

BIRD FAMILY IN HOPEWELL JOURNAL, 1784-85

Assessments in Bucks County, showing Mark Bird's silverplate plus his attendance at St James Episcopal Church in Bristol, within driving distance from the Falls of Delaware, and letters headed "Falls of Delaware" STRONGLY SUGGEST that Mark Bird lived there in 1782-86. In addition, the proof from Berks County Assessments that Wm Dewees of Valley Forge lease-operated the Birdsboro Forges 1782-85 and Hopewell Furnace 1782-84 adds to this supposition that Bird was living at the Falls of Delaware, where he erected "the biggest ironworks in America," 1782-86.

This absence of Mark Bird from Berks County suggests then that his sons John and James MAY have been "operating" Hopewell Furnace after the Dewees lease ended by January 1784. The surviving Journal begins its first entry with page 1 as the first Ledger page, the mark of a new set of books.

JOHN BIRD (p 95) A June 28, 1784 entry reads, "Cash paid to his mother for him", 15 shillings. ~~Mark Bird's mother~~ This is but one of at least fifteen cash payments made to him, totaling about 55.9.6, or \$149. His expenses to and in Philadelphia and to Trenton (opposite Falls of Delaware) are charges to Hopewell. His clothing is sewn by tailor John Mc Cormick from materials purchased at Hopewell. James Bird's tailoring is ^{ALSO} charged to John. ~~Ex~~ Exotic items included "shamery" linen for britches", blue coating at 7/6 (a dollar) a yard and an air baloon pattern for a waistcoat, costing another 7/6. He was NOT paid specifically for any work and his SOLE credit is "from Mark Bird for his balance" 138.18.0 $\frac{1}{2}$, above \$367. He may have lived at Hopewell since he bought a coverlid ^(COVERLET) for 12 Shillings on Jan. 21, 1785 (\$ 1.69). He also bought the unexpired time of Michael Riley, one of Mark Bird's ^{six} Irish indentured workers 18.7.8 about \$28.00.

WILLIAM BIRD (p 102) did not have a Hopewell account, but received monies in the Spring Forge entries. These charges seem to have been expenses for reactivating this forge; buying repair timbers (in the tree), and for replacing

John English as forge manager. No relationship is stated, but ^{this} Wm is considered to be Mark's son.

JAMES BIRD (p 95) Since James drew only cash and paid NO portion of his small account and received NO credits of any kind his relationship to Mark is established by credit monies on Nov. 26, 1784 and on Mar. 26, 1785 "to son James".
(p 55a,b)

FRANCIS BIRD / ^{p 136} (perhaps Bard) ~~Jxpxx22x~~
Entries for Francis Bird provide no clues whatsoever as to possible relationship with Mark Bird. Monies involved consist of a single credit ~~from~~ from Edward Hughes and a series of debits balancing this credit. The last ~~is~~ for "cash paid to his father", hardly an action by a Mark Bird son. The total involvement is about 10¹/₂ the about \$26.66, an amount not worthy of a Mark Bird son in comparison with James and John accounts.