

## **Reuben Saffold II**

[Vivian Price Saffold](#), 2009

**Reuben Saffold II (called Reuben, the Younger)**<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> was born on 4 Sep 1788 in Wilkes County, Ga.<sup>5,6,7,8,9</sup> He drew one lot in the state land lottery in 1805 in Washington County.<sup>10</sup> He subsequently moved to Morgan County, Ga., where he read law under Maj. Edward Payne in Watkinsville.<sup>11</sup> He immigrated in June, 1813 to the Tombigbee settlement, Jackson, Clarke County, in the Mississippi Territory.<sup>12,13,14,15,16</sup> The entourage of several connected families was conducted by Gen. Sam Dale, "the picturesque frontier guide and Indian fighter."

Reuben Saffold made his living as a lawyer and was elected as state legislator between 1813 and 1819 in the Mississippi Territory.<sup>17,18</sup> He served in the military between 1814 and 1817 in Mississippi Territory, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel.<sup>19,20</sup> He fought in the war against the Creek Indians in Battle of Burnt Corn, and commanded company in service along the Perdido River. He later was appointed a colonel in the militia of the Mississippi Territory.

He moved with his wife and toddler son from Madison, Morgan County, Ga. to Clarke County, then Dallas County (organized 9 Aug 1814), in the Mississippi Territory (later Alabama). There he bought land and slaves between 1814 and 1837. Deeds show his first land purchase in Dallas County was 20 Jan 1814.

Reuben Saffold began a short career in the Mississippi Territory Militia as a lieutenant colonel; he was later promoted to colonel. He fought the Creek Indians during the Fort Mims Massacre of 30 Aug 1813, while his wife and son were sheltered at a nearby fort, close enough to hear the battle. Another Saffold family story tells of Mary Evelyn picking flowers outside the fort, and a settler with a dog held off the Indians until she could reach the fort.

He also fought in the Battle of Burnt Corn, part of the Creek War, in 1813. He commanded a company in battle along the Perdido River, which forms the contemporary border between Alabama and Florida, in 1814.<sup>21,22</sup>

Reuben signed a "memorial" to the U. S. Congress asking for statehood for the Mississippi Territory on 8 Jan 1817.<sup>23</sup> He was elected as a delegate to the first Alabama state constitutional convention in 1819; the convention was held in Huntsville, Ala.<sup>24,25,26</sup> Reuben represented Clarke County (along with James Magoffin) at the convention. He was elected judge of the Second Circuit Court (and, thus, an ex-officio justice of the Alabama Supreme Court) in 1819.<sup>27,28</sup>

He signed the Alabama state constitution on 2 Aug 1819 in Huntsville, Ala.<sup>29,30,31</sup> He appeared in the census in 1820 in Dallas County, Ala.<sup>32,33</sup>

He moved to Pleasant Hill, Dallas County, Ala., 16 miles southeast of Selma, about 1825 in Belvoir, Pleasant Hill, Dallas County, Ala.<sup>34</sup> It was here that he built his home called Belvoir.



**Belvoir, home of Reuben Saffold II, in Pleasant Hill, Ala.**

Records show Reuben and his family were living in a log house in Pleasant Hill about 1838.<sup>35</sup> He built his home called Belvoir between 1838 and 1847.<sup>36,37,38,39,40</sup> Belvoir was placed in the Alabama Historic Register in 1998. The home currently is

privately owned and has been restored.

There are at least two other Belvoirs – one in Mobile, Ala. and the other in Columbia, S. C. – that were residences of Reuben's descendants.

Reference to construction of a house in 1834 may have been house on Furniss Avenue in Selma, later home of Reuben's son, Benjamin Franklin Saffold. While Reuben's primary residence remained at Pleasant Hill, he frequently had business in the Dallas County seat of Selma. He also lived in 1836 in Mobile, Mobile County, Ala., where he had been commissioned to establish public warehouse.<sup>41</sup>

Reuben appeared in the census in 1830 in Dallas County.<sup>42,43</sup> He appeared in the census in 1840 in Dallas County, Ala.<sup>44</sup>

He owned a great deal of land, having bought 909.915 acres of land between 13 Apr 1831 and 10 Apr 1837, according to the Cahaba, Ala. Land Office.<sup>45</sup>

He was elected as justice of the Alabama State Supreme Court (one of three justices) in 1832.<sup>46,47</sup> He was elected as chief justice in 1835, and resigned a year later.<sup>48,49</sup> A biography said of his service on the court: "In the discharge of his judicial functions he was firm, impartial, dignified, and affable." In his *Dictionary of Alabama Biography*,: Col. Albert James Pickett Judge Saffold: "The reports of the supreme court of Alabama are enduring memorials of his strength of mind, patient investigation, deep research and profound learning."

Reuben Saffold died on 15 Feb 1847 at Pleasant Hill, Dallas County, Ala. and was buried at Belvoir.<sup>50,51,52,53</sup> His large will, signed on 15 Dec 1845, revealed significant property, but also a great deal of debt.<sup>54,55</sup>

Biographies described him as "portly" and having an "excellent face." He was said to belong to "no church but believed in God."<sup>56</sup> Portraits of him and his wife hang in the Archives building in Montgomery, Ala.; duplicates are in possession of descendants.



Reuben Saffold II



Mary Evelyn Phillips Saffold

Reuben Saffold married **Mary Evelyn ("Polly") Phillips**, daughter of Col. Joseph Phillips and Jane Walker, on 21 Apr 1811 in Madison, Morgan County, Ga.<sup>57,58,59,60</sup> Mary Evelyn<sup>61</sup> was born in Jun 1793 in Wilkes County, Ga.<sup>62,63,64,65</sup> Although women generally did not own property her day, records show she bought land between 1829 and 1836 in Dallas County, Ala.<sup>66</sup> She appeared as head of household in the census in 1850 and 1860 in Dallas County, Ala.<sup>67</sup> She was a member of the Methodist Episcopal church.<sup>68</sup> Mary Evelyn died on 25 Jun 1860 at Belvoir, leaving a will, which she signed on 15 Dec 1845.<sup>69,70,71</sup> She and Reuben are buried at Belvoir.

Reuben and Mary Evelyn had 11 children, including seven sons. All but their eldest child were born in what is now Alabama.

[Joseph Phillips SAFFOLD I](#) (born on 12 Jan 1812).

[William Bird SAFFOLD](#) (born about 1813).

[Zeno Ray SAFFOLD](#) (born about 1814).

[Addison Jackson SAFFOLD](#) (born between 15 Sep 1815 and 1 Oct 1815).

[Jane Elizabeth SAFFOLD](#) (born about 1818).

[Mary Anne SAFFOLD](#) (born about 1820).

[Benjamin Franklin SAFFOLD](#) (born on 20 Apr 1826).

[Reuben Washington SAFFOLD](#) (born in 1827).

[Milton Jefferson SAFFOLD](#) (born on 18 Mar 1828).

[Caroline Sarah SAFFOLD](#) (born about 1830).

[Eliza Evelyn SAFFOLD](#) (born Aug 1831).

## Notes and Sources

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- <sup>1</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (1921), Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>2</sup> W. Brewer, *Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872* (1872), pages 214-215.
  - <sup>3</sup> Will of Reuben Saffold.
  - <sup>4</sup> National League of American Pen Women, Birmingham Branch (vignette on Belvoir written by Mildred Reynolds Saffold), *Historic Homes of Alabama and Their Traditions* (Birmingham Publishing Company, 1935, 1969), pages 163-166.
  - <sup>5</sup> Marie Bankhead Owen, director, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, *The Story of Alabama -- A History of the State*, Pages 335-336.
  - <sup>6</sup> Annie C. Thompson Cawley, 3 gg niece il, LDS IGI (1961).
  - <sup>7</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>8</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (1921), Vol. IV, page 1488.
  - <sup>9</sup> W. Brewer, *Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872*, pages 214-215.
  - <sup>10</sup> Virginia S. Wood, Ralph V. Wood, *1805 Georgia Land Lottery* (Greenwood Press, 1964), page 302.
  - <sup>11</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>12</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>13</sup> 1811-1819 Alabama (Mississippi Territory) census, Page 61.
  - <sup>14</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>15</sup> W. Brewer, *Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872*, pages 214-215.
  - <sup>16</sup> J.F.H. Claiborne, *Life and Times of General Sam Dale* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1860).
  - <sup>17</sup> W. Brewer, *Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872*, pages 214-215.
  - <sup>18</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>20</sup> Clarence Edward Carter, *Territorial Papers of the United States*. Vol. XVIII, pages 223-224.
  - <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*
  
  - <sup>22</sup> Saffold family tradition.
  
  - <sup>23</sup> Clarence Edwin Carter, *Territorial Papers of the United States, Territory of Mississippi 1809-1817*, Vol. VI, pages 744-746.
  - <sup>24</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>25</sup> W. Brewer, *Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872*, pages 214-215.
  - <sup>26</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1488.
  - <sup>27</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>28</sup> W. Brewer, *Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872*, pages 214-215.
  - <sup>29</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>30</sup> Madison County Board of Commissioners, *Signatures of the Delegates who Drafted Alabama's Original Constitution Signed in Huntsville August 2nd, 1819 1969* (150th anniversary of signing).
  - <sup>31</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>32</sup> 1820 Dallas County, Ala. census, Page 65.
  - <sup>33</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>34</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>35</sup> Philip Henry Gosse, *Letters From Alabama -- Chiefly Relating to Natural History*, pp8, 9, 13, 157.
  - <sup>36</sup> Preston Home to be Shown on Colonial Dames Tour.
  - <sup>37</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1488.
  - <sup>38</sup> Carolyn Hinson, Alabama Historical Commission letter (unpublished 9 Mar 1988).
  - <sup>39</sup> National League of American Pen Women, Birmingham Branch (vignette on Belvoir written by Mildred Reynolds Saffold), *Historic Homes of Alabama and Their Traditions*, pages 163-166.
  - <sup>40</sup> Philip Henry Gosse, *Letters From Alabama -- Chiefly Relating to Natural History*, pp8, 9, 13, 157.
  - <sup>41</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>42</sup> 1830 Dallas County, Ala. census, Page 105.
  - <sup>43</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>44</sup> 1840 Dallas County, Ala. census, page 72.
  - <sup>45</sup> Ancestry.com.
  - <sup>46</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>47</sup> W. Brewer, *Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872*, pages 214-215.
  - <sup>48</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>49</sup> W. Brewer, *Alabama: Her History Resources, War Record and Public Men from 1540 to 1872*, pages 214-215.
  - <sup>50</sup> Marie Bankhead Owen, director, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, *The Story of Alabama -- A History of the State*.
  - <sup>51</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>52</sup> Brent H. Holcomb, *Marriage and Death Notices From The Southern Christian Advocate* (1979), Vol. V, 1837-1860.
  - <sup>53</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>54</sup> Reuben Saffold, Will of Reuben Saffold (1 of 2), Dallas County, Ala. Will Book A, page 296-311.
  - <sup>55</sup> Will of Reuben Saffold (2 of 2), Dallas County, Ala. Will Book A, pages 296-311.
  - <sup>56</sup> Saffold Notes.
  - <sup>57</sup> Marriage license, Morgan County, Ga. (Some Georgia County Records).
  - <sup>58</sup> Marie Bankhead Owen, director, Alabama State Department of Archives and History, *The Story of Alabama -- A History of the State*, Pages 335-336.
  - <sup>59</sup> Saffold family history.
  - <sup>60</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>62</sup> Montgomery, Ala. Mail (newspaper).
  - <sup>63</sup> 1850 Dallas County, Ala. census.
  - <sup>64</sup> 1860 Dallas County, Ala. census.
  - <sup>65</sup> Brent H. Holcomb, *Marriage and Death Notices From The Southern Christian Advocate* (1979).
  - <sup>66</sup> Dallas County, Ala. General Direct Index to Deeds (Dallas County Tract Book), Vols. 1 and 2.
  - <sup>67</sup> 1850 Dallas County, Ala. census, page 247.
  - <sup>68</sup> Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, Vol. IV, page 1487.
  - <sup>69</sup> Montgomery, Ala. Mail (newspaper).
  - <sup>70</sup> Brent H. Holcomb, *Marriage and Death Notices From The Southern Christian Advocate*, Vol. V, 1837-1860, page 603.
  - <sup>71</sup> Mary Phillips Saffold, Will of Mary Saffold, Dallas County, Ala. Will Book A, page 212.
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