Leshamstown that he owned, and which the rector of Dunshaughlin claimed, and testified that his grandfather had bought these lands in 1745. Again, though, this very testimony by George, the

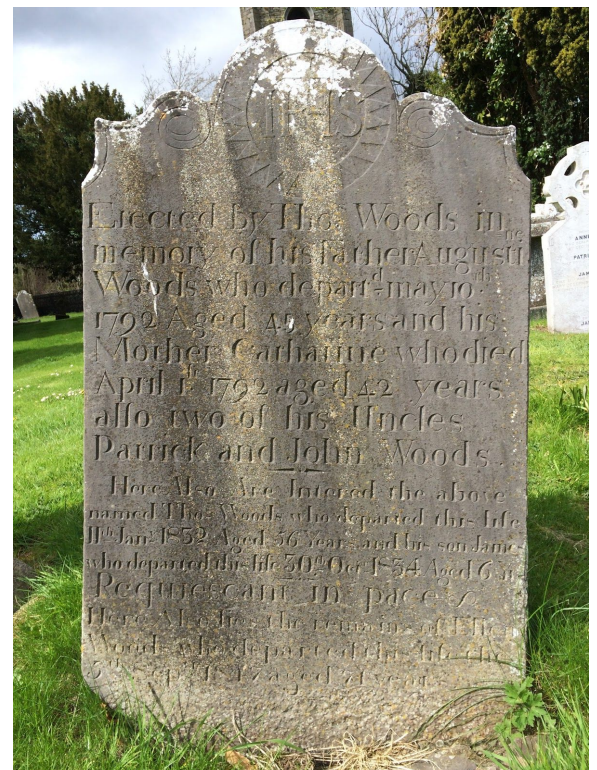
grandson tells researchers that **the family of George Woods, the will witness, was not in Meath prior to about 1745.** We do not know where George Woods was born and raised. Nor do we know who his parents, siblings or all of his children and grandchildren were. George, John Woods' will and the account of the dispute with the rector of Dunshaughlin in the early 1800's are all in Rev. Hamlet McClenaghan's *History of Dunshaughlin (Union of 9 parishes).*



Thomas erected it, to commemorate several members of the family, all nicely identified. That older stone apparently fell sometime in the last century, and was buried, or else was destroyed. **The stone that remains is to JOHN, the son of the first Thomas, mentioned above, and sons of John, Augustine, John and Patrick.** It was erected by Thomas, son of Augustine and nephew of John and Patrick. The stone inscription said that **Augustine Woods departed this life ye May 10th, 1792, aged 45 years,** and that his wife, Catherine died April 2, 1792, aged 42 years and their son Thomas departed his life, 11th January, 1832 aged 56, and a small son

There is a record of a **Thomas Wood** (no s) "of Dunshaughlin," who left a will dated **1728** found by McClenaghan, describing land he owned in Rosstown or Rosetown and naming wife: Johanna, son John, daughter Martha, and grand-daughters, Mary and Elizabeth Smith. Witnesses: Ebenezer Shackleton and Bernard Sheridan. He was interred at the old ruined church and cemetery at Knockmark and McClenaghan said there was a stone to the family of Woods (again, **Thomas went by Wood and Woods**) that was his.

On a visit to Knockmark, in 2016, we, including the town historian, Jim Gilligan, found there had been an area of at least two or three graves, adjacent to one another, and a stone was where McClenaghan described, but it was not to the Thomas who left the 1728 will. His great-grandson



of Thomas', named James, aged 6 years who died 30th October, 1834 was buried here also.

Knockmark is not far from Trevet Grange where a Woods' related stone was found and described by a English gazetteer. It was erected for Mary Woods, wife of Edmund Jealous in this same period. Mary (Woods) Jealous may have been Thomas' grand-daughter Mary, and given that **she died before George Woods moved into the area**, in 1745, the probability is high for this. McClenaghan also saw this large stone also. In recent years all the funerary sculpture and large, intact stones, including this one, were moved by the people of Dunshaughlin interested in preservation of ancient monuments into storage, waiting for funds for a museum. Several pieces from the cemetery were unusually fine and centuries old. There was an altar monument carved in about ¾ relief showing a banquet of the Cusack family, an old Norman family for members of the Cusack family. This monument was created in the late 14th or early 15th century and the Cusack had been a powerful noble family of the area who regularly used this church when it was still standing. It and the Knockmark church were destroyed in the rebellion of 1641 and subsequent war with the English Commonwealth, and were already ruins in 1740 when seen by the antiquarian who wrote about both for an antiquities gazette for early British tourists interested in romantic, old historic ruins and funerary sculpture.

From "**the Index to Prerogative Wills**," are two more wills in the 17th and 18th century which were not found by Betham. In 1678, **Thomas Woods**, merchant, in Dublin died and left a will. In 1746, **Thomas Woods**, gentleman, of Kilmaneage (Kilmanoge--seat of his principal estate), in County Kildare, near Naas died. This is the grandson of Sir Thomas Woods who had this seat, first, who died before 1689 as he is not on the lists of attainted, it appears at least one son is, instead. In 1702, **William Woods**, gentleman, of Ringsend, County Dublin, died and left a will that Betham also did not find.

Recently some Irish baptismal records were added to the online collection of "Family Search" and in the **church at Killucan, near Wardenstown in Westmeath** were the following records: **Richard Woods**, baptized, **son of Samuel and Elizabeth Woods**, 26 February, **1718**. **George Woods**, baptized May 20, **1724** son of Samuel and Elizabeth. **John Woods** baptized 16 April, **1727**, son of Samuel and Elizabeth. This is the last baptism of a child to this couple in this place, in remaining records for this church. **Samuel Woods is described as being a servant in Wardenstown in 1727, and a laborer in 1724**. His **father was a John Woods**, who was listed among the congregation in 1708, by the reverend's Anthony Dopping and Cornelius Coyne. John Woods has no status indicated, neither gentleman, nor laborer suggesting he was a tenant farmer. John Woods disappeared from the records, and Samuel Woods was listed as "communicant, on Easter, in 1714. The year 1708 is the last mention of John and 1714 is the first mention of Samuel, indicating he came of age, or was otherwise newly arrived in this parish in that year. John died or left. The status of this family, and in particular, this Samuel Woods, would make it unlikely he could afford to emigrate except as a family of indentured servants.

There is no son named George for the Samuel who emigrated in about 1727-29 in the Pennsylvania records, and the Samuel, who emigrated, was an older man born about 1680, who already had a daughter, Mary Magdalena born in 1710/11, and her brother Richard, was described in court records as her older brother. (Augusta County court records, including testimony of Mary Magdalena's son, Samuel McDowell regarding family relationships). The Samuel at Killucan, if he came of age in 1714, was about 15 years younger than Samuel the emigrant. There was a brother to Michael and Samuel, **John Woods, who lived in Albemarle County, near Michael** and who had sons **John Jr., Robert and George as per the son George's will and estate administration papers in Lancaster County, PA, in 1747**. The George Woods who died in Lancaster County, was over 30 years of age and had two children who were young but not infants, Hugh and Janet. Additionally the Richard Woods, son of Samuel and Elizabeth (Campbell) Woods, the emigrants was of age and in a lawsuit begun in 1734 by a merchant named Smith, over a dispute of the value of barter for goods

purchased. If he had been born in 1718, he would not have been of age. Richard Woods, son of Samuel the emigrant was married and acquired land in the Borden Grant in 1739 (deed registered in 1742, in Orange County, VA, later a copy sent to Augusta County). So although the Killucan parish register shows a family that could be related to the emigrant families, it is not the family of the Samuel Woods who emigrated between 1727-29, and was in Lancaster County, PA, in Donegal township by 1732.

In **1689**, as per the list of attainted was **John Woods**, gentleman, of Ballymorán House in **King's County**) now Offaly near Coolestown and within a few miles of both the Meath and Westmeath county lines.

From John O' Hart's 1892, *The Irish and Anglo-Irish Landed Gentry: When Cromwell Came to Ireland*, published by James Duffy and Co., Dublin, Ireland, 1892, as a supplement to O'Hart's *Irish Pedigrees*. Link to "When Cromwell Came to Ireland:" and Woods' and Wood surnames in it: <https://books.google.com/books?id=ZFZHAQAAMAAJ&q=Woods#v=snippet&q=Woods&f=false> The names of grantees and purchasers who were soldiers and officers for the Commonwealth are as follows, from the various sources he consulted.

Page 25, he mentions there is a pedigree for Woods in his other book. That book is still being digitized and uploaded according to one site that has the second book.

Page 411: from lists of "Soldiers of the Commonwealth": **Quartermaster, Mr. Andrew Woods, Lieutenant James Woods, soldiers Ralph Woods and Robert Woods**. (These men were entitled to receive grants for their service). For **Wood** were: **John Wood, soldier; James Wood, soldier, Valentine Wood, soldier--he later shows up in Dublin records, Widow Sarah Wood** (either widow of soldier, supporter in some way--such as supplies, most likely a widow of an unnamed soldier), and **William Wood**.

Page 423: List of land grants issued and counties: **John Woods in Westmeath, Thomas Woods in Kilkenny. Thomas Wood (no "s") in Sligo**. The grants were issued in 1652 and 1653, registered in 1654 and investigations done into some of them in 1656, and then again in 1661 under Charles II.

Page 469: from "Book of Survey and Distribution": no Woods with an "s" but it is clear that at least one person was a Woods, because he's listed among "soldiers of the commonwealth:" Edward Wood, **John Wood, Richard Wood, Robert Wood and Thomas Wood**.

Page 518: recipients of grants from forfeited estates: **John Wood**

Page 526: Names of **purchasers of forfeited estates: Lieutenant James Woods**

From the above, **there was NO John Woods, trooper who received land in County Meath, but there was a John Woods who did receive land in County Westmeath**. This is NOT the son of Richard Woods who was found by Prendergast and covered in his own book about the Cromwellian period of Ireland. Richard Woods' son John is not mentioned in Ireland until AFTER Richard Woods has acquired the 28 parcels of land, in addition to property in Dublin, and married Grizell Fitzgerald. It appears that John, son of Richard was a boy, left behind in Yorkshire when his father became Axtell's Quartermaster and that his mother died, perhaps while her husband was serving in Ireland for seven years. While there is a record of Richard Woods' second marriage to Grizell (Grace) Fitzgerald, there is no record at St. Michan's, which had several Woods' families among its parishioners across several decades, for the marriage of his son John to Mary____. The son, John, may well have married in England, not Ireland. By 1689, the only Woods in Meath and Westmeath on the Lists of Attainted was John Woods, son of Richard, who had but one son. The other John Woods is no longer there. Geographically, the closest John Woods in 1689 is in King's County (Offaly, today), in an area near Westmeath, and he may be a son of Sir Thomas Woods of Kilmaneage who also had a piece of land upon which he was residing in 1659 (Hearth Rolls), at Parsonstown which became Birr.

I can find NO evidence that there ever was “Trooper” or Captain (some claimed he was a captain) John Woods who came from Yorkshire with Cromwell’s forces and obtained land for his services in County Meath, nor that any individual surnamed Woods in County Meath, or Westmeath, was the ancestor of many Woods’ family emigrants to Pennsylvania in the 1720’s and 1730’s.

The existing records and DNA analysis point instead to the father of the emigrants being a John Woods of northern County Down or the Shankill Falls area of Belfast, as this is also the ONLY place the names Samuel and Michael--together, occur in the mid to late 1600’s and very early 1700’s.. The names, John, Adam, Andrew, Richard and others found in the Pennsylvania and Virginia lines exist here also.

Additionally, it is clear from the wills of John Woods of Rossmeade and his widow, Elizabeth Worsopp, daughter of Sir Thomas Worsopp and Elizabeth Parsons, that they had NO children and the estate of John Woods passed to his nephew Hans Widman, and the valuable lease that could be subdivided and was that came as a dowry to Elizabeth Worsopp, which entailed lands in the area of Dunshaughlin, in County Meath passed to her sisters and their children. (See the Hibernia Research Ltd, study done in the early 1970’s,, Betham’s wills and the abstracts of the deeds and leases from the Registry of Deed, all online at AmeriCeltic.net under ancestors then documents.) [Link to the Hibernia Research Ltd. study.](#)

Additionally, the same conclusion was reached by researcher writers for the “Virginia Magazine of History and Biography” in 1943. Vol. 51, No 4, October 1943, pp. 366-276, “Archibald Woods of Albemarle County” by Katie Prince-Ward and Mrs. Jerome A. Esker--found on JSTOR, a subscription website for historical and other research magazines.

Myth No. 3: Michael Woods (and his children) were born at Dunshaughlin, or Dunshaughlin Castle or Dunshanglin Castle in County Meath. First the 1300 year old town, once a village near a monastery, is named Dunshaughlin. Second, there never was a castle at Dunshaughlin.

By the 1600’s there was a small pile of rubble in what is now the Catholic cemetery of the old Catholic church that was built on land given to the church in the later half of the 18th century by a Woods family, of their own lands. The incident that prompted this gift and who made the gift and when is all in McClenaghan’s ***History of Dunshaughlin.*** This small pile of stones, once larger, the stones have been used in buildings since the 18th century,, has the footprint of a granary tower about the size of the one at



Glendalough that was also once part of a monastery. It is too small to have been even a small castle. **The castle at Trim**, in the same county as Dunshaughlin, County Meath, and **the monastery ruins with the intact granary tower at Glendalough** in County Wicklow show the differences quite clearly.

The first picture of this section shows a typical granary tower for a large monastery, **Glendalough**, in County Wicklow, which was built at nearly the same time the old monastery and first church for the village of Dunshaughlin. Notice how narrow the tower is and that it gets more slender toward the top. There was no iron or wood “skeleton” for the interior which helped support the stone in buildings in the middle ages. Height, without collapse of buildings, was initially achieved by making the building smaller and lighter, incrementally the higher it rose. Additionally, the stones were held only by a heavily clay mortar, not concrete. Concrete had been invented by the Romans, but the technique was lost to west Europe, with the collapse of the western empire, for over 1,000 years. Now imagine how many monks of average size of about 5' 6" in height could cram into that granary if the Vikings were coming, and if the granary was partly filled with grain. Now try to imagine a family of a knight, plus some of his soldiers, their weapons and armor, and a couple of servants in a motte that size. It doesn't work. Besides, as at Trim, Mottes



usually had a large manor house nearby with an enclosure and the house was partly built of stone--as at Trim, where a two-story manor house was soon built to replace miserable castle living.

There was nothing near the church in Dunshaughlin to indicate any such building existed near the small pile of rubble. The rubble field and mound size, near the church in Dunshaughlin, is easily measured and from that can be calculated the approximate size of the original tower. It appears to have a small footprint, about the size of a granary tower, not a knight's motte and armory, or keep. The granary tower if large enough, as for a large monastery could hold a few monks hiding from a Viking raid but not many more people than that, and that would be if it was not full of grain. Monastic lands and stores, besides providing for however many monks at a

monastery, usually helped provide relief to a nearby village or two, in the event that villagers with smaller land-holdings suffered crop losses and risked famine. This small pile of rubble has always been very near the village, which until the 20th century was usually quite small. The last remaining monasteries in Meath, including several associative villages such as Rathregan in the barony of Rataoath, where ruins of the church still remain, were destroyed between 1540 and 1560, as per various histories of places in the county.

As per Wikipedia. "The name Dunshaughlin is ultimately from Domhnach Seachnall – the church of Seachnall, or St. Seachnall's Church. After the Norman invasion of Ireland, Dunshaughlin became a seigniorial manor of Hugh de Lacy, Lord of Meath. The earthwork c. 700 m to the south of the church could be a motte built by him (See Google Earth photo. The arrow points to the 'motte'). Thereafter, the church became parochial." The person who wrote this, never measured the rubble field nor compared the footprint of this possible motte with

either the footprint of the granary at Glendalough or the De Lacy keep at nearby Trim.



The next picture in this group is of Dunsany Castle, begun as a real motte, which had additional mottes added until it became a keep and full castle. The mottes combined into keep and early castle were built by the Cusack family, just 2 miles north of Dunshaughlin. The Cusaks were the lords below the de Lacy's. They were the "seigniorial lords of the manor of Dunshaughlin." In fact, they frequented a church built even nearer to Dunshaughlin at what became known as Trevet Grange and had members of their family buried there, some with very elaborately

carved large funerary monuments. The castle then passed from the Cusacks to the Plunketts in the 14th century, with whom it has remained since then. Dunsany Castle, is owned by Lord Dunsany, of the Plunkett family, today, whose Plunkett ancestors acquired the older castle, and updated it in the 15th century (1400's) and have continuously lived in this castle. It is a major tourist site as it has been known to have some of the oldest late medieval-early Renaissance architecture in Ireland. **No Woods' family ever lived in, or owned, this castle.**



When we visited Dunshaughlin and toured the area with historian Jim Gilligan, we saw both the rubble pile in the cemetery, and the

location of the former Woods' family house/mansion that had been in Dunshaughlin. There once was a small mansion within a walled enclosure with a gate house, about the size described as ordered to be built by James I and later Charles I, on smaller plantation grants (of about 1,000 acres) . There is no evidence that it existed any earlier than the Supple mansion which was built between 1698 and 1700, as was the first of what is now "modern" Dunshaughlin when it was yet a village.

The enclosed area within the walls of the site where the old Woods "mansion," still exists, as it was used as a playing field for much of the 20th century, but the house is long gone. The manor house shown is Barnalick in Limerick County, and similar in style and age, perhaps just slightly larger than what the Woods' house in Dunshaughlin was. Differences in the vegetation and soil in the now empty walled enclosure show that there was probably a small "mansion" on one side of about 1800 square feet (900 or so square feet per floor), 2 stories and probably with a loft and cellar. It could have had either a thatched or slate roof, but if the owners were worried about fire, especially any being started by Catholic rebels, was probably slated within a short time of its first being built. A well would have been nearby and a kitchen-herb garden. Fields for agriculture and herding were once beyond the house on two sides and repairs to walls indicate one or two smaller gates for a person on foot, might have existed to reach the fields and village, opposite the main gate and toward corners of the enclosure. This house was built to be secure from rebellion. On the other side of the enclosure, and near the gate house are changes in soil and vegetation indicating a likely granary "tower" on the far side from the remains of the gatehouse, and a stables closer to the gatehouse. The wall has been clearly rebuilt several times, mostly recently in the late 1800's or early 1900's, as concrete is used between stones in the later work. There are a few small sections, notably in what remains of a rounded gatehouse, that still bear early mortar.



The town historian said the original house was contemporary



with another nearby for which they have the two original pillars of that property's main entrance gate, identifying them as the property of the Supple family and dated 1692 (picture just below). These are monuments now on the main street of Dunshaughlin, at the end with the oldest section of the town. The Woods' "house/mansion" was torn down by 1900, as it had no indoor plumbing and had been left to fall to ruins for some years before it was finally removed. The family who had lived there throughout the 18th century, had moved away from the area. Descendants of the Woods' who lived at Dunshaughlin are now believed by the local historian to be living at and near Rataoath.

Again the myth said that Michael Woods was born in Dunshaughlin in 1680, or 1684, and some even had him **born at “Dunshaughlin Castle.”** There was NO Woods family or residence in Dunshaughlin at that time, and **NO castle.** The Protestant family mansions were built after 1690. The nearest castle at Dunsany was and still is owned and occupied by the **Plunkett** family.

Myth No. 4: Michael Woods (1680-1762) named the estate he built up in Albemarle County, Virginia, “Blair Park,” for the place in which he had been born in Antrim, or Meath. According to the Albemarle County Historical Society, **Michael Woods named his estate “Mountain Plains.”** After Michael died, **the house and some land were sold by Michael’s heirs to Judge BLAIR who renamed the place Blair Park.** Now the Blair family claimed a relationship to Adam Wallace the young, heroic captain in the Continental Army tragically killed at the age of 24 in the Battle and British massacre of the Waxhaws. There was a speech, in which a Governor Blair, related to the Judge claimed this relationship. The parents of Adam Wallace were Peter Wallace and Martha WOODS. There were TWO original: Blair Parks; neither was in County Meath. One was in Ayrshire, in Scotland, where members of the Blair family had long resided, and the other was, and still is, a neighborhood of Bangor, in the north of County Down. Unfortunately, the neighborhood is not recorded in records before the 19th century in Bangor, and **the Woods’ were NOT in Bangor during its early history, and throughout the 17th century,** based on land and tax records. Bangor grew as a retreat from Belfast, beginning in the second half of the 19th century, especially after a railroad line was built connecting Bangor to Belfast in **1865** (Bangor history online as written by members of the local historical society and heritage museum).

Myth No. 5: Michael Woods was the father of some 16 children including all who lived in Albemarle County and the Woods in Augusta County. Rev.’s Neander and Edgar Woods claimed this as late as 1905 This began to be questioned as soon as Lyman Chalkley’s three volumes of abstracts of five counties’ records were published, titled ***Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish***, in 1911. In the Augusta County records were found a lawsuit that had been transferred from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania to Augusta County, in which Michael Woods, Samuel Woods (Michael’s son, Samuel was not born until just before 1740, as per baptism records of Rev. Craig that were found some years ago). The young boy was baptized in 1740 at the home of Gilbert Campbell, and several other members of what were clearly TWO Woods families were being sued by a merchant named Smith. The disputes leading to the lawsuit began in 1734 and the merchant initiated the suit in 1737. In this record and another group of records related to a marriage and selling off dower lands are TWO Richard Woods. The older one was an early sheriff of Augusta County, and later, Botetourt County when it was formed from Augusta. Richard Woods, “planter and merchant” from Albemarle, Michael’s son, married the older Richard’s daughter, and sold her dower lands as shown by deeds. The Sarah Woods in Michael’s will, was clearly unmarried. He identified all the husbands of his married daughters. Sarah was unmarried in 1762. Sarah Woods, identified in court cases as sister to Mary Magdalena Woods-McDowell-Borden Bowyer, Martha Woods-Wallace and Richard Woods of Augusta, was married to Joseph Lapsley in 1741, and was among three couples who went to the Orange County Courthouse to register the marriage. William Woods, son of Michael, was born November 2, 1715, married Susannah Wallace, a Woods-Wallace first cousin “just before coming with Michael to Virginia (1737), and lived to be nearly 60 years of age in Albemarle County. then Greenbrier County, Virginia, where he died April 12, 1775. There are many records of him and his family. William Woods, brother to Richard, Mary Magdalena, etc., married Martha Drake and was killed in the Fort Upper Tract Massacre in the French and Indian War in 1758, leaving wife and two teen-aged daughters captured and kept as prisoners for some months by the Natives, and several younger children who had been left in Augusta County with Martha’s family, as per the records related to his death, and administration of his estate in Augusta County. He was a few years younger than the particular William Woods who was Michael’s son, as this particular William Woods was married in 1743 or 1744, based on the age of his oldest daughter in 1758. The William Woods killed at Fort Upper Tract had been married in Augusta County, according to the

county records. The William who was Michael's son was already married to Susannah when Michael brought him with him down the Shenandoah Valley and through Woods Gap (now called Jarman's Gap) into Albemarle County in 1737.

Michael Woods, by the same court suit begun in 1737, was the father of 9 or 10 children--he bought 11 catechisms for himself, wife and children. He had at least one more in Albemarle County, after he arrived in 1737., Samuel, and maybe Sarah as well. However, Michael Woods was definitely, NOT the father of the Woods who settled in Augusta County. Samuel Woods, bought land with son William who was killed at Fort Upper Tract). This particular Samuel Woods had previously lived in Lancaster County, PA, Donegal township, near the particular Michael who lived in Paxtang township, in the early 1730's. Michael Woods did NOT have two sons named William both alive and married in the mid 1750's, nor two sons named Richard and one marrying the daughter of the other.

Rev. Neander Woods believed he found three brothers of Michael, named Andrew, William and John. Andrew and William were in Lancaster County, as was Samuel, but Rev. Neander Woods did little records searching in either Lancaster County, PA, or Albemarle County, VA and admitted he did none at all in Augusta County, VA. If he had he would have found Samuel Woods, and a Nathan Woods, who was born about 1700, or a little earlier, about five years before Samuel appears to have married based on a number of clues about the ages of his children when they married, died, etc., from their records. Additionally, **Nathan Woods,, in his 1752 will, mentions a married brother, named William.** The brother, William, had a son named Nathan. Samuel's son William did NOT have a son named Nathan. Samuel's son William, also lived in Augusta County, Virginia in 1752., Nathan and his brother William were living in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, when he died--in 1752. Nathan himself had two sons, Samuel, and William, the latter of whom also named a son Nathan, as per his will. Nathan also had a married daughter, Janet, married to a James Ramsey who had also named a son Nathan. Nathan's son William would have been married at about age 22-24 and already had a son past infancy. This indicates this William was born between 1720-25. Janet Woods-Ramsey could have married, by Pennsylvania colony law after age 18, and following the average age, married about age 20 or 21 and also had a child named Nathan, not an infant. Nathan himself would have married at age 21 or over, by laws and customs of the Protestant churches. He was married about 1720, and thus was born just before 1700.

Andrew Woods died in 1756, also in Lancaster County, PA, and left a will naming **sons: John and Andrew** and **daughters, Janet, Sarah, Martha and Margaret.** How Rev. Neander Woods found or knew about Andrew Woods, who left a will in Lancaster County, PA, but not about **Nathan Woods**, who also left a will in Lancaster County and mentioned his **brother William Woods** in the will, is a mystery, but it shows that the good Reverend did not research the county well. Abstracts of wills were put online by rootsweb, genweb, from transcriptions done by volunteers in the county of all the wills. However, in the abstracts, Andrew was mis-identified as Adam. Descendants of Andrew Woods, father and son John and Jack Woods, found and digitized and sent to me the digital copy of the original of the will showing he was Andrew, as Ruth Lamar Petracek had found a few decades earlier and said in her book **Woods-Wallace Cousin Clues**, on page 58.

About 1970, The Lancaster County Historical Society, also found a pew holders' list of the Donegal (township) Presbyterian Church of the 1730's, (county history says first churches were established in 1732 and later and the congregations existed before the buildings, and permanently assigned ministers) and the list named **Samuel Woods**, Mrs. Woods Sr. and Mrs. Woods Jr., **Nathan Woods, David Woods, William Woods**, Jennet Woods, Margaret Woods, and (child) Eliza Woods. It identified Eliza as a child; this suggests all the others were adults! This list was sent to Ruth Lamar Petracek who put the contents in her book, **Woods-Wallace Cousin Clues**, self-published in 1973, page 59.

John Woods, another brother, was in Albemarle County, living near Michael Woods. One of his sons, **George Woods** died in Lancaster County in January, 1748 and left a will naming wife, Janet and two children, Hugh and Isabella, and named his **brothers John and Robert** as executors of his estate, and also named his brother John's children, George and Isabella Woods. John was directed to come to Lancaster County, from Albemarle County, to administer the estate and become guardian to his children. Robert had declined to be co-executor. The court records show that John Woods did travel to Lancaster County from Albemarle County, Virginia and that he 'brought the children back to Albemarle County, Virginia with him." In Albemarle County, records, this John Woods is identified as brother to Robert and **son of John Woods, "Sr."** and is called "John Woods Jr." The will abstract and related administration records are online and mentioned on page 59 in Ruth Lamar Petracek's book, ***Woods-Wallace Cousin Clues***.

Rev. Neander Woods apparently found John Woods in Albemarle records, but then missed a sister of Michael, **Sarah Woods who had married Davis Stockton and lived literally right next to Michael, had children with many of the same names and** about whom it was mentioned in one deed and Stockton family records that Michael Woods had gone to Williamsburg to meet Sarah and and Davis Stockton, upon their arrival in Virginia, and bring them back to Goochland County with him and helped them acquire land next to his own.

So far, **from the actual records we have as probable brothers and sisters of the emigrant generation of Woods,; Michael, Samuel, Andrew, William, Nathan, John, Sarah (married Davis Stockton) and Elizabeth Woods (married Samuel Wallace, Esq.--chronically mis-identified as "Peter Sr.", but was a widow when she arrived) and we don't know who David Woods--pew holder along with Nathan, William and Samuel--was.** We also **don't know who Adam and George Woods were**, who arrived as "brothers" in Lancaster County in 1747, from a county history, or **who was Thomas Woods**, who arrived, or came of age, just before 1744, and settled near Andrew Woods. Three of these names show up together in a record in Ireland, an index record of a will in Connor Diocese in 1698 for John Woods, deceased, County, Antrim, listing as legatees (in the one-line index record): Samuel, John and Michael Woods. It doesn't state if the second John Woods is father or brother to Samuel and Michael. This brings me to the forgotten, very large group of extended families of Woods who actually were in Ulster, mostly in an area of the border of Antrim and Down Counties, and for whom the best and most evidence is that they were the paternal line of Woods from which the emigrants to Pennsylvania in the 1720's and 1730's came.

The following transcripts of original records come from all my files, built up over 50 years of research, and incorporating work done by others up to another 30 or 40 years before, as well as reams of notes taken in the last couple of years, as more materials have come on-line. This section includes some records found in various places on our trip to Ireland in 2016. **The Woods' family research and story is still a work in progress.** More research still needs to be done, and we all hope more records will come on-line especially as Ireland finishes its project to replicate, as much as possible what was lost in the Four Courts (including Records Office) explosion and fire in Dublin in 1922. In this section are links to other items, such as the Hamilton of Clanboye papers.

First, the **earliest record of Woods in Dundalk or elsewhere in County Louth**, which is at least next to County Meath, is **Michael Woods' purchase of the house and lot in 1721-1722 (abstract of deed was in the Registry of Deeds).** After that **several Woods' families were in Dundalk by 1831**, as per tax records found online, and some arrived between 1836-38. Since the tax records online began in 1831, it is hard to say when some of the families first arrived in Dundalk. Some of the names on the 1830's records are found among families who were in Armagh, particularly the southeastern part of the county in bits and pieces of records going back to the mid-17th century, and other names were in County Down previously. It appears County

Louth became an expansion area of economic opportunity for growing families of Woods from at least two neighboring counties.

The index to the registry of deeds showed **sales of property between 1707-29 by John Woods to ___Harrison in the neighborhood of Belfast (County Antrim); , John Woods and Richard Woods to ___Legg, in Belfast, Michael Woods to ___Coulter, and Richard Woods to ___Charley** (at least that's what the handwriting looked like for the surname). There were NONE in County Meath. There were **two leases issued to apparent brothers, Michael and Samuel Woods for land near Trim in County Meath in 1745**. Now one thing that is interesting about this group is the deed dated 1723 (upon completion of payments) by Alexander and Thomas Coulter to Michael Woods of Dundalk for the house and lot in Dundalk, lot described as 40 feet by 362 feet, and agreement to purchase in 1721 and last payment in 1723. Registry of 1723 payment, 16th May, 1723. The property was first owned by Viscount Limbrick, then sold to the Coulters who sold it to Michael Woods. It appears there were two transactions and Michael Woods might have sold property to one of the Coulters in one area and bought in the second area from the two. Since I only looked at one index record (was running out of time at the Registry of Deeds), I can't be sure whether this is one or two transactions, for sure.

From the "**Lists of Attainted**" 1689, as decreed by the Catholic Parliament of James II in Dublin **ordering forfeiture of lands** granted by previous kings, or plantationers of the kings, here are **the Woods' in the eastern half of Ireland: John Wood(s) Jr., Gentleman, Meath, at Garclony** he is the younger one for a region, but he is not the son of a John who had lands nearby awarded in the 1650's. John Woods of Garclony is Richard Wood/Woods' son. Richard Woods had died in 1674 (will) and after 1690, John Woods his son would sell Garclony and move to Rossmead, another property he already owned in Westmeath. Also on the 1689 list were: **Woods, John, Gentleman in King's County; William Woods, gentleman, County Cavan (Monaghan-Cavan line); Woods, Alexander, gentleman, County Tyrone. Wood (no s), Archibald, County Armagh. Both Wood and Woods families were in Armagh in the 1700's.**

Diocesan wills from indexes: Some wills still exist in either diocese libraries/archives. There are several online websites with the prerogative wills indexes. Sometimes, but not often, legatees were mentioned along with the deceased: **1698, deceased John Woods, Legatees John, Samuel and Michael Woods, (from the diocese named and other records of this same group, Belfast area Antrim, and County Down). Will administered by the Connor Diocese.** This suggests the deceased was in Belfast and the legatees were a few miles away in County Down. **A Michael Woods died in Belfast in Antrim in 1724, Connor Diocese administered will. John Woods died in 1720, and his will was administered in Belfast, Connor diocese. John Woods, died 1721, Derryachy, Londonderry County (old Coleraine County, before the reign of Charles II), administered in Connor diocese. John Woods d. Killoch, 1723 (county not given, could be Killough near Downpatrick but that should then be Clogher diocese), whose will was administered in Connor diocese. Richard Woods died in 1733, County Antrim, and his will was also administered in Connor diocese.**

From Chancery bills (court cases) found in the some of the "muster rolls microfilms of the LDS, before they quit renting them out: **in Ulster, involving people from at least three counties was Chancery Bill No. 6323, dated 27 January 1624/5 Andrew Woods vs. Sir John Stewart** (it appears of the Stewartown area which was close to two county lines) and James Lindsay and James Galbraith. A related addendum (two court cases were somehow related, but no details given), to No. 8744, involved **Sir James Stewart, Duke of Lennox v. Stewart et als (of the earlier bill)and James Wood**. Another set of chancery bills in Ulster, but what was in the microfilm didn't specify the counties, had **Samuel alias Emanuel Woods and M. Cashell, 12th Sept. 1646, and then Capt. Peter Ronard vs. Samuel alias Emanuel Woods 4 March, 1647.** There

was a suit by **William Cox vs. Jane Woods in 1643**, and a **Richard Woods vs. William Cumberland and Henry Culcock 20th November, 1643**. These were from a hodge podge of suits that **all involved Tyrone, Coleraine, Antrim and Down families**. One clue was references to the Stewarts in Tyrone and Antrim.

Hearth Money Rolls, County Antrim, 1669. John Woods, Upper Antrim County in Antrim Town. Widow Wood, Lower Toome barony in Antrim, Aboghill, Ballylomanie. Robert Woods, Lower Toome Baroney, Kirkinriolah parish, Kinhelta Estate (old name) Ballymena Estate (new name). John Woodes, Upper Toome Barony, Drummaul, Randalstown. Michael Woods Sr. and Jr. Upper Belfast barony, Shankill Falls, area of the Belfast Liberties, along with John Woods. Peter Woods, Lower Belfast barony, Carrickfergus, along with John Woods.

There were numerous Woods in Armagh County in three baronies, on the hearth rolls there for 1669, including forenames William, Andrew and John, and these names were in surviving records of the 1700's and early 1800's. The greatest concentration was close to the counties of Down and Louth.

The earliest wills and cemetery records in County Meath mentioning Woods, began after 1700, after the one John Woods who came and went and witnessed Rev. Bonning's will in 1654, at Rathregan--village no longer exist, just a ruined church, the village and few remaining homes in the area were close to what is now Batterstown, otherwise close to Dunboyne. Found were **a cemetery record referring to a family of Thomas, Augustine, James, etc. starting with persons alive in the area in the 1720's or 1730's**. This headstone commemorated a number of members of a family and was erected in 1792, but mentioned individuals of three generations from 1745 to 1834 and was erected by a grandson of a man, **Thomas Wood/Woods (he went by both) who left a will in 1728**, and named the son who is among those named on this headstone/monument. The monument is at the old graveyard of Knockmark at Dunshaughlin.

The next will was for a **John Woods who died in 1760, had no sons**, but daughters, one of whom married a James Clynch. His will was witnessed by a George Woods who arrived in the area in 1745, as per records of land dispute found by Rev. McClenaghan and mentioned in his book, *History of Dunshaughlin*.

Earliest wills thus far found in various indexes: Widow, Janet Woods (doesn't say widow of whom, but she's in the Hamilton (of Clanboye) Manuscripts as a landowner, a mortgagee to the family), died 1688 at Belfast, will administered in Connor diocese. John Woods died 1702 at Cavansreagh, in County Armagh, his will was administered in Clogher diocese..

From the Hamilton Manuscripts are the following Woods. In or just after 1813 a witness in a dispute involving several persons was John Woods, who lived in Legagowan and held lands at Ballyalghan under Lord Dufferin. Under "Rents Payable in 1692, in the same papers was Adam Woods in Killileagh parish. Also in "part Toleverie or Tolecuie"--spelled both ways in 1692 was a Widow Woods. In a half of Ballywoolin was Andrew Woods., also in 1692. From "A List of Mortgages on the Jointure Lands of the Late Countess Clanbrassil" (who died in 1688) was Widow Woods on BallyMcaran. Here is a link for the full set of manuscripts: https://archive.org/stream/hamiltonmanuscri00belf/hamiltonmanuscri00belf_djvu.txt

In Dublin, is a 1712 will for a single gardener named John Woods who worked for the Harold's, and another will for a Thomas Woods, clothier in 1731; that's all for early Woods wills there. There is a record of a John Woods, butcher and inn-and-pub-owner who acquires land as a sublease in Dunshaughlin for pasture (about 18 acres, as I recall) in the 1720's--part of the mess of leases and subleases from Worsopp to her sisters, a nephew and then broken up into subleases. it appears he only arrived there recently. Michael Kenny, a town historian before Jim Gilligan believed that this John Woods had children but

does not know who they were but the date on the lease suggests he was certainly not old enough to be a parent of our immigrant ancestors born in the 1680's and 1690's.

Now AFTER 1740, several instances of the unusual names Samuel and Michael Woods appear in Dromore, Drogheda and earlier, in 1714, in Killucan near Wardenstown in Westmeath. The last are dirt poor by the way. There are several records about them and Samuel Woods in Killucan was a laborer when one son was baptized and a servant in Wardenstown when another was baptized. This is about a generation before the brothers who leased land near Trim in County Meath. Perhaps someone from the northern families was scouting around after about 1705 for opportunities more southerly, but NO Samuel or Michael was in these southerly areas before 1714, and most after 1735, well after ours emigrated.

From the pages and pages of foregoing records, **the conclusion must be that Michael, Samuel, John, etc. Woods were NOT born in County Meath**, but were born in either Antrim near Belfast, where their father was a landowner, or in the north of County Down on Hamilton of Clanboye lands where their father could have been either a tenant or was buying land through a mortgage issued by the Hamilton Earls/Countesses of Clanbrassil. It is notable that from 1629 or just before to 1813 a number of Woods are associated with grants of land that were originally made to either Sir James Hamilton, later Viscount Clanboye whose son became the first Earl of Clanbrassil, or the Hamilton Duke of Abercorn--cousin to Sir James Hamilton and his five brothers whom Sir James brought to Ireland, also. From just before 1669 to 1813, most Woods are on, or adjacent to, lands of Hamilton of Clanboye/Clanbrassil, in Antrim, Down and a small part of Coleraine, followed by Woods in Armagh. **Sir James Hamilton's brother, John Hamilton, had acquired grants in Armagh.** The Hamilton Manuscripts and other plantation records cited by Rev. George Hill in his four volume series ***Conquest of Ireland***, state that Sir James Hamilton who acquired one third of the estate of Con O'Neill, in 1605, brought his five brothers who were living in Ayrshire, where their father was a minister, and in-laws and friends to live on his portion of Con O'Neill's former lands. He issued non family persons mortgages and leases and some of those to whom he sold land were allowed to sublease a portion of their patents. He also persuaded his cousin, the Hamilton **Earl of Abercorn** to obtain grants in Ireland, which Abercorn did, some of which were near Strabane (County Tyrone) and Londonderry (Counties Londonderry and part of Coleraine). He also acquired land in Nenagh in County Tipperary. The Earl of Abercorn also brought over his extended family, his in-laws, servitors and friends, and even some former tenants, in Scotland to the lands in Ireland. Woods' have been found in Scottish records in Ayrshire near where James Hamilton, his father and brothers lived, which was also not far from where Abercorn held some lands. The Earl of Abercorn had lands in and around Paisley in Ayrshire, as well as West Dumbartonshire and South Lanarkshire. This suggests that before the Woods were in the Antrim-Down area of Ireland, they were in western Scotland.