

The Land Holdings Of the Todd Families of Rutherford and Cannon County, Tennessee

Background

Between 1809 and 1811, three apparently unrelated Todd families came to settle in Rutherford County, Tennessee. One of them settled in the Todd Hollow-Big Springs area southeast of Murfreesboro. The second one settled in the Carson's Fork area near what became the community of Burt, 9 miles to the northeast of the first family. This area is in the portion of Rutherford County that became Cannon County in 1836. The third one settled 12 miles to the north of Murfreesboro. In the 1840s, two branches of the Big Springs family (Walker and Jefferson Todd) moved to the Carson's Fork area. Some of their descendants intermarried with the Todd family that had preceded them and over the decades the separate origins of the two families was forgotten. Family historians working the 1960s and 1970s trying to reconstruct the forgotten family history concluded that all these Todds were from the same family. Based on limited data, they sought to deduce the relationships between them all. Recent research sheds a correcting light on some of these deductions.

Male DNA testing on descendants of the Carsons' Fork area Todds – Jesse b 1770-80, James B. b 1788 and William T. b 1793 - revealed that these Todds did not share the same ancestor on the male line as the Todd Hollow-Big Springs Todds. We assume they are therefore unrelated Todds who came from a different area in North Carolina. Their genetic relationship appears to come through lineages other than the Todds though more samples and research are needed to confirm this. This is a major change in the understanding of the Todds of Rutherford/Cannon County compared to what earlier family historians had deduced.

The third family – Edmond Todd b 1786 – seems to have had no interactions with the other two families. Though his descendant's DNA matched members of both of the other two Todd families, it appears that this connection is not through the Todds, but rather through other lineages of the person sampled.

A map has been prepared showing the locations of the Todd lands to see if the geography of settlement might reveal some clues about the relationships between the various Todds. This information together with the DNA data and some new discoveries in the public records has at long last revealed more of the pattern of relationship and non-relationship between the various branches of the Todds.

The Map

The map was created using the Rutherford County Historical Society's "Rutherford County Tennessee Land Grants" compiled by Ernest K Johns and Susan G. Daniel and along with selected deeds obtained from the Rutherford County Recorder's office.

The maps reveals that Jesse Todd b 1770-1780, James B. Todd b 1788 NC and William T. Todd b 1793 NC all settled in the Carson's Fork area (Owl Creek and Horse Spring Branch) while Benjamin Todd b 1759, Aaron Todd b 1784, William Todd b 1781 and Reuben Todd b 1785 all settled in the Cripple Creek-Todd Hollow area just north of Big Springs, nine miles southwest of the Carson's Fork area.

Edmond Todd's land north of Murfreesboro is nowhere near either of the other two Todd clusters.

The maps shows that the following Todds all settled in the Todd Hollow – Big Springs area:

- Benjamin Todd b 1759
- Aaron Todd b 1784 son of Peter b 1756,
- William Todd b 1781 son of Caleb b 1751
- Reuben Todd b 1785, son of Caleb Todd b 1751.

The latter 3 were all nephews to Benjamin b 1759.

The map also shows that Benjamin Todd b 1785, son of Benjamin Todd b 1759 bought land in 1832 in the Fox Hollow area which lay about 3 miles south of his father and cousins in the Todd Hollow area. What is significant about this is that this land was just 1 mile east of the land that Jefferson Todd sold in 1845/1848 that he had inherited from his father-in-law, John Simmons. The Simmons land also is close to the land of John Painter (not shown) who may have been the father of Julia Ann Painter, the first wife of Walker Todd. This suggests that Walker Todd and Jefferson Todd were associated before they came to Cannon County in the 1840s.

The geographic evidence also suggests that Jefferson Todd and Walker Todd might have been associated with each other as children. Since Jefferson was presumably in the Fox Hollow area when he married in 1835 and since Benjamin Todd b 1785 bought land in Fox Hollow in 1832, we can assume that there was some relationship between Benjamin Todd b 1785 and Jefferson Todd b 1814. We then note that in 1830, Benjamin Todd b 1785 was living next door to Mary Todd b 1770-1780 who was living with a young woman and three male children, two of whom were the same ages as Jefferson and Walker Todd. So this could mean that Jefferson and Walker were associated with each other as children. We assume that this Mary Todd was the Mary Todd 1762-1866 grandmother of Walker Todd b 1822 even though the Mary of the census record is listed as born in the 1770s rather than the 1760s, assuming this is an error by the census taker.

The geography also suggests some relationships between the families who lived in the Carsons' Fork area. Jesse Todd's land purchase in 1814 was on Owl Creek and his land grant in 1827 was next door to Hugh Brawley who got a grant there in 1815. James B. Todd got a grant and bought land in the early 1830s on Horse Spring Branch, thought to be the present Haws Spring Branch near Burt on Carson's Fork, about 2 miles south of Jesse's land. William T. Todd got a 500 acre parcel in the 1830s that stretched almost 2 miles from Horse Spring Branch eastward to Dry Creek in what was then Warren County (now Cannon County). The close association of Jesse Todd to Hugh Brawley suggests that Jemima Todd who married Hugh Brawley in 1821 was kin to Jesse. Since Jesse's children were mostly born in the 1810s and since Jesse's brothers

were born 1788 (James B.) and 1793 (William T.), it is likely that Jemima was born in the 1790s and therefore mostly likely a sister to Jesse.

In the 1840s, three of the Big Springs area Todds - Asa Todd b 1817, Jefferson Todd b 1814 and Walker Todd b 1822 – all moved to Cannon Co. Asa bought land in 1842 seemingly in the Dug Hollow area of Brawley’s Fork where Alexander Espy his step-father had gotten a grant in 1832/1834. Walker and Jefferson bought nearby land in the Burt area of Carson’s Fork in 1847 and 1848, apparently next door to James B. Todd.

Notes on the Maps

1. Map 1: Regional Map of Rutherford/Cannon Co area

The map shows the locations of:

1. Jesse Todd b 1770-80 and Hugh Brawley on Owl Creek, a tributary of Carson’s Fork
2. James B. Todd on Haws Spring Branch (Horse Spring Branch)
3. William and Benjamin Todd’s land on Cripple Creek and Todd Hollow
4. Benjamin Todd, Aaron Todd and Reuben Todd on a branch tributary to Todd Hollow.
5. The Summers family that intermarried extensively with the Todds.
6. Purchase in 1832 of Benjamin Todd b 1785 and proximity to John Simmons whose land was sold by his son-in-law Jefferson Todd in 1845/1848.
7. Edmond Todd appears to have settled and remained near the confluence of the East and West Forks of Stones River about 12 miles north of Murfreesboro/12 miles north of the north boundary of this map.

2. Map 2:

This shows the earliest grant to William Todd, surveyed in 1809, granted in 1815 and to Benjamin Todd surveyed 1817, granted 1821. It also shows William’s second grant surveyed in 1825 and granted in 1826.

3. Map 3

This shows Aaron’s grant surveyed in 1817 and granted in 1821 and Reuben’s grants surveyed in 1816 and 1818 and granted in 1823 and 1833. It also shows Benjamin Todd’s grants surveyed in 1825.

Also of interest are Abner and Thomas Summers lands. Thomas’ daughter Tabitha married Burton Lusk son of Mary Todd and Samuel Lusk. Mary was Benjamin Todd’s daughter. Abner Summers married Lucinda Todd whose identity has not been proved though she was probably a granddaughter of Benjamin Todd.

Map 4:

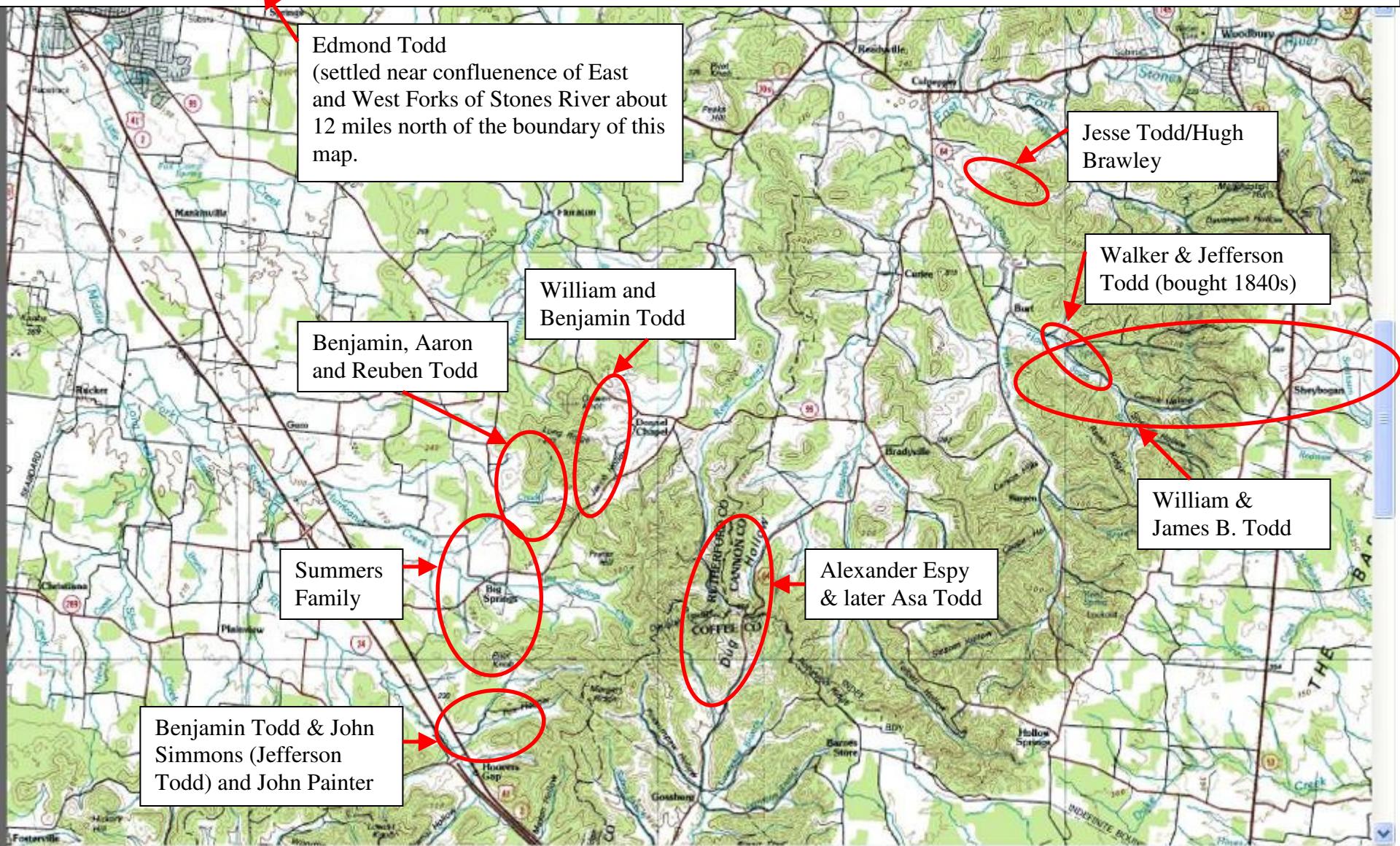
This shows the 1832 land grant in the Fox Hollow area to Benjamin Todd b 1785 son of Benjamin Todd b 1759 and its proximity to the 1832 land grant to John Simmons which was sold

by his son-in-law Jefferson Todd in 1845/1848. The John Painter land lay to the west of the Burks land which lay west of the John Simmons land.

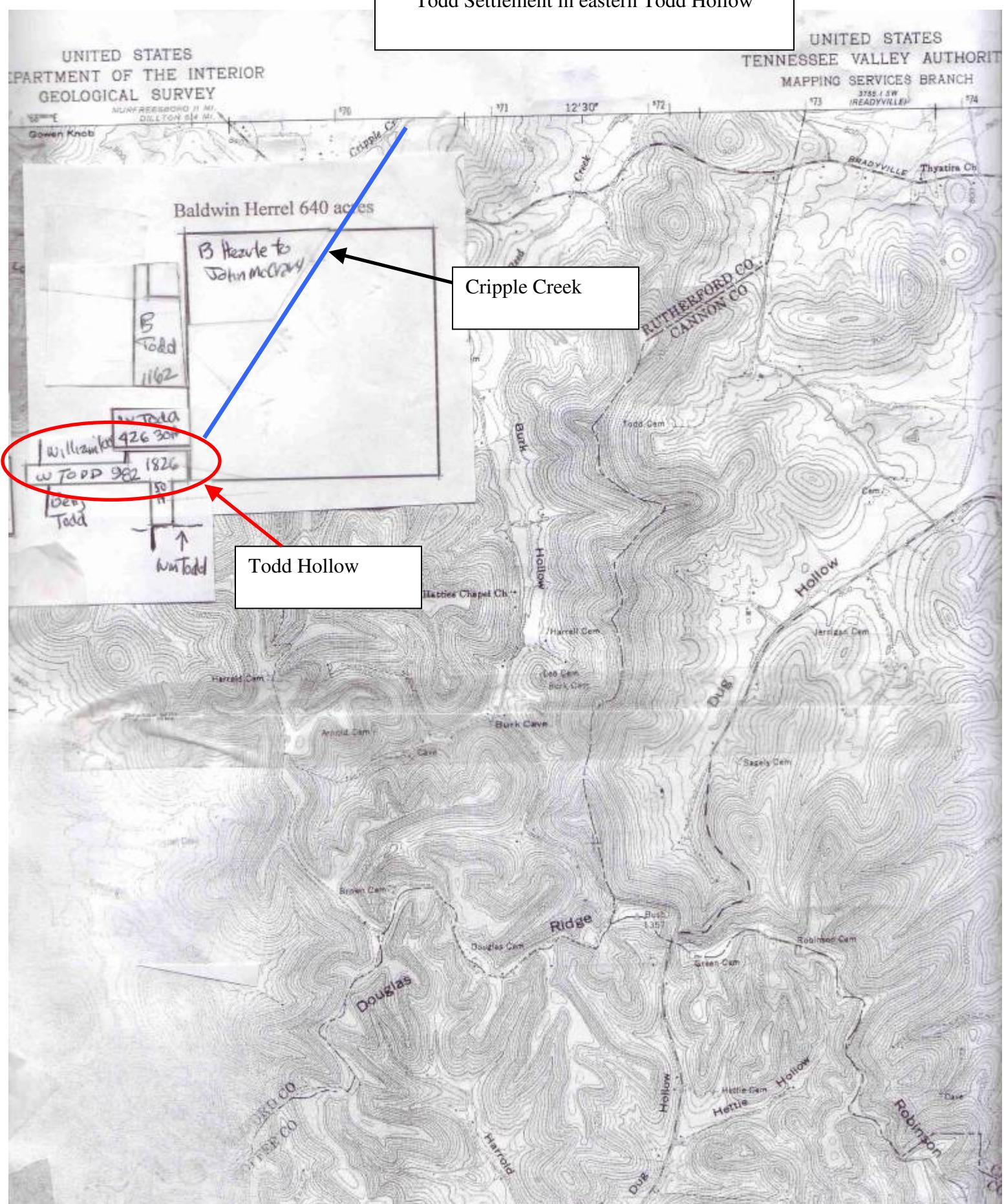
Map 5:

This map shows Jesse Todd b 1770-80 next door to Hugh Brawley on Owl Creek, a branch of Carson's fork near the confluence with the East Branch of Stones' River. It also shows Ruth and John Brawley and two parcels of the inter-related Falkenberry family. Further to the south on Horse Spring Branch was two of the parcels of James B. Todd, one of which was sold to Jefferson Todd and from him eventually came to Walker Todd. The 6 parcels of Jefferson Todd were division of the lands of Jefferson that included the original 1847 purchase by Jefferson. Walker Todd's original purchase was south of Jefferson as pointed to on the map.

Todd Family Lands
In the Area Between Carsons Fork and Big Springs and Fox Hollow
Of Rutherford and Cannon County, Tennessee
Map # 1
Richard McMurtry January 2012



Map # 2
Todd Settlement in eastern Todd Hollow



Map # 3
Todd Settlement
in eastern and western Todd Hollow

