

Introduction and Transcription to the Andrew Woods Deerskin Booklet

Accreditation

This deerskin covered booklet belonged to an Andrew Woods of Virginia, between 1759-1789, whose father had died in 1758. It was held by the descendants who settled in West Virginia until donated to the University of Michigan, Clements Library, now the owner and curator of this booklet and the rest of the Andrew Woods collection. Library identification: Andrew Woods deerskin notebook, 1759-1789, Woods Family Papers, box 1, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

Introduction

This Andrew Woods Deerskin Booklet is a several page, 300 year old booklet covering mostly an estate settlement and agreements relating to the care of Andrew Woods younger under-age brother for some years. Photographs of the original manuscript appear at the end of this document, and preceded by a transcription of the same, and some background on the family.

In 1758 or early 1759 the father of Andrew Woods died, leaving a wife, named Martha, and children identified in this booklet as Polly (Mary), Andrew, Archibald, and Elijah. Only Elijah is an under age child, living as a dependent upon his mother and his brothers. Andrew appears to be the oldest, based on the property and responsibilities that he had. Martha is "Mama" in these pages. Andrew was an earlier settler of Ohio, when it was still owned by Virginia. He acquired land in Ohio from "the Ohio Company," which was due his brother who elected not to go to Ohio. Descendants of Woods family members who settled in Ohio include a Supreme Court Justice of Ohio. Other members of the Woods family founded what is now Wheeling, West Virginia. It was believed the Andrew Woods who owned this booklet was the same Andrew Woods who was in Wheeling, West Virginia. This is not proved; in fact this booklet suggests that the Andrew Woods who acquired his brother Archibald's interest from the Ohio Company was the son of William Woods, who was killed in the "Fort Upper Tract Massacre" in 1758, leaving a widow, Martha (Drake) Woods and "children" including daughters named Mary Magdalena and Sarah, who along with their mother had been taken prisoner by the Natives who over-ran the fort, and were returned separately. Some reports said Magdalena was not returned. Other researchers claim it was Sarah who was not returned.

William Woods was identified in Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish by Lyman Chalkley, the three volume set of abstracts of actual records of Augusta County, and successor counties, as a brother to Martha Woods-Wallace, wife of Peter Wallace, and Mary Magdalena Woods-McDowell- Borden, sister to Martha Woods-Wallace, and Richard Woods, an early sheriff of Augusta County, and later sheriff of Botetourt County. Another Andrew Woods, b. 1722, was identified by Rev. Neander Woods as a brother to Richard Woods and had spent part of his life in Albemarle County, then moved to Botetourt, where he later "succeeded his brother, Richard, as sheriff." More analysis of full records, for several counties needs to be done to more clearly sort out the several Woods of two emigrant brothers, Michael and Samuel, who share too many of the same names. There were also additional brothers to Michael and Samuel some of whom remained in Pennsylvania and also went westward into the Ohio Valley region.

The booklet includes agreements and memoranda of Andrew Woods, son of Martha, in settling his father's estate and caring for his youngest brother, Elijah. The years in the items read as 1759 and 1769. It is not clear that Joseph Wood or Woods mentioned as owing money on a bond to the family is a close relative or not. He is "Woods" with an "s" in one page, and "Wood" without the "s" in the last page.

The transcription follows the order of the original, as do the pictures.

Transcription

"...in faith and blood so bind my Self and heirs to keep Mama her life time. If she chooses to dispose and stays Cleare of Trouble, to have Clothing and victualling of a fireside. Elijah, till he is of age bade be subject to his Business is to have the same. If Mama Choses to leave to return over the Mountains, I am to provide a Negro girl for her to be at her command while she lives, then be mine. I am to keep her part of the stock as I do my own. In Witness where of I lived ____ (hard to read), less my piece to Mama and dispose ____ of his (signature) Andrew Woods, Archibald Woods and their seal drawings.

NB. I do father Bind my Self and heirs, Executors, to abide by this before ment (meant) obligations. I also bind my less of heirs that if in case I should die before Mama that in that case Mama is to have Nance (Nancy) Altogether at her Disposal. Andrew Woods, August 3rd, 1759.

August 30, 1767 or 1761: Memorandum of an agreement between Andrew Woods, Archibald Woods and Mama Regarding

We suppose that the Amount of all the Estate that is due in _____ is 161 pounds (English, sterling) of which Polly (nickname for Mary) is to have 35 pounds for her part and the Remainder to be Equally Divided between Mama, and of Archie, and if any one of the Latter is run to more Expenses, correcting (?) that sum, it is to be averaged (?) Equally if farther.

Ditto six cows which is to be 1/3 of 6 to Mama, the next 1/3 of 6 to Andrew and the last 1/3 and other choices to Arch.

Again there is six horses which is to be equally divided. The gray mare of the brown horse of Andrew to Mama, and the other brown horse of the Little Gray of Arch, the Dun of his own Sorall and ____

Again there is Six Negroes, viz. Ceasar, Hans, Philo, Dick, Herod and Ben. It is agreed that Andrew gets Ceasar and Hans, then Arch is to get Herod and Ben. If Arch gets Ceasar and Hans, then Andrew gets Herod and Ben. Which ever gets Herod and Ben is to have a child of the others and to have Dick.

It is farther agreed that Andrew is to have 1,000 acres of land due to Arch. from James and Joshua Howard and Andrew is to have the one half of all the land that is coming to Archibald from Ohio Company that Do (ditto) the Surveyed and also Andrew is to have the half of Archie's part of the land Surveyed for George Thomas (?-last name was hard to read but began with Th and appeared to have "om" following the "Th.")

We, Martha Woods, Andrew Woods and Archibald Woods enter into the following agreement, and bind ourselves to abide by the same. It is agreed that Andrew gets Herod, Ben and their wives when he is able to run about and it is agreed that Arch gets Ceasar and Hans. 30th Day of July, 1769. Signed Martha Woods, Andrew Woods, Archibald Woods and Elijah Woods.

We, Martha Woods, Andrew and Archibald Woods do agree that will jointly buy or deliver a Negro boy to Elijah, about eight or ten years of age provided he is subject to his Business until he lives of age. (The last line was underlined and separated the foregoing segment from a crossed- out section that followed on the same page.)

(Crossed out section) July 30th 1769. Andrew and Archibald Woods enter into the following Articles of Agreement (To whit). We jointly agree to purchase a Negro boy for Elijah, about 10 or 12 years old, out of the last portion (?) of the Bond due from Joseph Woods. If we cannot accomplish that, it is agreed that Andrew pay to Arch 15 pounds toward Arch's having a like one if any is about the same. _____ if Raised (?) in two portions Archibald to the 10th April. Hapcowe (Hascowe?) Kate at Henry Lin's (Linn)."

Poetry written in the “landscape” direction of the page followed the crossed-out lower half of the preceding page. It is a lament of a man traveling, or exploring, and missing his wife left behind.

“I write since writing was my sole relief and in the dewy sheets thus breath(e) my grief Blest letter go my tendrest thoughts come Lay to her warm lips thy signet she will Lay And with a kiss dissolve the seal away Seven tedious nights guiltless of sleep I stood Night with the wind and murmur with the Flood Then Climbing the utmost cliffs have cost to view My tears like glasses the object nearer drew.”

(The last handwritten page that was photographed is apparently the corrected version of the agreement between Andrew and Archibald regarding the purchase of a slave boy for their brother Elijah and how it was to be done.)

“Agreement between Andrew and Archibald to buy Elijah a Negro boy aged 10 to 12, out of the last Bond due from Joseph Wood. Andrew to advance 15 pounds for his part, Archibald to pay the remainder what ever it be. If that cannot be accomplished, Andrew is to pay the Like sum toward getting another of the same, but Archibald is to have the option to take the Negro out of that Bond or not. If Negroes are raised or fallen in Value from what they are at this time, Andrew is to pay in proportion to the 15 pounds toward getting a boy. Teste Andrew Woods (seal drawing) and Archibald Woods (seal drawing).”

I do bind my
 self & heirs to keep Mama
 her life time of the Chusesto
 Trouble to have Clothing & other
 alling of a fire side of Justice
 Elijah till he is of age & his
 wife is to have the same
 & If Mama chooses to leave
 me to Return Over the
 mountains I am to provide
 a Negro Girl for her to
 be at her command
 while she lives then let
 Mine - ~~Woods~~
 I am also to keep this
 part the stock as I do my own
 I do witness where of I find
 my self my heirs to the same
 and my heirs of the same
 Andrew Woods

N^o 13 I do further bind my
 self my heirs Executors &
 to abide by the Before write
 Allegation I also bind My
 self & heirs That If in case
 I should be so ordered that I
 Die before Mama that in that
 Case Mama is to have & have
 altogether at her Disposal
 that Witness my hand
 and Wood's
 Andrew Woods

Aug 3^d 1759

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 Collection/item: Woods Family Papers, 1704-1974 Box/Vol.: 1 Date: 8-5-14
 Andrew Woods Note book

August 30 1807
 Memorandum of an
 agreement entered of
 between Andrew Wood &
 the wife of Maria Wood
 the suppose that the
 amount of all the personal
 estate that is due in both
 is £164 pound of which
 Polly is to have £35 for
 her part of the remainder
 to be equally divided
 Maria. And. J. Luke & if
 any one of the latter is
 run to more expences con-
 cerning that sum it is to be
 averaged equally - of further
 to six cows which is to be
 to Maria the B.C. of B. to
 And. the B.C. of L. Ay.
 & the other B.C. ones to each

Again there is six
 cows which is to be equal
 Maria is to have
 the Gray mare of Brown
 more of And. the other
 Brown Horse of Little
 Gray of her the Dun
 of his own small all
 Again there is six
 growing Cows Hans
 Dick Head of Ben
 It is agreed that if
 case And. gets Cows
 Hans that he is
 to get Head of Ben but
 if Luke gets Cows
 Hans then And. is to have
 Head of Ben of which
 And. gets Head of Ben is
 to have Dick of the other
 to have Dick

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 Andrew Woods Note book

It is farther agreed
 that Andrew is to have
 1000 acres of land due to
 Arke from James of London
 Howard's land is to have
 the one half of all the land
 that is coming to Arke from
 this Company that is the
 one half of his part that
 is to Survey and also
 Arke is to have the half
 of Arke part of the land
 Survey for George Strickland
~~of the land of the~~

Martha Woods Andrew
 of Arke Woods Co. Embellish
 the following agreement of Arke
 and our selves to a bid by the
 same It is agreed that Andrew
 gets Herod's part & Sir & Sir
 is to be deliver'd to Arke when
 he is able to run about &
 It is agreed that Arke gets
 Ceasar's of Mans

In witness where of
 witness to Let our Hands & seals
 this 30 Day July 1709
 Let Martha Woods
 Woods
 Elijah And Doods
 Arke Woods

We Maatha Andrew
Arche bloods do agree
That we will jointly buy
or Deliver a Negro boy
To Elijah about eight or
Ten year old provided he be
Subject to his Business under
the slaves of Age &c

July 30th 1709
Andrew Arch^d bloods Enter
into the following Articles
of agreement (Jointly) We jointly
agree to purchase a Negro boy
for Elijah about Ten or 12 years
old out of the Last ~~Arche~~
Bond due from Joseph bloods
& if we cannot accomplish that
It is agreed that Andrew pay to
Arch^d £15 towards purchasing
a like one if any way that a child
the same value of value in
proportion according to the
Last Negroes Rate at this
time

I want since writing was my care
And over the day sheets thus been thinking
Best letter go my hand rest thoughts convey
To her warm lips thy signet she will lay
And with ships dole her thy seal away
Seven tedious nights quills of sleep's store
Light with the wind and murmurs with the flood
Thou blinding the utmost lights how soft to view
My tears like glasses the object nearer view

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Collection/item: Woods Family Papers 1704-1794

Andrew Woods Note book

Box/Vol.: 1

Date: 8-5-14

