
Roundabout Research: Pursuing Collateral Lines to Prove Parentage of a Direct Ancestor— Samuel Hanson of Frontier Georgia

By Elizabeth Shown Mills, CG, CGL, FASG, FNGS

It is folly to end a search in any county at the time when the parties of interest move off. In the best of cases, documents pertaining to them may be recorded years after their removal. In other cases, some family members stayed behind and—as collateral kin—created records far more useful than those left by forebears in the direct line.

He came. He saw. But on the frontiers of America, he seldom lasted long enough to conquer. Unlike Caesar, whose exploits were well memorialized, a male on untamed lands newly wrested from the Indians was likely to leave little trace of his presence. No memoirs. No Bibles. No marriage records. No church memberships. No business transactions. No military files. No pensions. No wills. Odds are, he died before any census taker asked about his birthplace. His offspring would move on to other frontiers, leaving behind whatever memory they might have had of the ancestral kin and homeland from which their father came. Now, about all that descendants know is *He came. He married. He begat.*

More often than not, the identification of such men is a roundabout process—a connect-the-dots puzzle, in which the final image is not clear until all the dots are linked. Except, the researcher has no discrete set of dots to work with. Starting at the known point, exploring all directions until some similar dot appears, one eventually etches a line from the pioneer's offspring to their cousins, uncles, and other kin several degrees removed until, finally, a loop of evidence joins the pioneer indirectly to his previously unknown parents and birthplace.

Samuel Hanson of nineteenth-century Georgia illustrates the nature and scope of such projects and one manner in which the challenge can be met.

THE CHALLENGE

In February 1829, Hanson sprang, fully grown, into the records of Talbot County, Georgia,¹ an area recently forfeited by the Creek Confederation. The land had been surveyed in 1826–27 as part of a new county called Muscogee, its

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1. Talbot Co. Book of Strays, Book A: 4, Ordinary's Office, Talbotton, Ga.

lots to be given away in the state's 1827 land lottery. Hanson was not a lucky drawer; had he been, his county of prior residence would be a matter of record.² If he bought land after his arrival in Talbot, the purchase went unrecorded—even though the 1840 census identifies his occupation as “agriculture.”³ Aside from a February 1829 incident in which he reported taking up a stray animal in “Capt. Young’s” district⁴ and the 1830 census that places his household in Young’s Valley,⁵ he did an excellent job of avoiding record keepers. Not until 7 March 1842 did county officials take notice of him again—that being the day on which a local planter, Robert H. Dixon, went before the court to report Hanson’s death. Dixon then posted two bonds: one to take an inventory and administer the estate; the other to serve as guardian of Hanson’s six minors, with Dixon’s brother-in-law, Peter F. Mahone, as his surety.⁶ Neither Dixon nor the court mentioned Samuel’s widow Mary or his adult children, *Elizabeth Caroline*, wife of Robert T. Kendrick, and *Mary A.*, wife of Daniel Morse. The proceedings named only the six minors: *James A.*, *David A.*, *Evans M.*, *John R. A.*, *Mirabeau*, and *Samuel E. Hanson*.⁷

2. Martha Lou Houston, comp., *Reprint of Official Register of Land Lottery of Georgia, 1827* (1929; reprint, Baltimore: Clearfield Co., 1992) is only a registry of draws, not a roll of all who registered.

3. 1840 U.S. census, Talbot Co., p. 195, line 24; National Archives (NA) microfilm publication M704, roll 51.

4. Talbot Co. Book of Strays, Book A: 4. William H. Davidson, *A Rockaway in Talbot: Travels in an Old Georgia County*, 2 vols. (West Point, Ga.: p.p., 1983, 1985) variously mentions Young’s Valley but does not identify “Capt. Young.”

5. Samuel Henson household, 1830 U.S. census, Talbot Co., p. 326, line 10; NA microfilm M19, roll 20.

6. Talbot Co. Bonds, Administrators & Guardians, 1830–1865: 196, 232, Ordinary’s Office. For the relationship between Dixon and Mahone, see Davidson, *A Rockaway in Talbot*, 416, 552. Dixon had married Martha Marshall, daughter of Stephen and Elizabeth (Burt) Marshall of Putnam Co., Ga., while Mahoney had married her sister Elizabeth Henry Marshall.

7. Elizabeth Caroline Hanson married Robert T. Kendrick about 1833–34; see Robert T. Kendrick household, 1850 U.S. census, Talbot Co., population schedule, 16th dist., p. 283, dwelling/family 855; NA microfilm M432, roll 83. Mary A. Hanson married Daniel Morse on 26 March 1837, before Dixon Cureton, J.P., of Pleasant Hill, Talbot Co.; see declaration of Mary A. Morse, 10 October 1892, in rejected widow’s service pension application no. 2156, Daniel Morse, Indian Wars; Records of the Veterans Administration, Record Group (RG) 15, National Archives. Talbot Co. Marriage Book A: 69 misidentifies the groom’s name as Daniel Morse.

In 1902, the above Samuel E(mmett) Hanson died, unmarried, in Woodlawn, Texas, leaving a will naming his siblings—including Elizabeth Caroline Kendrick, who had died in Florida, and Mary A. Morse, who resided near him in Woodlawn. Copies of this and other family papers left by the late Hugh E. Mills of Woodlawn (grandson of Mary A. Morse and legatee of Samuel Emmett Hanson) are held by the present writer.

Tradition also places one or two additional brothers in the family. If they belong, then both should have been adults by 7 March 1842. In a letter to the present writer dated 21 November 1971, Miss Wyoline Hanson of Shiloh, Ga. (granddaughter of James A.), wrote that her “Aunt Mary [Morse, née Hanson]” had a “brother William ‘Bill’ who was buried in Pleasant Hill near [my] Grandfather James. Also there was another one, Tapley . . . who died in his late teens.” However, Miss Hanson thought that Tapley was called “Bo.” As shown above, the family did include a *Mirabeau*, but he reached his majority in Dallas Co., Ark., after moving there with his remarried mother and stepfather, then served in the Confederacy. See Travis Bledsoe household, 1860 U.S. census, Dallas Co., Ark., Jackson Township, p. 122, dwell./fam. 768; NA microfilm M653, roll 40. Also Compiled Service Record, M. L. Hanson (Pvt., Co. F, 12th Regt., CSA); War Department Collection of Confederate Records, RG 109, National Archives. He seems to be the *Mirabeau Lamar Hanson* whose death on 14 September 1899 is recorded in the Bible of his brother John R(ober)bert, owned in 1984 by John’s great-grandson, William H. Hanson of Mobile.

On the other hand, it may not be accurate at all to assume that Hanson *avoided* record keepers. An analysis of the county's early records suggests another problem typical of the frontier: obviously incomplete and erratically organized materials in most record categories. The court *should* have required a filing of the inventory and the sale of property, as well as annual accounts of sums received and expended on behalf of the minors. If Dixon filed these, their whereabouts are unknown. The only subsequent document found for the estate was the March 1847 reassignment of the guardianship to James A. Hanson, the eldest identified son who had just turned twenty-one. James posted bond for a paltry \$150.⁸ Then he, like the guardian before him, went silent.

Typically, nothing in the county named parents or prior residence for Samuel Hanson. Nothing in the trove of family papers kept by descendants of his daughter Mary A. (Hanson) Morse pointed to his origin. The 1880 census statement that Mary's father was born in Georgia⁹ was more a discouragement than a lead, considering that pre-1830 censuses are mostly nonexistent in Georgia. (Only a few 1820 returns survive.) Nonetheless, Samuel Hanson's parents are identifiable—once the research goal shifts from *Find Samuel's parents* to *Study all Hansons in that place and time*. Doing so proves once again the most fundamental principle of southern research: *to break a stalemate in a direct line, identify collateral kin and reconstruct their lives*. Somewhere amid the documents they left, one will find the missing dots that connect the elusive ancestor to his forebears.

COLLATERAL EVIDENCE

Eleven years or so after Samuel died in Talbot County, Mary Morse's younger siblings went to court and filed a series of receipts—each acknowledging that James, as guardian, had paid him fifteen dollars as his

full distributive share of the property entire and complete satisfaction of all the right, title, interest claim, or demand I have or might have in and upon the estate real and personal of *Evans Hanson*, deceased, *my uncle*. . . .¹⁰

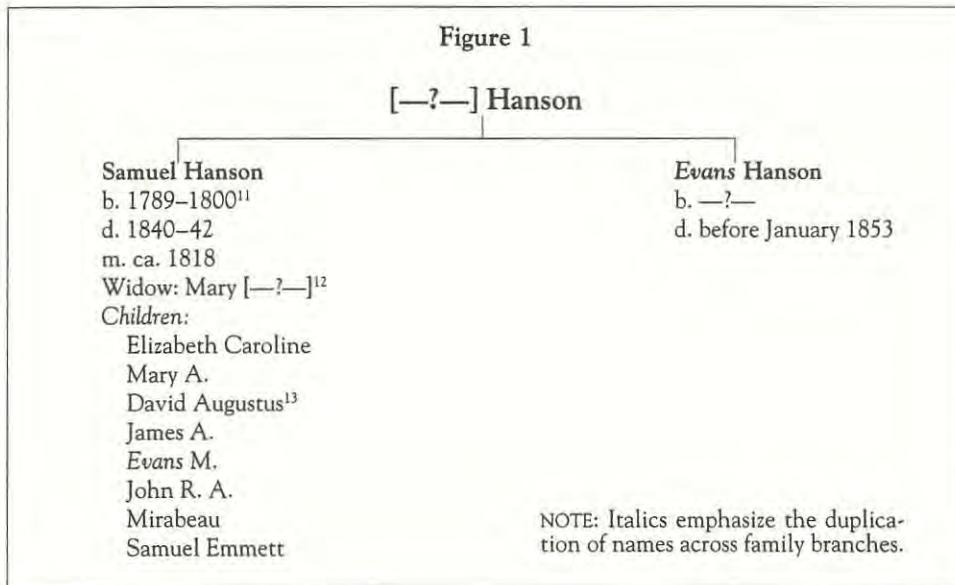
From these receipts, which did not name Mary at all, one can sketch the beginnings of her family tree, hypothesizing that the word *uncle* means "father's brother." See figure 1.

No William Hanson appears amid family members on contemporary censuses. A thirty-six-year-old *Thomas W. Hanson*, who was not in the county in 1850, lived two doors from the widowed Mary Morse on the 1860 U.S. census, Talbot Co., pop. sch., dist. 681, p. 675, dwells./fams. 696 and 698; NA microfilm M653, roll 137. However, this Thomas would have been a minor in 1842 and should be among the named minors of Samuel Hanson. Moreover, no Thomas or William is named among the siblings or deceased siblings in Samuel Emmett Hanson's will. Other evidence exists, both pro and con; but it does not yet justify placing a Thomas or William into this family.

8. Talbot Co. Schedules, Administrators & Guardians, 1829–1853: 45.

9. William A. Morse household, 1880 U.S. census, Harrison Co., Tex., pop. sch., precinct 5, p. 483B, enumeration dist. [ED] 49, p. 14, dwell. 125, fam. 146; also see Samuel E. Hanson household, p. 481B, ED 49, p. 10, dwell. 92, fam. 111; both on NA microfilm T9, roll 1310.

10. 3 January 1853, Talbot Co. Journal D: 246, Ordinary's Office.



The Search for Evans Hanson

A search of Georgia's "people finders" (principally, census indexes, land lottery records, and statewide indexes to wills and intestate records) did not reveal any person named Evans Hanson.¹⁴ The search did, however, yield one potentially connected record:

20 February 1788
 Richmond County, Georgia
 Marriage of Thomas Hanson Sr. to Elizabeth Evans¹⁵

The Search for Thomas Hanson and Elizabeth Evans

Following this couple, year by year from 1785¹⁶ through tax rolls and other records they created, yielded a generous assortment of material, but none of the documents along that obvious trail identifies their children. Richmond, an old county on Georgia's eastern border, split in 1790, at which time Thomas and Elizabeth's residence fell into the new county of Columbia. By 1815, they had

11. 1830 and 1840 census data, previously cited.

12. Samuel's marriage date is calculated from the age of his eldest daughter. For widow Mary, see 1850 U.S. census, Talbot Co., Ga., pop. sch., 23d dist., p. 616, dwell./fam. 1184; NA microfilm M432, roll 95 (Mary Hanson, 47, widow, with Evans, 23; John, 20; Mirabeau, 12; and Samuel, 10). Considering the gap in children's ages, Mary may have been a second wife.

13. David's full name is autographed on a photograph in papers of Hugh E. Mills, owned now by his great-granddaughter, Rachal Mills Lennon, Cottontown, Tenn.

14. Ted O. Brooks, *In the Name of God, Amen: Georgia Wills, 1733–1860* (Atlanta: Pilgrim Press, 1976); and Jeannette Holland Austin, *Georgia Intestate Records* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1986).

15. Richmond County Loose Marriage Bonds, 1785–1849; microfilmed copy, Georgia Department of Archives and History (GDAH), Atlanta.

16. Thomas Hanson entered 150 acres on the Savannah River and another 300 acres on Germany's Creek on 7 February 1785. See Richmond Co. Superior Court Land Grant Minutes, 1784–87: 26; GDAH microfilm.

moved westward to Jackson County, where Thomas (as a Revolutionary soldier) was a fortunate drawer in the land lottery of 1820.¹⁷

All three counties, Richmond, Columbia, and Jackson, offer numerous entries for the name *Samuel Hanson*. Pieced together, most of them depict a man a generation older than Samuel of Talbot. Like Thomas, that Samuel had received a land grant in 1785.¹⁸ He had married Margaret “Peggy” Sims, a daughter of William Sims,¹⁹ by whom at least one son was an adult in 1807.²⁰ From Columbia, he moved his family to Jackson County, buying land adjacent to one Thomas Hanson, and then on to the county of Morgan. There, Peggy entered the 1827 land lottery as a widow of a Revolutionary soldier and won Lot 92, Dist. 13, Sect. 2 (Muscogee County)²¹—a tract that would fall just across the Talbot County line.²²

It is folly, however, to end a search in any county at the time when the parties of interest move off. In the best of cases, documents pertaining to them may be recorded years after their removal. In other cases, some family members stayed behind and—as collateral kin—created records far more useful than those left by forebears in the direct line. In this case, continuing the Columbia search for another half-century turned up an extremely significant record.

NUNCUPATIVE WILL OF JOHN A. HANSON

Drawn 5 October 1843; registered 5 March 1844

Columbia County, Georgia

Dr. John A(ugustus) Hanson, a short time before his death, called on the undersigned to make the following division of his property:

- The property that “came by his wife” is to go to her, together with his bay horse and buggy.
- His sorrel horse was to be given to his mother.
- Whatever interest he might have in the estate of *his uncle Evans Hanson* was to remain in the hands of *his uncle William Hanson* to be used as he wished, because he [John] owed the Dr. [William] and wished him paid.
- His silver watch was to be given to his youngest half-brother (unnamed).

Attested by Thomas H. Dawson, Larkin B. Roberts, Jno. C. Smith.²³

17. Jackson Co. Deed Book G: 43, Ordinary's Office, Jefferson, Ga.; and Silas E. Lucas Jr., *The Third or 1820 Land Lottery of Georgia* (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1986), 140.

18. Silas Emmett Lucas Jr., *Index to the Headright and Bounty Grants of Georgia, 1756-1909* (Vidalia, Ga.: Southern Historical Press, 1970), 264. This older Samuel also had a son Samuel of roughly the same age as Samuel of Talbot.

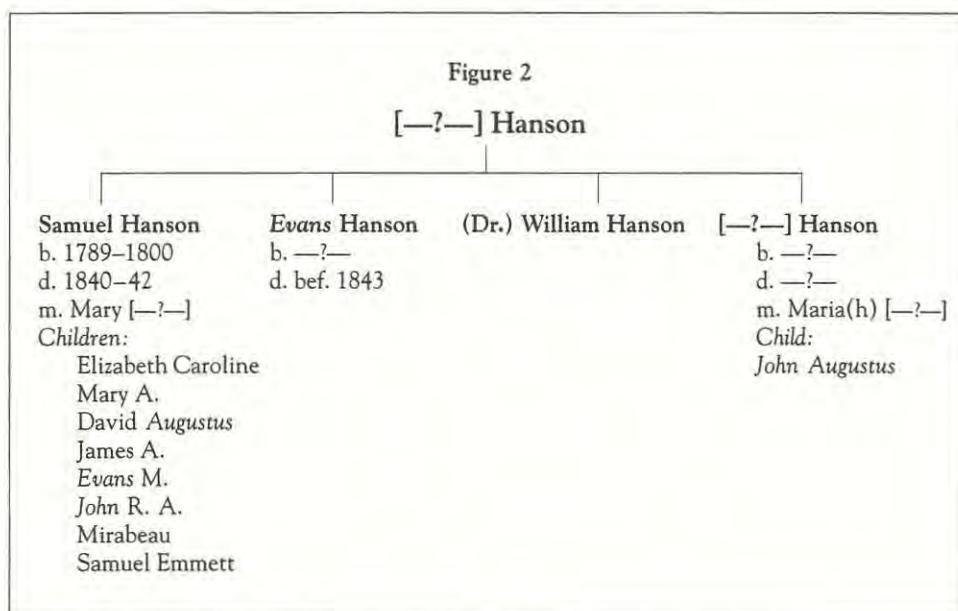
19. Deed of gift, 8 July 1802, William Sims to William Hanson, grandson, abstracted in Pearl Baker, *Columbia County, Georgia, Early Court Records* (Albany, Ga.: Georgia Pioneers, ca. 1965), 27.

20. “Hanson, Wm. (son/Sam'l),” in Silas Emmett Lucas Jr., *The Second or 1807 Land Lottery of Georgia* (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1986), 61.

21. Houston, *Reprint of Official Register of Land Lottery of Georgia, 1827*, 103. Also, see will of Samuel Hanson [Sr.], Morgan Co. Will Book B: 95.

22. [Map of] *Georgia and Alabama, 1839* (Philadelphia: H. S. Tanner, 1839) shows the land lottery districts within each of Georgia's counties—but not the lots themselves.

23. Columbia Co. Will Book X (1839–1851): 46, 70; GDAH microfilm. See also Columbia Co. Administrator's Bonds Book N (1828–1851): 134; Columbia Co. Inventories, Appraisements & Sales Book EE



If one hypothesizes that the “uncle Evans Hanson” from whom John *Augustus* Hanson expected to inherit in 1843 is the same “uncle Evans Hanson” from whom David *Augustus* Hanson did inherit in 1853, then two new branches can be added to the theoretical family tree. See figure 2.

The Search for John Augustus Hanson’s Parentage

A similar search of Jackson County *before* Thomas and Elizabeth Hanson were known to be there turned up another obvious connection:

ESTATE OF JOHN HANSON

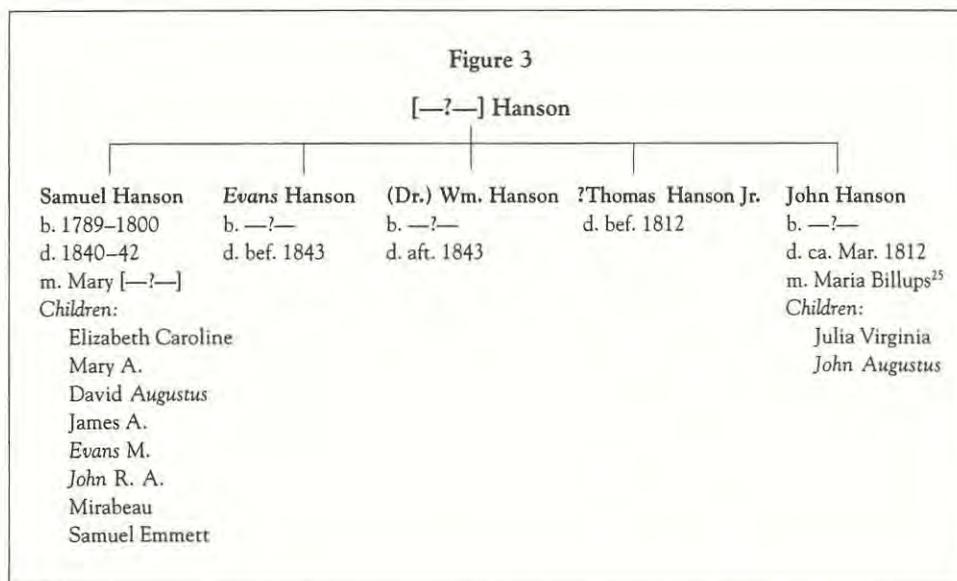
2 March 1812. Walton Harris and Hugh Montgomery petitioned to be appointed administrators of the estate of John Hanson, deceased.

Maria Hanson petitioned to be appointed guardian of her minor children, Julia Virginia and John *Augustus* Hanson.

Thomas Hanson Sr., administrator of estate of Thomas Hanson Jr., dec’d., acknowledged his willingness to dispense with public notice of the copartnership estate of Thomas Hanson, dec’d., and John Hanson, dec’d., and asked the court to appoint a person to divide that estate.²⁴

(1839–1850): 251–58; and Columbia Co. Accounts, Book GG (1846–1851): 122, 188 and Book C (1851–61): 510. The referenced half-brother appears to be a son of John’s mother Maria who, according to GG: 122, had become Maria(h) *Holiday*.

24. Jackson Co. Record of Wills & Estates, 1796–1813: 163–66; GDAH microfilm. Also, Jackson Co. Letters of Administration & Guardianship, 1818–1843: 138 (GDAH microfilm), dated 2 March 1812 and



Tempting though it may be to assume that “Thomas Hanson Sr.” was the father of “Thomas Hanson Jr.,” the usage of the times does not permit that assumption. However, the evidence does support an expansion of the hypothetical family tree. See figure 3.

The Search for Thomas Hanson Jr.

The younger Thomas, business partner of John, was not so difficult to find. In fact, both men were felled in the same winter season—with Thomas anticipating his death soon enough to prepare a proper will:

WILL OF THOMAS HANSON

3 November 1811. After settlement with *brother John Hanson, father Thomas Hanson* should have the remainder of the estate.²⁶

2 March 1812. Thomas Hanson Sr., administrator, acknowledged his willingness to dispense with public notice of the copartnership estate of Thomas Hanson, dec’d., and John Hanson, dec’d., and asked court to appoint a person to divide that estate.²⁷

With the identification of Thomas Sr. as father of Thomas Jr., the next temptation is to place Thomas Hanson Sr., Revolutionary War soldier, and his wife

recorded 2 February 1832 [sic], at which time Walter Harris, Hugh Montgomery, J. M. C. Montgomery, Jos. Little, and Thos. Hanson signed a bond for \$7,000, guaranteeing the performance of Walter Harris and Hugh Montgomery as administrators of the estate of John Hanson.

25. For the marriage of John Hanson and Maria Billups, 3 April 1808, see Jackson Co. Index to Loose Marriage Bonds, Ordinary’s Office.

26. Jackson Co. Records of Wills & Estates, 1796–1813: 163–66.

27. Ibid.

Elizabeth Evans at the head of the family tree. However, several questions remain—particularly these two:

- Where was the elusive Evans Hanson?
- Can one reasonably conclude that John Hanson, who had two children before March 1812, and Thomas Hanson, who was also an adult and a businessman by 1812, were both children of Elizabeth Evans, who wed Thomas in 1788?

The Search for Age Evidence

Although Georgia is woefully short of censuses in the pre-1830 period, it is rich in tax rolls and land lottery registrations by which one often can identify the point at which young male residents reached adulthood. The published list for the 1805 lottery includes six Hansons from Columbia County:²⁸

Edward Hanson	1 blank
Samuel Hanson	2 blanks [2 draws as a Revolutionary soldier]
Thomas Hanson	2 blanks [ditto]
Thomas Hanson Jr.	1 blank
W. Thomas Hanson	1 blank [son of Samuel?]
William Hanson	1 blank [William, son of Samuel] ²⁹

Under the lottery rules of 1805, all of the above males should have been at least twenty-one years of age. Thus, Thomas Jr., born before 1784, was not likely the son of Elizabeth Evans, whom Thomas Sr. married in 1788.

The Missing Evans Hanson

The search of Columbia County for a half-century *after* Thomas and Elizabeth's removal to Jackson yielded yet another son who had stayed behind. This one was surely Elizabeth's son:

ESTATE OF HENRY EVANS HANSON

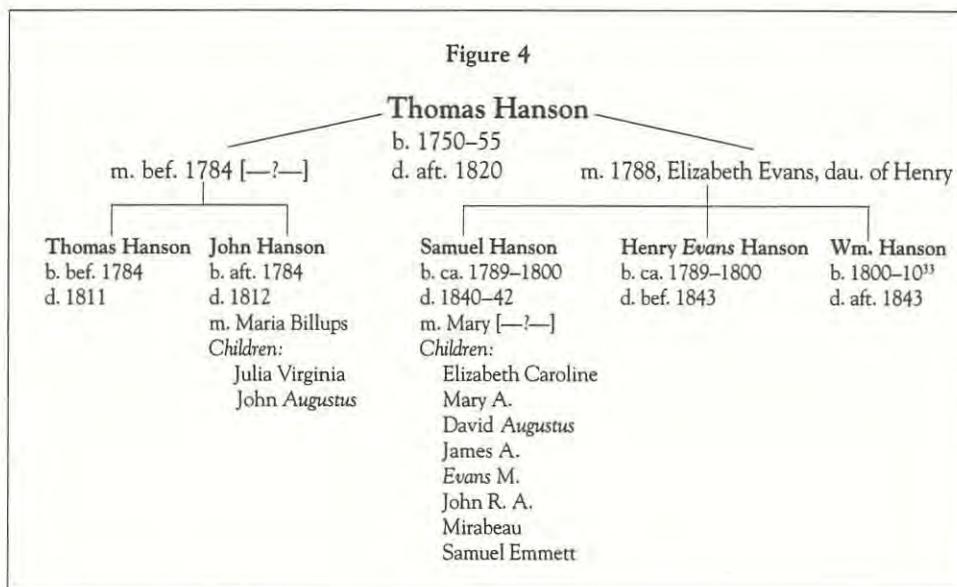
23 January 1843

William Hanson petitions court to be appointed administrator of the estate of Henry Evans Hanson, who had died intestate leaving various goods.³⁰

28. Virginia S. and Ralph V. Wood, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery* (Cambridge, Mass.: p.p., 1964), 144. "Edward" was actually Edmund Hanson. In 1814, Edmund died in Morgan Co., Ga., after bequeathing a slave named Jim and other property to his father Thomas, who—as a resident of Jackson County—acknowledged receipt of that inheritance; photocopied estate papers of Edmund Hanson, provided in 1987 by Jackson County Ordinary's Office (without file no.) to William H. Hanson, Mobile; copy in possession of present writer. The research on Edmund is not developed above because he was not instrumental in connecting Samuel to Thomas Sr.

29. William's parentage is identified on the 1807 lottery list, which specifically cites him—the only William in Jackson Co.—as Samuel's son; see Lucas, *The Second or 1807 Land Lottery of Georgia*, 83.

30. Columbia Co. Bonds, Guardians & Administrators, Book N (1828–1851): 121; GDAH microfilm. See also Columbia Co. Inventories, Appraisements & Sales, Book EE (1839–1850): 149–50.



Henry Evans Hanson. Under that unknown first name or the initials *H. E.*, other records had essentially hidden him in plain sight.³¹ But the source of both his names is clear. In 1802, in Columbia County, an older Henry Evans had penned a will that named his daughter Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Hanson.³²

The dots are now connected:

- Samuel Hanson, who named a son Evans and a son Augustus (both of whom inherited from the estate of their uncle Evans Hanson), was surely the brother of
- John Hanson (whose son John Augustus also inherited from the estate of his uncle Evans Hanson), who was in turn the business partner and brother of
- Thomas Hanson Jr., who identified his father as
- Thomas Hanson Sr., the man who honored his own father-in-law, Henry Evans, by giving that name to his son—i.e., the same
- Henry Evans Hanson whose estate was administered by his only surviving brother
- William Hanson, who, in that capacity, was named as an uncle and legatee of John Augustus, son of John, above.

And the hypothetical family tree becomes a real one, rooted in both direct and indirect evidence.

31. For example, see 1830 U.S. census, Columbia Co., p. 339, line 25; NA microfilm M19, roll 16. The H. E. Hanson household is credited with two males 20-29; the second is likely his brother William. The 1840 U.S. census offers no viable male of his name. William is a head of household, living alone, in Columbia Co., p. 290, line 31; NA microfilm M704, roll 39. Henry Evans Hanson may have been dead by that time.

32. Columbia Co. Will Book A: 150; GDAH microfilm.

33. 1840 U.S. census, Columbia Co., p. 290, line 31.

CONFIRMING THE HYPOTHESIS

Even if the paper trail ended at this point, Samuel's position as son of Thomas would be secure. Yet, as is often the case, attempting to reconstruct all branches of a family, wherever they roam—and thoroughly following all contemporary individuals of similar name—eventually leads to evidence that confirms the hypothesis one has reconstructed. In the county of Newton, a county mentioned in no other documents relating to the above individuals, one Thomas Hanson drew up a will in 1827. He identified himself as a landowner in Newton and stated that he had formerly resided—not in Jackson, Columbia, or Richmond where the above Thomas is known to have lived—but in Henry County, from which Newton had been partially cut in 1821. This Thomas named his heirs—including a son Samuel—but he said nothing further about that Samuel to connect him to the Samuel of Talbot as opposed to any of the other Samuel Hansons in contemporary Georgia. It is only by comparing the full list of children to the siblings reconstructed for Samuel of Talbot, that one is able to say *Yes. The families are the same.*

WILL OF THOMAS HANSON

Newton County, Georgia

27 February 1827 (date of will)

2 May 1831 (date of proving)

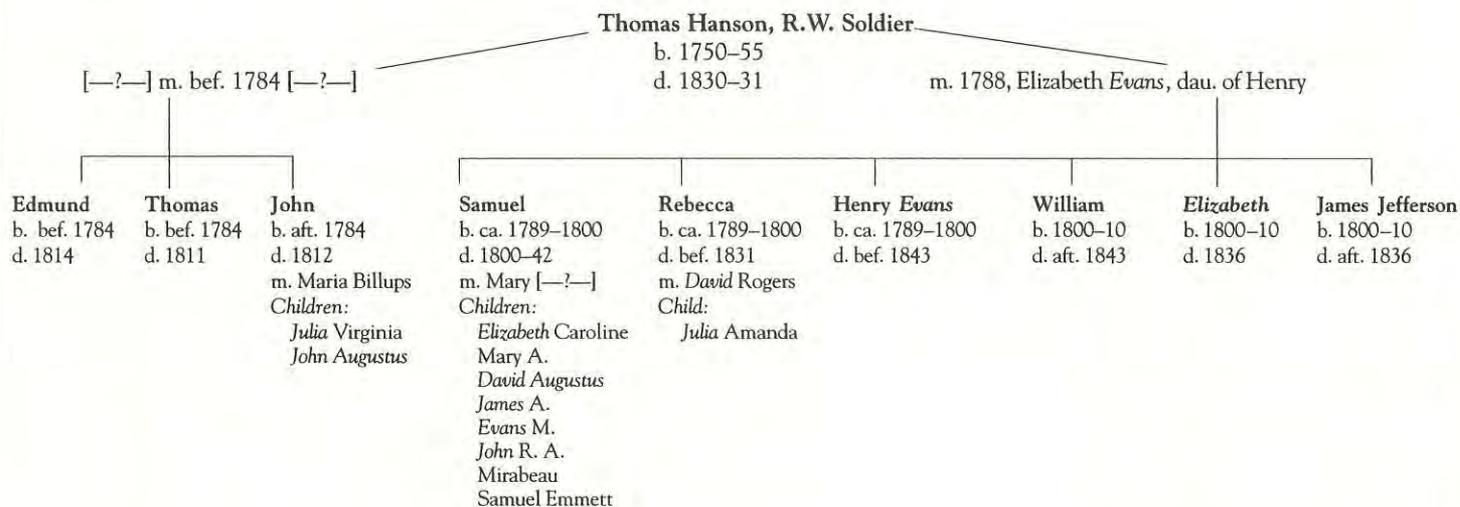
"Being old and infirm in body but of sound and disposing mind," Hanson leaves entire estate to wife Elizabeth Hanson during her natural life. Thereafter, the land on which he lives (Lot 96, Dist. 10, formerly Henry, "now Newton County") and the adjacent Lot 221 in Dist. 9 on West side of Yellow River, should be equally divided between "my daughter Elizabeth and *Henry Evans Hanson* and James Jefferson Hanson my sons." Other heirs and bequests: "the heirs of my son John Hanson, deceased," one dollar. "My son *William Hanson*," fifty dollars. The balance of the estate then to be divided between "Elizabeth Hanson, my daughter, *my son Samuel Hanson*, *my son Henry E. Hanson*, James J. Hanson, and the legal heirs of my daughter Rebecca Rogers and *John A. Hanson, the son of John Hanson dec^d.*" Executors: "wife Elizabeth Hanson . . . together with my sons Henry E. Hanson and James J. Hanson and David Rogers."³⁴

CONCLUSION

In most matters, human nature and common sense call for sticking to the main point and not getting sidelined by peripheral issues, but that is not a sound strategy for genealogical research. Humans cannot be understood when isolated

34. Newton Co. Will Book 1: 45; FHL microfilm 0,325,733. As an overview of the other family members identified in Thomas's will: the younger Elizabeth Hanson drew up her own will on 19 February 1836, naming her heirs as a niece Julia Amanda Sims, brothers Jefferson and Samuel Hawn, and heirs of her sister Rebecca Rogers; see Newton Co. Will Book 1: 85. Julia Amanda was also one of those unnamed "heirs of Rebecca"; on 23 August 1832, as Julia Amanda Rogers, she married Hubbard Sims in Newton Co. (Marriage Book A: 214). Her mother, Rebecca Hanson, married David Rogers on 1 January 1815 in Jackson Co. (Marriage Book ABC: 87). The 1830 census of Newton Co., p. 41, lines 11–12 places James J. Hanson (aged 20–30) adjacent to Thomas Hanson (80–90) and three females: 60–70 (Elizabeth Sr.), 20–30 (Elizabeth Jr.); and 10–15 (Julia Amanda?). James also claims a male aged 70–80; see NA microfilm M19, roll 20.

Figure 5
 Reconstructed Birth Family
 for Samuel Hanson of Talbot County, Georgia



Notes:

For Edmund, see n. 28. For Elizabeth and Rebecca, see n. 34. Rebecca's placement as a child of Thomas by Elizabeth, born 1789 or later, is based upon her 1815 marriage and the fact that her daughter Julia wed at sixteen or younger. The above chart does not purport to be a complete accounting of all children of Thomas Hanson. Research continues on other possibilities.

from their environment or their kith and kin. Collaterals—the family members from whom one does *not* descend—are just as important to research as the direct line. The world does view genealogy as *linear* in nature—a straight and narrow line that directly links parent to grandparent to great-grandparent, and on through more distant forebears. But few cultures have had the kind of vital records or record preservation to support long lines this narrowly drawn. Instead, genealogical research is a journey in which one roams through many branches of a family, following a tangle of lines that are likely to be parallel, perpendicular, diagonal, and circular as well. The researcher who explores this maze and watches for significant markers along the way can eventually accumulate enough of them to pave a quite clear path around the record gaps, the common names, and the ambiguous identities that plague most frontier research.

Of Sound Mind?

The *North River Times*, Haverstraw, New York,
5 September 1834, volume 1, number 3, page 1, column 3.

SINGULAR WILL AND FUNERAL—Among curious wills, that of Luis Cartusius, a Judge of Padua, deserves to be mentioned;—here are some of the principle [sic] articles: —1st. I forbid my house being hung with black after my death, and I desire that all who attend my funeral may be dressed in green. 2d. I require that there be collected all the violins, and all the flutes, and all the drums in the city, in order that they may accompany me to my long home. 3d. I name for my heir the person who shall laugh most at my interment.

Never did a funeral present a more singular appearance. There were all the relations of the deceased striving to laugh, with as much sincerity as under the usual circumstances they would have endeavored to cry. The will was disputed by a near relative, as the production of a madman; but the lawyer who was retained to defend it, maintained that a Judge could never be charged with madness, and upon this conclusive reasoning the will was pronounced valid.

—Contributed by Amy S. Giroux, CG

Update: Common Roots for the Lees of Virginia?

NGSQ 90 (September 2002): 211–23. The author contributes the following: (p. 213) Alice (Harete) (Lyes) Heminge was buried at St. Andrew, Worcester, 14 May 1640; (p. 215) the marriage of John Lee to Jane Hancock occurred at St. Andrew, Worcester. For both, see St. Andrew's Parish (Worcester), Bishop's Transcripts (1612–40), microfilm 0,246,695, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.