

Isaac Bacon, A Family Man

By Donna Cox Briggs,
Washington County, Tennessee Archives

Five days a week, twice a day, I drive down Boones Creek Road. A good portion of the land is still farmland, and I love seeing cattle, the rolling hills, and even the railroad trestle. I honestly do not think I ever wondered who owned the property in the late 1700's and early 1800's. It was Isaac Bacon, and here is his story.

Isaac Bacon was born about 1743 in Pennsylvania, likely in the area that became Berks County. He was the eldest son of Jeremiah and Anna "Nancy" Bacon. Little is known of his early life, but it can be confirmed that he was a private in the 2nd Pennsylvania Battalion of Continental Forces, enlisting on February 14, 1776, and was discharged only eight months later. He was then listed on the Berks County, Pennsylvania Militia records from 1777 - 1782. On July 20, 1778, Isaac took the Oath of Allegiance in Berks County. He was listed there on the tax lists as a "freeman."

Isaac was the first member of the Bacon family to settle in Washington County, Tennessee, where he purchased 110 acres on Boones Creek from Mark Mitchel in 1789.

The first time we see him on the surviving tax lists of Washington County is in 1792, Captain Melvan's Company, shown below. He was listed with 110 acres, and no white or black polls.

Acres of Land	Owner's Name	Polls		Acres of Land
		White	Black	
3	Abraham Gray - - -	1	=	=
3	Joseph Melvan - -	1	=	=
0	<u>Isaac Bacon - -</u>	"	"	110

1792 Washington County, Tennessee Tax List, Melvan's Company

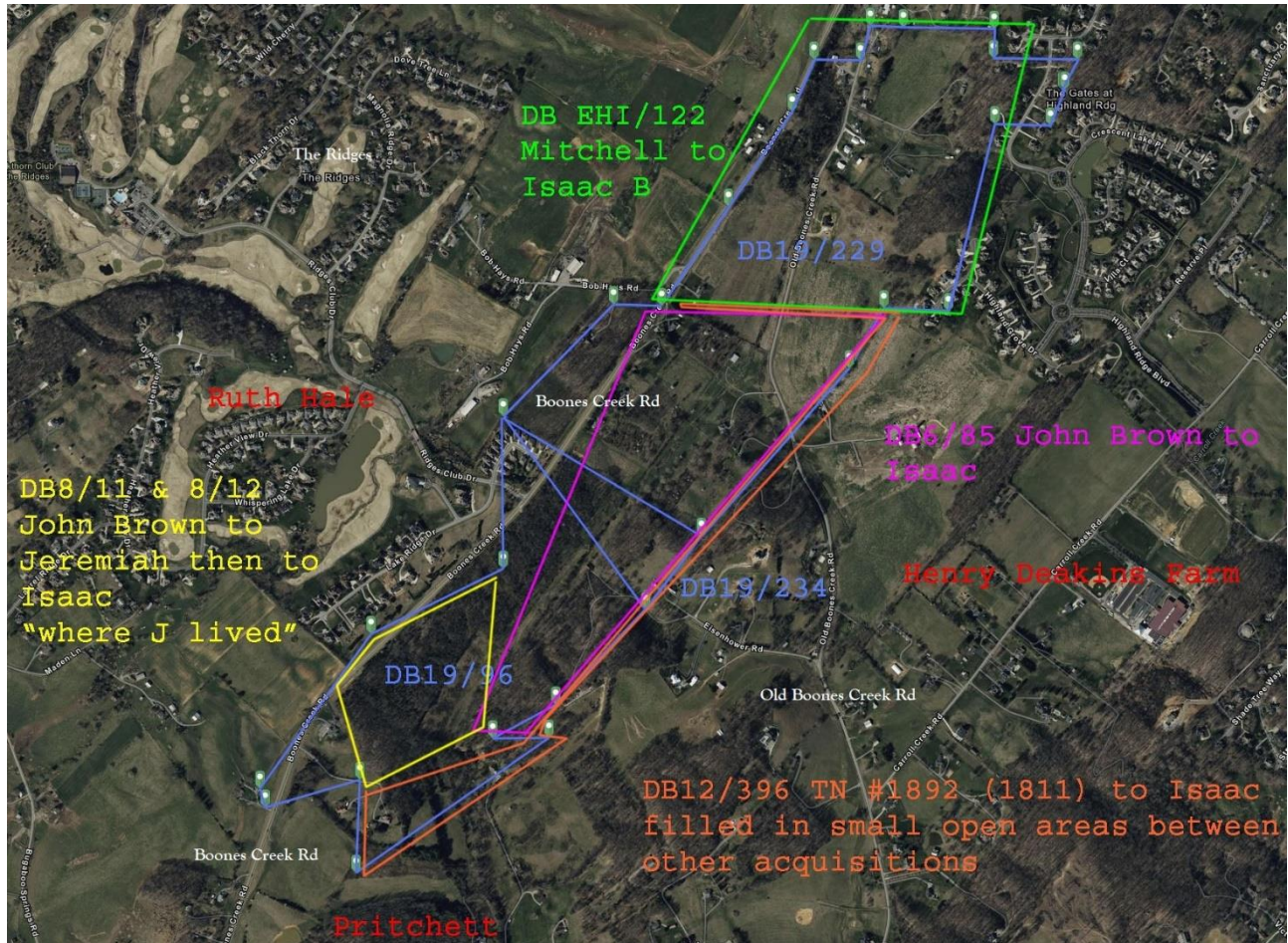
In 1793, he is listed with no white or black polls, and 200 acres of land. The same was also entered in 1794.

132	<u>Isaac Bacon - -</u>	=	=	100
-	Thomas Wrighte	1	=	200

1793 Washington County, Tennessee Tax List, Melvan's Company

In 1796, he expanded his property by purchasing 150 acres that adjoined Mark Mitchel and others. Bacon had two land grants, #345, was issued February 19, 1797, and grant, #1260 was issued June 8,

1797, which added another 200 acres to his holdings. Isaac Bacon was prolific in real estate dealings, and there is quite a list of purchases and sales in the county's deeds. Some of these purchases were made, so that he could divide the land, and sell portions to his relatives. Two of his brothers, Charles and Jonathan, as well as his daughter Nancy, and her husband Joshua Hunt purchased land from Isaac. To quote a Bacon family researcher, Robert Wells, "The constant interaction between Isaac Bacon and the other Bacons in Washington County suggests that he was interested in their well-being, and is further evidence of their closeness as a family unit."



Isaac was married to Abigail who some researchers have speculated may have been a Barnes, though to date the evidence does not support this attribution. They were married prior to their entry into Washington County and were the parents of seven children:

1. Thomas Bacon (1785 - 1851)
2. Joseph Bacon (1791 - 1858)
3. Nancy Bacon (circa 1792 - 1863)
4. Isaac E. W. Bacon (before 1799 - before 1850)
5. Charles W. Bacon (circa 1804 - 1838)
6. Jonathan Bacon (circa 1802 - after 1850)
7. John B. Bacon (1808 - 1872)

Isaac wrote his will on June 23, 1826, and it was probated in Washington County at the July term of County Court, 1826. It is unknown where he is buried. Abigail, his widow, was listed in the 1830 census, and her household consisted of one female (Abigail), aged 60 - 70 and three males aged 20 - 30. Beginning in 1831, she began selling her land, eventually selling four tracts of land and moving to McDonough County, Illinois with daughter Nancy Hunt and her family. She died there on December 28, 1840 at the age of 74 years and is buried in the Bean Cemetery near Colchester, Illinois. Their sons, Joseph and Charles, are also buried there, as is their daughter, Nancy Hunt.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Isaac Bacon". The ink is dark and the paper is aged and slightly yellowed. The signature is written in a fluid, connected style typical of the early 19th century.

Signature from his will, signed in 1826, Washington County, Tennessee

NOTE: The genealogical information for this early landowner was taken from researcher Robert Wells, a genealogist from England, who is a descendant of Isaac Bacon through his son Thomas. Mr. Wells has made two trips to our archives on his way to visit family in the states, and it has been quite a pleasure to get to know him. We anxiously anticipate his next visit.

Gordon Edwards is our local deed expert, who so graciously volunteered to plat deeds for the *Early Landowners* project.

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