

Early History from Bro. Darrin Russell Tulare, Calif.

For starters, the man named in the traditional lineage as John Carl McDonald was not actually named that. The Old Bro. McDonald who baptized Bro's Marion Reece, Jim Caldwell and others was actually John Carl's father JACOB McDonald. John Carl was born in Wisconsin in 1862 and died in Woodward, Oklahoma in 1917. It does not take much math to figure out he was not the Bro. McDonald who performed all those baptisms that we have record of in the 1870s. He would have been about 16 when Bro. Jim Caldwell was baptized and even younger for the others. The older traditions actually never named a first name for Bro. McDonald and only the later traditions coming out of DeWitt mention him as John Carl. I believe the later traditions confused him by name with his son. Bro. McDonald (Jacob that is) was born in Canada West (probably Southern Ontario) in 1811. His father moved to Oneida county, New York some time in the 1820s. Jacob McDonald's parents were on one record described, without names as being born in New York. The 1830 census gives his name as James McDonald. This James seems to have moved to Wisconsin as well for a short time but to have been living in Lyons, NY by 1850.

Now let's go backwards in time for a minute. There is an Elias Brewer (I) who was born in NJ in 1740 who died in Oneonta Ny in 1812. He was obviously too old to have baptized Jacob McDonald who was only about 1 year old and any way lived in Canada. Besides this Elias Brewer started out as Reformed Dutch and ended his life a staunch Presbyterian. There must have been a family friendship, if not relationship with this Elias and the McDonald family though, because his will was witnessed by a James McDonald in 1809, probably the same one, or his father another James. Also in the time period of 1810-18 a few of this Elias Brewer's children emigrated to Canada themselves, probably James as well, and that is how Jacob came to be born there. The majority of the children that left eventually returned to New York. A couple of this Elias' children also owned land in Oneida. The Presbyterian Church that Elias Brewer helped to found only lasted until about 1822 when for unknown reasons it divided and fell apart. The implied issues at hand concerned infant baptism, which the Presbyterians perform, and evidence of conversion, which they did not require. I surmise this because a few years later when the church was reorganized it was along those lines and though called Presbyterian was much closer to Baptist in outlook. So what exactly happened? Who knows exactly, but I have an idea it involved a sect called the Followers of Christ, who also in those days went by the term "Free Brethren".

In Maine there was a society of "Free Brethren", they believed house-to-house meetings and that any could participate by lead of the Spirit. Though they did not all reject medicines, most did as they believed that the workings of healings and miracles were a promise of God to be depended on, not a relict of the past. They believed in baptism, laying on of hands, lord's supper with foot washing, and in the Holy greeting to be exchanged by all. In that day the only other church with similar beliefs was the German Baptists often referred to as Dunkers, but even they performed the greeting between same sex only. This greeting which the world misunderstood was probably the grounds for one of the more well known ministers, A Jacob Cochrane, to be incarcerated for adultery and promiscuous behavior. The odd part about his situation is that his wife did not bring up those charges, but stood by her husband the entire time, and I believe he was the first American example of someone being convicted in public minds even before a trial took place. Several members of his congregation moved to Allegany , NY just a few miles from Oneida, one of the prime movers being Moses McDonald. Also the Jacob McDonald (older than ours but of the same family) that was ordained in Maine with Abner Woodsum. Also there was a man

named Gupthill and another named Junkins who were also prominent among the "Free Brethren" that moved to NY. They started their migrations to that sparsely populated area of New York about the same time the division happened, and the circumstantial evidence points to them being the cause. One of the tactics used by them when they hit a new area was to first preach their doctrines in the established churches before retreating to their house meetings. When this Jacob Cochrane was released one of the first places he went was there, and it is reported that he baptized the Mormon Joseph Smith when he was about 16 years old while in New York. Either he or one of the other ministers that came from Maine, maybe even the Elder Jacob McDonald who would have known the Brewers through family connections, baptized Elias Brewer, probably in the time period 1823-27.

Now which Elias Brewer? You see Elias Brewer the First had one son by the same name, a nephew, and 2 grandsons, which were each of ages enough to be the one. Well for starters the nephew seems to have died a Quaker, and the two grandsons of the same name remained Presbyterian. That leaves the son Elias Brewer, who was born about 1780 and died in 1870 or 1871 in Michigan. he was one of the pioneers of Michigan and was buried in a "Free Church Cemetery" which indicates he did not belong to any accepted denomination, but was probably of the "Free Brethren". Also the fact that he remained in Michigan and did not migrate West with the others but yet lived long enough to be known by some of the earlier ones who did migrate West is also further evidence that he is correctly identified.

This Elias Brewer would have baptized the younger Jacob McDonald probably some time in the 1830s, likely around the time Jacob McDonald married Mary Walrath, which was about 1837. Now this Elias Brewer had a nephew by the name of Asahel Brewer who had married Eleanor Quackenbush a cousin to Mary Walrath. When Bro. Jacob McDonald moved to Burlington Wisconsin Eleanor's brother Lambert and Bro. In law Edward Boss , who married Polly Quackenbush also went. Also some of the Northrup family, Trowbridge, Ladd and Rooker families also emigrated to the same town all from the same area of New York. All these families had representatives in the faith who emigrated to Illinois, then Missouri, then Kansas and Nebraska, and some of them even into the Oklahoma Territory.

So My projected Baptismal lineage, not at all absolutely proven, but highly likely is ;

1) Jacob Cochrane (d.1834 NY)

2) Jacob McDonald or James McDonald (d. around 1854 NY)

3) Elias Brewer (c. 1780- 1871 MI)

4) Jacob McDonald (1811-1891 KS)

5) Jim Caldwell; Marion Reece; James Hickman; John Annis; Frank Osborn; Elijah Osborn; David Torrance; John Carl McDonald and multiple others.

Hope this helps Bro. Bill,

Bro. Darren Russell

John Carl McDonald married Eva McIlvain and had 6 children, the oldest, a daughter named Ollie who married Oscar Pfister near Vici, Oklahoma. They had several children, the oldest being Arta Vonda who married Eugene Curtis McCracken. Eugene's brother Ted also married one of the Pfister girls Lois and they lived in Olathe, Colorado. Lester Pfister is one of the sons of Oscar and Ollie and lived in Cortez Colo

Jacob Cochrane

James McDonald

Jacob McDonald

Elias Brewer

John Carl McDonald w/ Eva McIlvain

6 children Daughter named Ollie

Married Oscar Pfister

Son, Lester Pfister

Bro. Les Pfister, (he didn't like being called Lester, just like I prefer Bill, not Billie)

Bro. Les was my main mentor as a minister. He was a traveling Evangelist and just happened to come to McKinleyville, Calif. on the day I was baptized. Feb. 11, 1956

I owe so much to him, as he was so patient with me, and taught me so much.

He died in 2010, and I was called upon to officiate at his funeral, but I was taking care of Marcelle before she died, and could not go to Colorado, from Sapulpa, Okla.

So, I recorded my words, and they played them at the Service..

I am including them for you to read.. 🙏🙏