

PREFACE

The total material in these two volumes represent eight generations of the descendants of John Nichols, and, in some cases, the children that make up the ninth generation. The names of some 12,000 individuals are listed here, but regrettably, the identity of everyone could not be determined, and the hope is that future historians publishing these chronicles will use this work as a guide and “fill in the gaps.” Some readers may find that information about their particular family line is disappointedly sparse, and for that I apologize. One of the primary objectives in publishing this family chronicle was to provide a framework that others can expand upon and embellish as they see fit. It should be noted that all documents that were transcribed for inclusion here were copied word for word, preserving the original spelling and grammar. These included obituaries, newspaper articles, census reports, deeds, personal letters, and legal documents. Every reasonable attempt has been made to check and verify information when possible, but the number of sources involved has made total accuracy impossible, and errors are bound to be discovered. The author would appreciate having any discrepancies or omissions brought to his attention, and both email and street addresses are provided on the back of the title page.

The primary focus herein is the old pioneer, John Nichols, and his descendants. He and his wife, Nancy Burch, settled in Barren County, Kentucky in 1812, where they raised thirteen children to adulthood, almost all of whom would have children of their own. The work consists of two volumes; the first volume containing the preface and chapters one through seven, and volume two containing chapters eight through fourteen plus the appendices and index. Chapter one discusses John Nichols’ early life in Virginia, the journey from Virginia along the Wilderness Road to Kentucky and the couple’s ultimate home site established on Fallen Timber Creek. Each of the succeeding thirteen chapters pertains to each one of their children and includes that individual’s descendants. The books contain almost 1000 photographs, which are distributed throughout the two volumes and arranged chronologically at the end of each chapter. Many photographs were copied from tintypes, and in a few cases, daguerreotypes, and all photographs are printed here in black and white.

The source of official records for Virginia counties was the Library of Virginia, located in Richmond, Virginia, where tax records, land deeds, court order books, wills, marriage records, etc. are available to the public on microfilm. A complete list of archival material is outlined on their website: <http://www.lva.lib.va.us>. Microfilm data can be viewed in person in Richmond or can be ordered through interlibrary loan. The availability of official records from Kentucky counties is quite variable due to courthouse fires and other disasters. It is fortunate that the Barren County courthouse never burned, and almost all records dating back to the county’s formation in 1799 have been preserved and are available for study either in Glasgow, Kentucky or on microfilm at the Kentucky History Center or the State Library Archives Building in Frankfort, Kentucky. Unfortunately, other counties were not so lucky. The Hart County courthouse in Munfordville burned to the ground in 1928, totally destroying over 100 years of official

county records, and this greatly added to the difficulty in tracking down information on the descendants of George Webster Nichols, who moved to Hart from Barren in the 1860's.

From their home in Barren County, Kentucky, the descendants of John Nichols' soon spread to other parts of the country, and outlined in Appendix I are many of these early movements listed on a migration time line chart.

Listed in Appendix II are important Nichols family sites in the Fallen Timber Creek area of Barren County, including a map spotting their location. These include the site of John Nichols' old home place, the homes of Abner Nichols and Anne (Nichols) Burch, which are still being lived in today, Elbow Spring, Bowles Cemetery (formerly Nichols Cemetery) where John and Nancy and many of the descendants are buried, the site of Vernon School and Church, etc.

Some general sources of information along with selected references are cited in Appendix III.

The work as presented here was essentially a self-publishing effort, and without the aid of a personal computer, the task of producing this manuscript would have been infinitely more difficult as well as more expensive. The software used in organizing and compiling the data was Family Tree Maker by Broderbund. Once reports were generated using FTM, they were then exported to Microsoft Word, where additional editing and modifications could take place, including the insertion of photographs. After all the pieces were in place, the total compilation was downloaded to a CD and given to the publisher for printing and binding.