



Key, Job Caswell Key, William Ely Key Jr, Evaline Cynthia Key, Francis Caroline Key, and Peter Allen Key<sup>17</sup>. These children, all under 13 years of age, moved with William to Arkansas by 1836 when William's name appears on the tax lists for Carroll Co AR<sup>18</sup>. There were two children born in Arkansas: Elisha Cassel Key and George W Key [62]. George was born 25 Feb 1840 in Carroll Co AR<sup>19</sup>, the youngest child of William and Frances.

Carroll County Arkansas (Figure 3) in the northeastern part of the state was formed 1 November 1833 and in 1840 had a population of 2844 souls<sup>20</sup>. The boundaries of Carroll County have changed many times during its history, ceding land to Madison and Searcy counties in the late 1830s, to Newton County in 1842 and to Boone County in 1869<sup>21</sup>.

The family of William Key and Frances Beller Key remained established in Crooked Creek Township in Carroll Co AR from 1840 through 1850 when the population of the county was 4614<sup>20,22,23</sup>. Crooked Creek does not appear in a list of locations for modern-day Carroll County but historical records show that Crooked Creek was an older name for the city of Harrison AR, now in Boone County. Modern-day Boone County, which was formed in 1869, lies directly north of Newton County and east of Carroll County (Figure 4). The city of Harrison lies about 20 miles almost directly north of Jasper, the county seat of Newton County. A land patent was granted to William Key in 1843 for a plot of land (1/8 of a section) in T17-N R20-W 5<sup>th</sup> PM meridian; this land lies south of Harrison, very near the present-day border with Newton county<sup>24</sup>. This area is most likely where the Key family was in the 1840s and 1850s on land that is now in Boone County, but then was part of Carroll County.

The Beller family also appears to have moved from Alabama to Arkansas during this period. Land patents adjacent to William Key's holdings were registered to George W Beller in 1854; nearby is a patent held by William Bellar [sic] dated 1844 and two held by Peter Beller dated 1843 and 1854<sup>24</sup>. William Beller, Peter Beller and A F Beller also appear in the 1840 US Federal Census for Crooked Creek Township, Carroll County AR<sup>25</sup>. The House family tree also places Lydia Beller Wilburn in Carroll County AR by this time, listing the birth of several of her children as taking place there<sup>6</sup>. There is a listing for a Wm Wilburn and for a J. J. Wilburn in Crooked Creek Township of Carroll County in the 1840 US Federal Census, although the ages for females in these families do not match 38-year-old Lydia<sup>25</sup>. Taken together, these records suggest that four children of Eli Beller (Frances, William, Peter, and Lydia) lived in Carroll County AR by 1840.

William Key's wife and George Key's mother, Frances Beller Key [125], died of smallpox in February 1850, when George was about ten<sup>26</sup>. She is the first person listed in the mortality records of 1850 (July 1 1849 through Jun 30 1850) for Carroll County. Her place of birth is confirmed as North Carolina in the record and she is identified as a 52 year-old married female. She was ill for 7 days preceding her death in February. Besides Frances Beller Key, there was one other death from smallpox: a 51 year-old male farmer who was ill for 17 days before he died<sup>26</sup>. He was Frances's brother, William Beller. His wife Lovina and his infant daughter also named Lovina died in December 1849 and January 1850, respectively. His death date is given as 26 February 1850.

The names of 24 other people appear on the list of reported deaths that year in Carroll County; nine of them were infants younger than one year. Seven of the deaths, including adults and children, were described as sudden. Other citizens suffered long illnesses, such as the 46 year-old cooper who died of consumption after 12 years of living with the disease. Some of the cases are odd, such as the 53 year-old man who died of "old age" of two days duration. I should hope it takes me so suddenly.

The remarks attached to the page of mortality data for 1850 in Carroll County shed additional light on the conditions<sup>26</sup>. The remarks are:

"Free stone water. Soil second rate. Small pox a few cases confined to a few families. The case of the death by Colera [sic] as above hapened [sic] whilst the individual was up in Missouri at Independence. Unusual numbers of suden [sic] deaths during the year. 16 m, 9 f [died]."

Ten years later, in 1860 George Key was established in Polk Township, Newton Co AR, living with his father William and several siblings<sup>27</sup>. Newton County was formed on 14 December 1842 from portions of Carroll County<sup>28</sup>. The county seat is Jasper, which in 1880 had a population of 91 and even today has a population below 500<sup>29</sup>.

### **The Civil War Intrudes**

Arkansas was a slave state and was the ninth to secede from the Union at the time of the Civil War. In spite of this official position, there were many citizens who remained committed to the Union. It appears that the Key family may have split in an unusual way, with two brothers each serving on both sides of the conflict. Records exist showing a George W Key as a private in company H, B of the 11<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Arkansas Infantry, a unit of the Confederate Army and in another Confederate unit, the

11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> Consolidated Regiment (Griffith's), Company C<sup>30</sup>. Elisha Key, George's brother closest to his age, originally enlisted in Company F of the 27<sup>th</sup> Arkansas Infantry for the Confederate states, but in January 1863 he deserted, according to one undocumented source<sup>31</sup>. Elisha then switched sides and with his brother George W Key enlisted 10 Feb 1864 as a private in Company D of the Arkansas 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment, in the Union Army<sup>30-32</sup>.

The service of George W Key in this unit of the Union Army was confirmed by the pension requested filed by George's widow in 1904, which listed his unit as the Arkansas 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment<sup>30</sup>. Thus, it is confirmed that George W Key in our family line was a supporter of the Union, at least by the time the war ended.

This 2<sup>nd</sup> Arkansas Cavalry unit featured in several actions in the northwestern part of Arkansas. The History of Boone County Arkansas<sup>33</sup> includes the following section:

The presence of such large numbers of Union troops took its toll on the local Confederates. Bailey said that, during the time of this occupation, perhaps half of the houses in the Crooked Creek Valley were burned, and substantial loss of life occurred. [Bailey, "Reminiscences," pp 34-35, 42]. Men from the 2nd Arkansas Cavalry were at Klepper's Mill on several days in April and May 1864 when Thomas B. Freeman, William J. Gamble, McDonald May, John W. Nichols, Daniel Philips, Miles H. Philips, Robert Qualls and Richard Standridge were enlisted. Union enlistments at Bellefonte during this time included Frederick Evans, Martin Brisco, James R. Andrews, George W. Bush, Mathias Braswell, David Alexander, Joseph Alexander, Irvin E. Breedlove, John Keys, Bradford L. Looper, George f. Mainess, John W. Manes, Walter Francis M. Taylor, John Townsen, George A. Turner, Crockett Wommick, Zephaniah Roberts, **Lucius W. Schuler** and Stephen J. Still.

Other records confirm that on 4 May 1864, 18-year-old Lucius W Shuler enlisted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arkansas Cavalry at Bellefonte AR<sup>34</sup>. Lucius was the brother of Margaret E Shuler, who would marry George W Key in 1868.

The conflict within Newton County brought on by the Civil War is highlighted in the Wikipedia listing for the history of the county<sup>35</sup>:

Newton County residents were divided during the Civil War, serving in both the Confederate and Union armies. John Cecil, who had served as Newton County's sheriff, served as a Confederate Captain. Jasper blacksmith James R. Vanderpool (ca. 1832-1880) served as Captain of Union Company C, [1st Regiment Arkansas Infantry Volunteers](#), while farmer and teacher John McCoy (1820–1903) served as Captain of Union Company F, [1st Regiment Arkansas Infantry Volunteers](#). Many Newton County citizens served under each of these men, as well as in other units. As an example of how the war divided families, Confederate Captain Cecil's brother, Sam, served as a sergeant in Union Company D, [2nd Regiment Arkansas Cavalry Volunteers](#). Violence took a severe toll on the civilian population, and at one point, Captains McCoy and

Vanderpool escorted 20 wagons of Unionist families from Newton County to Missouri to seek refuge.<sup>[3]</sup>

## References

<sup>1</sup><https://www.history.com/topics/us-states/arkansas#:~:text=Part%20of%20the%20land%20acquired,and%20achieved%20statehood%20in%201836.&text=The%20name%20Arkansas%20was%20used,river%20along%20which%20they%20settled>. Accessed 18 Oct 2020.

<sup>2</sup>Eli Beller married Polly Campbell 19 Mar 1796 in Stokes Co NC (“North Carolina Marriages 1759-1979”) index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/FZYD-7XM>: accessed 20 Apr 2014, Eli Beller and Polly Campbell, 19 Mar 1796, citing Stokes, North Carolina, reference p 16; FHL microfilm 422159. Also in North Carolina US Index to Marriage Bonds and in North Carolina US Marriage Records 1741 – 2011.

<sup>3</sup>Eli Beller held a land grant in Stokes, North Carolina 18 Dec 1797

<sup>4</sup>1810 US Federal Census for Germanton Township, Stokes Co NC  
Page 7 of electronic record: Eli Beller 2 males 0-9, 1 male 10-15, 1 male 26-44, 2 females 0-9, one female 10-15, 1 female 26-44.

<sup>5</sup>Eli Beller was issued a land patent 14 Oct 1810 in Madison AL. Another was issued 14 Oct 1819 for Huntsville, Madison AL, township 001s, range 002E, aliquots SW1/2, Section 18; accession number CV-0110-053.

<sup>6</sup>Lydia Beller in House family tree. Father Elias/Elisha Eli Beller, mother Mary Polly Nancy Campbell. Lydia born 14 Nov 1802 in Germantown, Stokes NC, died 6 Dec 1842 in Smith TX. This tree lists the following siblings for Lydia: Nancy Ann Beller 1796-1820, John Beller 1797-1828, Frances Beller Key 1798-1850, William Campbell Beller Sr (slave owner) 1799-1850, Capt Peter Beller 1800-1862, Pheby Ann Beller 1801-1876, Daughter Beller 1805-, Eli Campbell Beller 1809-1850, George Washington Beller Sr 1809-1882, Daniel Beller 1815-1881, Allen T Beller 1821-, Penninah Jane Beller Combs 1822-1883, Mary Elizabeth Beller 1832-1862, Lydia Bellar 1837-1883. According to this tree, Lydia was born in Germanton, Stokes Co NC, married in Madison Co AL where she had several children, then moved to Carroll Co AR where she had five more children. Her married name was Wilburn.

<sup>7</sup>Eli Beller in five public family trees on Ancestry, all with marriage date 19 Mar 1796 in Germanton, Stokes NC to Mary Polly Campbell born 1778.  
K McGilvary family tree lists one child: Lydia M Beller 1805 – 1842.

<sup>8</sup>William Beller, spouse (Martha) Lavina Wilburn. Parents: Eli Beller and Mary Polly Campbell. Born Stokes Co NC, 1799. Died Carroll Co AR 26 Feb 1850. Family data collection, individual records.

<sup>9</sup>1830 US Federal Census Ranges 1 and 2, Madison co AL. Line 5 of page 25 of electronic record: William Beller 2 males under 5, 2 males 5-10, 1 male 15-20, 1 male 30-40, 1 female under 5, 1 female 5-10, 1 female 20-30, 1 female 50-60.

<sup>10</sup>Alabama, Marriage collection, 1800-1969  
William Key married Frances Beller 23 May 1818 in Madison County, Alabama. Name of person performing the ceremony is not given.

<sup>11</sup>Hines/Janes family tree. William Ely Key was born 19 Aug 1799 in Lincoln, TN. Spouse Francis Beller (1798-1850). Parents Jobe Caswell Key (1730-1826) and Rebecca Colegate (1745-1811).

<sup>12</sup>RLTROTTER2015 family tree. William Key born 19 Aug 1799 in Lincoln, USA. Died 1870 in Carroll, AR. Spouse Francis (or Lydia M) Beller (1805-1842. Parents Jobe Caswell Key (1730-1890) and Hannah Caroline Beller (1835-1909).

<sup>13</sup>Day Family Tree. William Ely Key born 19 Aug 1799 in Lincoln, TN. Spouse Francis Beller, who died in 1850. William Ely Key married Sarah Ann Key (1811-1880) after 1850 in Arkansas. No parents given.

<sup>14</sup>Nebo family tree. William Ely Key born 19 Aug 1799 in Lincoln, TN. Spouse Frances L Beller (1798-1850). Parents Job Key (1748-1828) and Martha Key (1770-1830). This tree lists William Ely Key as a half-sibling to Job Key Jr (1768-1849), Benjamin Franklin Key (1804-1870), Ezekiel Key (1808-1860), Mary L Key (1812-1880), Magnes Key (1820-1869), Mary Frances Key (1825-), John W Key (1825) and Annie Rebecca Key (1827-). These people appear in the will of Job Key Sr who died in 1828 but there is no mention of William.

<sup>15</sup>My Campbell/Wright/etc family tree. William Ely Key was born 19 Aug 1799 in Lincoln TN. Married Frances Beller (1798-1850) 23 May 1818 in Madison AL. Parents Job Key & Martha Key. Children: Elizabeth L Key 1819-1861, Mary Key 1823-1850, Jobe Caswald Key 1824-1890, William Ely Key Jr 1827-1884, Evaline Cynthia Key 1829-1882, Caroline Key 1832-, Peter Allen Key 1834-1908, Elisha Cassel Key 1838-1915, George Washington Key 1840-1904. Second spouse was Sarah born 1819.

<sup>16</sup>1830 US Federal Census Ranges 1 and 2, Madison co AL

Line 1 of page 55, electronic record: William Key 2 males under 5, 1 male 30-40, 1 female under 5, 2 females 5-10, 1 female 10-15, 1 female 30-40. *This record is consistent with William's age of 31 and Frances's age of 32. The children could be Job Key age 5 or 6 and William Ely Jr age 3; Evaline Key under 1; Mary Key age 7 and Elizabeth Key age 11. One girl aged 5-10 is unaccounted for.*

Line 2 of page 55: Job Key 1 male under 5, 1 male 10-15, 1 male 20-30, 1 male 40-50, 1 female 15-20, and 1 female 40-50. *This record could be for William's brother, born in 1789 (age 41 in 1830).*

Line 12 of page 55: Martha Key 1 female 30-40, 1 female 60-70.

<sup>17</sup>1850 US Federal Census Crooked Creek Township, Carroll Co, AR 10 Oct 1850

Family #503: **William Key** 51 yo male farmer born in TN; land \$600; literate. The children from Job through Peter were born in AL; Elisha and George were born in AR. Job Key 24 farmer; William Key 22 farmer; Evaline Key 20; Caroline Key 18; Peter A Key 15; Elisha C Key 13; **George W Key** 9.

<sup>18</sup>Arkansas, Compiled Census and Census Substitutes Index, 1819-1870. William Key of Carroll County, Arkansas Territory, appears on the 1836 tax list.

<sup>19</sup>George W Key, gravestone in Hogen Cemetery, Mayes Co OK. Geo W Key. Born 25 Feb 1840. Died in Locust Grove, Mayes Co OK 22 Apr 1904.

<sup>20</sup>(<https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/carroll-county-752/>).

<sup>21</sup>(<https://carrollcountyar.com/history-carroll-county-shuffle.php>).

<sup>22</sup>1840 US Federal Census Crooked Creek Township, Carroll Co, Arkansas

Page 4 line 6. William Key. Household has 3 males under 5, 2 males 5 - 9, 1 male 30 - 39, 2 females 5 - 9, 2 females 20 - 29, 1 female 40-49. *The 3 males under 5 could be George, Elisha, and Peter. Job and William Jr were 12 and 14, not 5 - 9; William would be 40 or 41. The females Evaline & Caroline were 8 and 9 or 10, (2 females 5 - 9); the females 20 - 29 are missing in 1850. Frances Beller Key was 40 (1 female 40-49).*

<sup>23</sup>1850 US Federal Census Crooked Creek Township, Carroll Co, AR 10 Oct 1850

Family #503: **William Key** 51 yo male farmer born in TN; land \$600; literate. The children from Job through Peter were born in AL; Elisha and George were born in AR. Job Key 24 farmer; William Key 22 farmer; Evaline Key 20; Caroline Key 18; Peter A Key 15; Elisha C Key 13; **George W Key** 9.

Family #538: Eli Beller 41 yo male stone cutter born in NC; literate. Wife Ann, 34 yo female born in AL. Children: William 18 born in AL, Mary A 16 born in AL, Hannah C 15 born in AR, Frances E 13 born in AR, Alabama 11 yo female born in AL, Peter M 9 born in AL, John M 7 born in AL, Eliza E 4 born in AL, and Virginia C 2 born in AL.

Family #543: William C Beller 22 yo male farmer born in AL; literate. Elizabeth C 16

yo born in AL, Ervin E 15 yo male, Amanda M 11 yo female, Louisiana 9, Malissa A 7, David W 5, James P.S. 2 , and Garret G 5 months; Ervin through Garret were all born in AR. These Bellers lived with Garret Greer and his family.

Family #544: George W Beller 25 yo male farmer born in AL; land \$1200; literate. Elizabeth W 24 born in TN. Martha E 3 yo female born in AR.

<sup>24</sup>Family Maps of Boone County, Arkansas by Gregory A Boyd, J.D. Copyright 2007. Arphax Publishing Co, 2210 Research Park Boulevard, Norman, Oklahoma 73069. ISBN 1-4203-0417-8

<sup>25</sup>1840 US Federal Census Crooked Creek Township, Carroll Co, Arkansas  
Page 4 line 7: A F Beller. One male 15-20, one female 60-70.  
Page 4 line 8: Peter Beller. One male 10-15, 1 male 15-20, 1 male 30-40, 3 females under 5, 3 females 5-10, 1 female 20-30.  
Page 6 line 27: Wm Beller. One male under 5, 2 males 5-10, 1 male 10-15, 1 male 40-50, 1 female under 5, 2 females 5-10, 1 female 10-15, 1 female 30-40.  
Page 6 line 16: William Wilburn. One male 50-60, 1 female 50-60.  
Page 6 line 30. J.J. Wilburn. One male 20-30, 2 females under 5, 1 female 20-30.

<sup>26</sup>US Federal Census Mortality Schedules, 1850-1885  
Line 1: Frances L Key, married female born about 1798 in North Carolina, died Feb 1850 at age 52 of small pox.  
Line 4: Lovina Beller Jr, 4 months of age, born in Arkansas, died in January. Cause of death is listed only as "sudden".  
Line 5: Lovina Beller Sr, 40 year-old married female, born in Alabama, died in December. One day of illness but death listed as "suden".  
Line 6: William Beller, 51-yea-old married male farmer, born in North Carolina, died in February of smallpox, after 17 days of illness.

<sup>27</sup>1860 US Federal Census Polk Township, Newton Co, Arkansas, 10 July 1860  
Family no. 1, dwelling 457.

**William Key**, 61 yo male farmer, \$50 in personal estate, born in TN  
Sarah Key 53 yo female domestic born in TN. Children: Calvin? Key 17 yo male farm laborer born in AR; P. A. Key, 25 yo farmer, \$250 personal estate born in Alabama; Eliza F Key 20 yo female domestic born in AR; Genze A Key 1 yo male born in AR; E C Key 21 yo male farmer, \$100 personal estate born in AR; **G. W. Key** 20 yo male farm laborer \$75 personal estate, born in AR.

<sup>28</sup>[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Newton\\_County,\\_Arkansas\\_Genealogy#County\\_Information](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Newton_County,_Arkansas_Genealogy#County_Information) (Information accessed 16 Oct 2020)

<sup>29</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jasper,\\_Arkansas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jasper,_Arkansas) (Information accessed 16 Oct 2020)

<sup>30</sup> US Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, 1861-1865.



George W. Keys, residing in Newton County, Arkansas. Rank: private, survived the war. Enlisted at age 24 in Newton County, Arkansas in Company D, Arkansas 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment on 10 Feb 1864. Born abt 1840. Source is Index to Compiled Military Service Records 2<sup>nd</sup> Arkansas Union Cavalry, Arkansas Research. The Civil War Pension Index shows Texas M. Key, widow of George W. Key, applying for a pension in 1904, naming this same unit; the application was filed in Indian Territory. George W Key aka G W Key Confederate Army Arkansas 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> Consolidated Regiment, Arkansas Infantry (Griffith's), Company C Private; M376 roll 13.

<sup>31</sup>US Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934.

Elisha C Key submitted pension 30 Aug 1890. Spouse Margaret Key filed as widow from OK in 1915. Unit was D2, Ark. Cavalry. Age 26 at enlistment, born in Carroll Co AR, enlisted 10 Feb 1864 in Newton Co AR, Company D, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry, Union Army. Survived the war and died 1 Nov 1915 in Atwood OK.

US Confederate Soldiers Compiled Service Records 1861-1865. E C Key age 25 born in 1837 enlisted at Jasper, Newton Co AR, in 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry as a Private in the Confederate Army.

<sup>32</sup><https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-soldiers.htm?submitted=1&SDunitCode=UAR0002RC#sort=score+desc&q=George+W+Key>

<sup>33</sup>History of Boone County, Arkansas, with a narrative by Roger V Logan Jr. Boone County Historical & Railroad Society, Inc. 1998. Accessed through Google Books.

<sup>34</sup>US Union Soldiers Compiled Service Records, 1861-1865. Lucius W Shuler, age 18, born about 1846, enlisted as a Private in the Second Cavalry, Ran-So at Bellefonte AR on 4 May 1864.

<sup>35</sup>Wikipedia, History of Newton County, Arkansas. Accessed Nov 27, 2020.