

Widows' Dowers of the 1820s in Washington County, Tennessee

*Transcribed by Gary R. Toms and William R. Gann
of the Gann Historical Society and Library*

These dowers were found among the loose court papers of Washington County, Tennessee, which are housed in the Archives of Appalachia in Sherrod Library, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee. These are transcribed from photocopies of the original documents. Every attempt has been made to keep the original spelling and punctuation, even though this has meant retaining obvious errors.

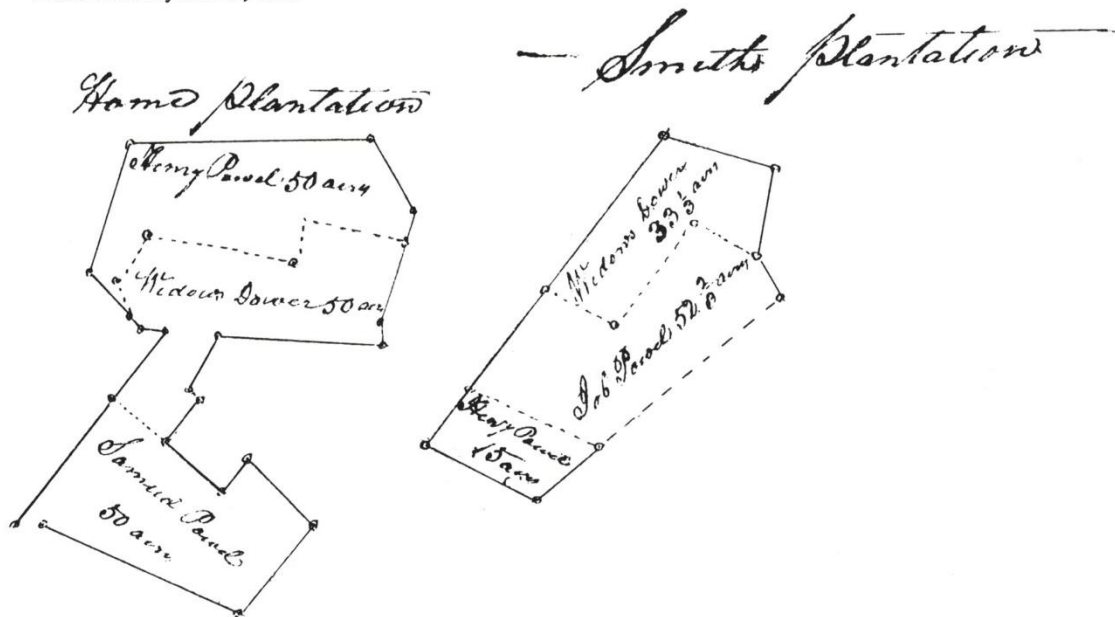
The value of these dowers from the period 1820 to 1829 differs from those of the 1840s which appeared in the Jan.-Feb./Mar.-Apr. 1996 issue. In these dowers, there appears to be a strong emphasis on describing the land, using the metes and bounds measurements of that period. This is in contrast to those of the 1840s which appeared to be primarily concerned with providing the widow and her family with supplies to sustain them for one year while the estate was in probate. Even so, these dowers concerned primarily with land have considerable value for the genealogist. There is the obvious value of specifically naming the widow and giving a date by which her husband was deceased. Secondly, the names of other heirs of the deceased and often the adjacent landowners may be given.

Of particular interest in transcribing this series of dowers was the treatment of surnames. There are several good examples in these documents of surname variations where the same name may be spelled two, three or more different ways in the course of a document. This underscores once again the need for the researcher to always be open to surname spelling variations and to check every possibility.

These dower rights were found in one specific group of loose court papers in the Washington County Court Records collection at the Archives of Appalachia. These dowers were found in Series D-II, Judicial Records, 1780-1939, Box 235. Additional documents of this type exist for Washington County and will be transcribed for future issues.

NOTE: The "style" of the case, or other notes from the reverse side of the dower, are transcribed only when they provide different or additional information from what is contained in the main text of the dower.

Estate of Henry Powel, decd.



Courses and Distances of the Widows dower part of the home plantation, Beginning at a black oak corner of the heirs of Robert Allison No 42 East 9 poles to a Cedar Stake near the spring branch at the old tan yard and near a marker white oak on the opposite side of said branch, thence with the division line between her and the part laid off for Henry Powel N 19 W. 18 poles crossing the spring branch at the corner of the spring house to a post oak thence N 38 E 27 poles to a Stake near a locust, thence S 77 E 76 poles along the orchard fence and marked red oak to a Stake at the corner of a field thence S 14 E 24 poles to a stake and Sycamore thence S 77 E 56 poles to a white oak thence S 19 W. 41 poles to [a] fell[ed] white oak corner of Robison old grant thence South, 14 poles to a white oak Strains corner thence N 85 W. 86 poles to a stake where two post oaks stood then S 29 W. 30 poles to a white oak thence S 55 E 6 poles to a stake thence S 38 W. 28 poles to a Stake corner of the Tract laid off for Samuel Powel thence with a line thereof N 49 W. 37 poles to a Sassafra his corner on a line of Allison's heirs thence with their line N 41 E 45 poles to a stake corner of said heirs then with their line N 85 W. 12 poles to the Beginning Containing Fifty acres.

Course and Distance of the widows Dower part of the Smith plantation, Beginning at a white oak near a road and Barn, thence up a lane North fifty eight west thirty six poles to a Stake in said lane thence through a field South thirty nine West Sixty seven poles to a black oak corner of Jobe Powels part of said plantation thence with his line North fifty eight West forty poles to two black oak and a white oak thence North thirty nine East ninety nine poles to a Stake where a Thorn Bush formerly stood thence South Seventy East fifty eight poles to a Stake thence a Straight line to the beginning containing thirty three acres and one third of an acre.

Course and Distance of Jobe Powels part laid off for him on the Smith plantation—Beginning at a white oak corner of the widows dower part thence South forty six East Twenty three poles to a Stake near a marked black

[oak?] Henry **Marshes** corner thence with his line South fifty west one hundred and Twenty poles to a stake corner of a part of said place laid off for Henry **Powel** thence with his line North Sixty three West seventy poles to a double white oak thence North thirty nine East Sixty four poles to two black oak and a white oak corner of the widows part, thence with her line South fifty eight East forty poles to a black oak thence North thirty nine East Sixty seven poles to her corner stake in the lane, thence with said lane South fifty eight East thirty six poles to the beginning containing fifty two acres.

Course and distance of Henry Powels part of the **Smith** plantation Beginning at a Stake and a white oak thence North Sixty three West Sixty two and a half poles to a Stake where a Sourwood formerly stood thence North thirty nine East thirty six poles to double white oak Jobe Powels corner thence with his line South Sixty three East Seventy poles to stake said Jobes corner thence South fifty three West forty poles to the Beginning containing Fifteen acres

Also the Course and distance of Fifty acres laid off for the said Henry Powel on the home plantation Beginning at a post oak near the spring house corner of the widows dower part thence with her lines North thirty eight East Twenty seven and half poles to a stake near a locust thence South seventy seven East seventy six poles to a stake thence North fourteen East Twenty four poles to a stake near a sycamore thence South Seventy seven East fifty six poles to a white oak North nineteen East Twenty three poles to a post oak North thirty west forty two poles to a umberdy poplar in Marshes field West one hundred and Twenty seven poles to a Stake South eighteen West sixty eight poles to a white oak south forty two East Twenty nine poles to a cedar Stake at the old tan yard Corner of the widows dower part thence North nineteen west eighteen and a half poles crossing the spring branch to the Beginning

Course and distance of Fifty Acres laid off for Samuel Powels at the lower End of the home plantation Beginning at a Sassafras corner of the Widows dower part on a line of **Allisons** heirs thence with their line South forty one West eighty poles to a Stake near a marked black oak thence South Eighty five East fourteen poles to a stake and fell[ed] white oak thence South Sixty five East eight six poles to a post oak thence South Sixty two East Twenty one poles crossing a fork of biglimestone [sic] to white oak corner of **Fergesons** Heirs thence with their line North forty one East Sixty poles to a hickory and Spanish oak thence North forty three and a half West forty nine poles to a white oak on some rocks near a spring thence South thirty eight west Twenty one poles to a white oak thence North forty nine west Seventy five poles to Beginning We the committee appointed by the County Court of Washington County at October Session 1822, to apportion and lay of [sic] the real estate of Henry Powel Deceased between his heirs do hereby Certify the foregoing platts and certificates to be a true plan of the divisions by us made between them Given under our hands the 13th day of January 1823

Division of the
Estate of Henry
Powel

Nathan Shipley
John Stephenson
John Strain
Jonathan Barcroft
Isaac Smith

Estate of James Stuart, decd.
State of Tennessee }

To the Sheriff of Davidson County Greeting

You are hereby commanded to Summon Elizabeth Stuart Heir of James Stuart decd. to appear at the Circuit Court of Equity for Washington County to be begun and held at the Court house in Jonesborough on the Second Monday of September next then and there to answer a Bill of Reviver exhibited in Said Court by Montgomery Stuart against her and Thomas D Stuart heir of James Stuart decd. and further to do and receive what the said Court may then and there Decree Concerning her in the premises Herein fail not and have you then and there this Writt Witness James V **Anderson** Clerk & Master of said Court the 2nd Monday of March 1823

James V Anderson Clk & M
By Robert **McLin** DC

On reverse: Subpoena to Answer
 Montgomery **Stuart**
 vs
 Elizabeth Stuart
 Heir of James Stuart, decd.
 Isd. [issued] 22nd July 1822
 To
 Sepr. Term 1822

[Note: All dates in this subpoena are transcribed exactly as written. The clerk was apparently a bit confused at the time he prepared the document. *Bill of Revivor*, an equity practice; a bill filed for the purpose of reviving or calling into operation the proceedings in a suit when from some circumstances as a death of a plaintiff the suit has abated. *Black's Law Dictionary*, Sixth edition (1990), p. 1321.]

Estate of William Colyar, decd.

	July Sessions 1823	
John Lashbrooks & Wife	}	In this cause Judgment vs
vs.	}	pro confesso having been
William Colyar &	}	entered in this at the last
Alexr. Colyar Admrs.	}	Term of this Court It is
of William Colyar decd.	}	Now Ordered that James
	}	Sevier Jacob Brown and

John **Bayles** be appointed Commissioners for the purpose of dividing the Negroes of William Colyar decd. now in the possession of said Administrators so as to Set apart to Sd Lashbrooks and wife Distributees of Said Estate one fourth part of said Negroes and make report to next Term of this Court how they have executed this Order

A true Copy from the Minutes
 Test
 Matthew **Stephenson** Clk
 By Robert **McLin** DC

Estate of William Sitzler, decd.

We the Jury appointed by order of the County Court of Washington County at their July Session 1823 to lay off the Dower of Catherine **Setsler** have laid off thirty three and a third acres of land as her dower right of the Estate of William Setsler deceased Including the dwelling house out houses and other improvements agreeable to the above platt,
 Beginning at a white oak corner of the whole tract thence South forty one East crossing a branch and runing Just below the head of a spring twenty three poles to a heap of Stone thence South Eighty three East through the orchard thirteen poles to a stake at said orchard fence thence with the middle of said fence South Six west Eight poles to a Stake at another fence thence with said fence South Eighty two East twelve poles to a Stake thence with the middle of said fence South Sixty eight - East one hundred and five poles to a Stake on Martin **Kitsmillers** line thence with his line North Seventeen West, Eighty poles to a white oak Sapling said millers [sic] corner thence West one hundred and Sixteen poles to the place of Beginning

Given under our hands the 25th day of August 1823

Martin Kitzmiller
Wm T. Ensen
John Ellis
James Ellis
George Hale
Thomas Miller
Nathan Shipley
Joseph Clark
Jacob Ellis
Alexander Dyer
Charles Baskett
John Crouch

Martin Kitzmiller
Wm T. Ensen
John Ellis
James Ellis
George Hale
Thomas Miller
Nathan Shipley
Joseph Clark
Jacob Ellis
Alexander Dyer
Charles Baskett
John Crouch

Washington County }
State of Tennessee }

Pursuant to an order of the Court of said County July Sessions 1823 We the undersigned being appointed to Set apart to the widow Sitzler late wife of William Sitzler Senr. Decd. her maintenance for One year according to law do hereby certify that we have in the discharge of Our duty Set apart to her the following articles (viz) All the Old Corn now on hand. and thirty bushels out of the crop now growing. all the wheat on hand five Head of Hogs. One Heifer, One Bee Stand, Six dollars in Money, all the Tobacco and Soap On hand. One piece of Soal leather all the Spun thread

Given under Our hands this 11th day of August 1823

Jacob Ellis
John Crouch
John Ellis

On reverse: One years Allowance to Mrs Catherin Setzer [sic]

Estate of John Campbell, decd.

[While not actually a dower, this document was found among the dowers and is included for its value in naming the widow and providing a date by which her husband was deceased.]

State of Tennessee } January Sessions 1824
 Washington County }

Ordered by the Court that the Sheriff give notice to Sarah Campbell that unless she appears on the 3rd day of next term of this Court & and take out Letters of Administration in the Estate of her decd Husband John Campbell Letters of Administration will be granted to another

A true copy from the Records of the Court
 Test Robert McLin DC

On reverse: Copy of notice
 To
 be Served on
 Sarah Campbell

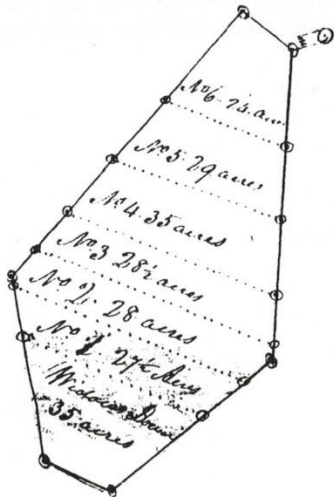
April 14th
 1824 I delivered a true Copy
 of the within to Sarah Campbell
 Jno D Gwin
 Deputy for
 S Hunt Shiff

I Samll Hunt Sheriff do hereby deute John
 D Gwin to Execute this Subpene
 Aprul 13th 1824

Saml Hunt Sheriff

Estate of William Miller, decd.

*Laid down by a scale of 100
 poles to an inch*



In Pursuance of an order of the Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions for Washington County We the undersigned have proceeded to divide the real estate of William Miller deceased amongst his Heirs in the following manner, To Wit, We lay off for Rebecca Miller one of the Heirs the Lot marked No. 1 containing twenty seven and an half acres. Begining at a Stake near a marked black oak on John Cowans line a corner of the widows Dower thence with Cowans line North Sixty one degrees East thirty three poles to four hickories and a black oak on said line thence North fifty seven degrees West one hundred & Sixty poles to a percimmin on Frederick Fancelers[?] line thence with the same South thirty three poles to a Stake near the mouth of Fancelers line a corner of the Widows Dower thence with the line of said dower South fifty Seven degrees East one hundred & twenty four poles to the Begining

We have laid off to Hannah Miller one of the Heirs Lot No. 2 containing twenty eight acres. Beginning at a percimmon on Faneclers line a corner of No. 1 thence north five poles to two white oaks Faneclers & the Heirs of Robert Maclins corner thence with the line of Maclins heirs North fifty degrees East twenty four poles to a white oak thence South fifty seven degrees East one hundred and Sixty four poles to a white oak thence South Eleven and an half degrees West Six poles to a Stake & pointers thence South Sixty one degrees West twenty one poles to four hickories and a black oak thence North fifty seven West one hundred & Sixty poles to the Beginning

We have laid off for Jane Miller one of the Heirs Lot marked No. 3 Containing twenty eight and an half acres Beginning at a white oak a corner of Lot No. 2 thence North Eleven and an half degrees East thirty poles to a white oak & pointers thence North fifty seven West one hundred and forty six poles to a white oak on a line of R. McLins Heirs thence South fifty West thirty poles to a white oak thence South fifty seven East one hundred and sixty-four poles to the Beginning

We have laid off for Hariett Miller one of the Heirs Lot No. 4 containing thirty five acres. Beginning at a white oak and post oak corner of No. 3 thence North Eleven and an half degrees East forty eight poles to a white and pointers thence North fifty seven West one hundred and fourteen poles to a Stake and pointers on a line of R. McLins Heirs thence with the same South fifty West forty eight poles to a white oak thence South fifty seven East one hundred and Sixty four poles to the Beginning

We have laid off for Rachel Holmes formerly Rachel Miller one of the Heirs Lot No. 5. Containing twenty nine acres. Beginning at a Stake near a marked white oak corner of Lot No. 6. thence South Eleven and an half West fifty poles to a white oak and pointers corner of Lot No. 4. thence North fifty Seven East one hundred and fourteen poles crossing the middle of the Spring to a Stake & pointers on R. M Lins line thence North fifty East fifty poles to a Stake near a white oak pointer thence South fifty Seven East eighty two poles to the Beginning

We have laid off for Nancy Giddeon formerly Nancy Miller one of the Heirs The Lot marked No. 6. Containing twenty four acres Beginning at a black oak the Beginning corner of the whole Tract and a corner of Christian Zettys land thence North forty degrees West forty poles to a Stake and white oak in Line of a red oak and white oak called for in the Grant a corner of the land of the heirs of John Barkley and Robert M Lin thence South fifty West Seventy five poles to a Stake near a white oak pointer corner of Lot No 5 thence with a line of the Same South fifty Seven East eighty two poles to a Stake near a marked white oak thence North Eleven and an half East Sixty Six poles to the Beginning

Done and Subscribed this 20th day of January 1824

Frietrich Ferchler
William Crookshanks
Joseph McLin
John Cowan
John Stephenson

Frietrich Ferchler
William Crookshanks
Joseph McLin
John Cowan
John Stephenson