

Notes on James Calhoun

James Calhoun was born 1747 in Donegal County, Ireland.¹ James emigrated from Letterkenny, County Donegal, prior to 1769, sailing first to Philadelphia, and settling in Lancaster County.²

James Calhoun married Eleanor (Ellen) Templeton. In 1769 James and Eleanor were living within District 10 of the Presbyterian Church of Mercersburg, in present day Franklin County.³ Samuel Templeton (father of Eleanor) was an elder of the church during this period. James and Eleanor had two sons Samuel Calhoun and William Calhoun.⁴ From the records of the Mercersburg Presbyterian Church, Moses (Samuel?) Calhoun, was born 21 October 1770, and William Calhoun, was born 13 June 1773.⁵

Eleanor Calhoun is reported to have drowned in a swollen creek. Records of the Upper West Conococheague Presbyterian Church give 14 May 1777 as date of death of Eleanor Calhoun and an infant son, also named James Calhoun.⁶ The same records report the 14 May 1777 death of William Templeton, and the 24 May 1777 death of Samuel Templeton. Samuel Templeton is the father of Eleanor Calhoun.⁷ The coincidence of the deaths of Eleanor Calhoun and William Templeton suggest that they may have died in the same drowning incident.⁸

James Calhoun's service in the Cumberland County militia is documented in the Pennsylvania Archives. His service records: (1) Active Duty Militia, James Calhoun, Rank Private, County Cumberland, Unit 6th Battalion, 7th Company, 7th Class, Order from Council dated March 25, 1778, Commander Capt. Robert McCoy, Duty Served; (2) Active Duty Militia, James Calhoun, Rank Private, County Cumberland, Unit 5th Battalion, 7th Company, 2nd Class, Commander Capt. William Wilson, Duty Served 2nd Tour, 1st and 2nd Classes – 300 Men to Ye Standing Stone.

James Calhoun served as a Private in the Cumberland County militia under Captain Robert McCoy. The unit saw action in May 1778 at the Battle of Crooked Billet, near Hatboro, PA, during which James Calhoun was wounded and taken prisoner. Captain Robert McCoy was killed 1 May 1778 in the Battle of Crooked Billet.⁹

Testimony of William Kelly reports that Kelly served in the same unit under Captain Robert McCoy, was wounded by a saber blow to his skull, taken prisoner and treated in a hospital in Philadelphia. Kelly reports that James Calhoun was one of the prisoners with him in the hospital in Philadelphia. Kelly reports that after the British withdrew from Philadelphia, leaving the prisoners behind, he made his way back to Cumberland County.¹⁰

James Calhoun was sworn as a witness in the Indiana County Orphans Court on 1 June 1809 to give testimony on behalf of the wife of William Dean. Calhoun testified that Dean fought in the Battle of Crooked Billet and that he saw Dean killed in that action.¹¹ William Dean was killed 1 May 1778 in the Battle of Crooked Billet.¹²

An act of the Pennsylvania legislature awarded James Calhoun an annual allowance based on his prior service and wounds incurred during the Revolutionary War.¹³ The act cites his service under Captain Robert McCoy.

During the time of his service in the Cumberland County Militia, James left his sons Samuel Calhoun and William Calhoun in the care of neighbor Mary Abraham Walker, wife of Robert Walker.¹⁴

Mary Abraham Walker, born 1740 in Radnor Township, Chester County, fourth child of Noah Abraham and Mary Wynne. Noah Abraham was born 1697 in England, and died 1759, Nantmeal Township, Chester County. Mary Wynne was born about 1700 in Wynnestay, Philadelphia, daughter of Jonathan Wynne and Sarah Greaves.

Robert Walker and Mary Abraham were married 3 December 1761 in Chester County.

Robert Walker served under Captain Noah Abraham (brother of Mary Abraham Walker), Cumberland County Militia, 23 October 1777 to 14 July 1778, including action at the Battle of Crooked Billet.

Robert Walker died 28 January 1778 at Valley Forge.¹⁵ He is buried in the Lower Path Valley Presbyterian Church Cemetery, Franklin County.

During the period of Robert Walker's military service, Mary Abraham Walker relocated with her sons and the two Calhoun sons to Armstrong Township, Westmoreland County. Armstrong Township is in present day Indiana County.¹⁶

After completing his service with the Cumberland County militia, James Calhoun went to Westmoreland County, to rejoin his sons in the care of Mary Abraham Walker. James Calhoun married the widow Mary Abraham Walker in 1783.

James Calhoun is listed in the 1790 Federal Census as residing in Armstrong Township, Westmoreland County.¹⁷ James Calhoun is listed in the 1800 Federal Census as residing in Westmoreland County (Westmoreland County Sheet 148B).

James Calhoun and Mary Walker Abraham Calhoun are the parents of John Calhoun, born 16 January 1784, and Noah Abraham Calhoun, born 1786.

James Calhoun was a strict member of the Associate Presbyterian Church, known as "seceders." He is listed in early tax rolls as a farmer, schoolmaster, and weaver. He was one of the first school teachers in present day Indiana County.

James Calhoun lived in Indiana County only a few years before he moved to Boggs Township, Armstrong County, where he spent the remainder of his life. James Calhoun died 1826, and is buried in the Calhoun Cemetery, Boggs Township, Armstrong County.¹⁸

John Calhoun was born in Armstrong Township, Indiana County, 16 January 1784. John Calhoun moved with his parents to Pine Township, Armstrong County, part of present-day Boggs Township, to the site of the Calhoun homestead and current location of the Calhoun Cemetery.¹⁹

Mary Abraham Walker Calhoun, second wife of immigrant ancestor James Calhoun, died 1828 in Pine Township (a part of which is now in Boggs Township), Armstrong County, and is buried in the Calhoun Cemetery on the site of the original Calhoun homestead.

John Calhoun moved to Dayton, Armstrong County, in 1813, where sometime after 1825 he became an elder of the Glade Run Presbyterian Church.²⁰ The Sabbath School was constructed in 1826 and John Calhoun was one of its first officers, along with Joseph Reed and A. Findlay.

Endnotes

¹ His Scottish Colquhoun ancestors came from Luss, Dumbartonshire, on the banks of Loch Lomond. In 1608, Sir John Colquhoun, the Laird of Luss, was awarded a grant of 1000 acres by King James I of England (James VI of Scotland), under the Plantation of Ulster. The grant was called Cargagh and was in the Barony of Boyleagh, County of Donegal. In 1662, Humphrey and Robert Galbraith held the lands in fee. <http://www.dun-na-ngall.com/grants1608.html> From Rev. George Hill, *An Historical Account of the Plantation of Ulster at the Commencement of the Seventeenth Century 1608-1620*, Belfast, 1877. "On the 14th of July, 1630, letters of patent were issued to Robert Colquhowne, son of Sir John Colquhoun; and a grant to him, his heirs and assignes, forever, of a small proportion of Corkagh, in the precinct of Portlogh, barony of Raphoe, containing 1,000 acres. To be held as of the castle of Dublin, in free and common socage. The lands are created into a manor, to be called Corkagh, with power to create tenures and hold 400 acres in demesne; court leet and court baron; warren, park, and chase, according to the usual terms." As of Hill's writing in 1877, the precinct of Portlogh now forms part of the barony of Boyleagh and Bannagh, and its name has become obsolete. It now appears that Corkagh Manor is a public park: From <http://www.areaman.tv/connectiwalks/corkaghparkiwalk.pdf> "Corkagh Park has its origins in a manor house and its estate and includes the old Corkagh Demesne and land on both sides of the Camac River. The lands were bought by the Finlay family in 1750 and remained in their ownership until 1959. Corkagh House was then demolished and the land farmed. In 1983, Corkagh Demense was purchased from Sir John Galvin by the then Dublin County Council. Corkagh Park now falls under the remit of South Dublin County Council's Parks Department.

² Lancaster County was created from Chester County and non-county area in 1729, and originally encompassed areas of other present day counties, including: Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Westmoreland, and York. See *Pennsylvania County Formation Maps* at http://www.familyhistory101.com/maps/pa_cf.html. Screen shots on file.

³ This is reported in *American Revolutionary Soldiers of Franklin County Pennsylvania*, Compiled by Virginia Shannon Fendrick for the Franklin County Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Chambersburg, PA, 1944, page 39. Cumberland County was created from Lancaster County and non-county area in 1750, and Franklin County was created from Cumberland County in 1784.

⁴ Joel T. Livingston, *A History of Jasper County Missouri and Its People*, Volume II, The Lewis Publishing Company, 1912. Digitized by Google. PDF copy on file.

⁵ Mercersburg Presbyterian Church, from *Treasures of the Past for Peters Township, Franklin County, PA*, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~treasures/pa/franklin/peters/mercerv1.htm>.

⁶ According to a *Historical Sketch of Franklin County, Pennsylvania*, published in 1878 (copy on file), a Presbyterian church was organized in the year 1738, under the name of "The Upper West Conococheague Church," embracing all the territory now occupied by the congregations of Welsh Run, Loudon, and St. Thomas. The church edifice stood about two miles north-east of where the town of Mercersburg now stands and was generally know as the "White Church." The present day location of the church and cemetery appears to be at the intersection of Church Hill Road and Findley Road (Township Road 332).

⁷ Samuel Templeton appears on the 1751 tax lists for Peters Township in Cumberland County, in "History of Franklin County, PA" Warner, Beers & Co. 1887. Fendrick reports that Eleanor is the daughter of Samuel Templeton and that William Templeton is the son of Samuel Templeton. Fendrick reports the same date of death for Samuel Templeton, but this William Templeton is reported as serving with Captain Patrick Jack during 1789-91. It is possible that the William Templeton reported dying on 14 May 1777 was a Templeton child and nephew of James and Eleanor in the care of Eleanor Calhoun at the time of the tragedy. See entries for James Calhoun and William Templeton in *American Revolutionary Soldiers of Franklin County Pennsylvania*, Compiled by Virginia Shannon Fendrick for the Franklin County Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Chambersburg, PA.

⁸ The same church records report the 22 June 1824 death of a James Cathoun (sic). Although James Calhoun is reported elsewhere to have died in Armstrong County, it is possible that his death was recorded by his former congregation. This date of death is prior to the year 1826 reported for James Calhoun in *American Revolutionary Soldiers of Franklin County Pennsylvania*, Compiled by Virginia Shannon Fendrick for the Franklin County Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Chambersburg, PA.

⁹ Mercersburg Church. The Church Register shows the following deaths due to the Revolutionary War:

Jonathan Smith, a ruling elder died of camp fever at Amboy Oct. 13, 1776.

John Campbell, by oppression of the enemy, Oct. 30, 1776.

James McCoy, killed at Ft. Washington Nov. 16, 1776.

Dugal Campbell died of camp fever in J.J. Jan. 1777.

Patrick McClelland by oppression of the enemy 1777.

Joseph Watson killed in battle, Dec. 1777.

Capt. Robert McCoy killed at Crooked-billet May 1, 1778.

William Dean killed at Crooked-billet May 1, 1778.

William Sterret killed at Crooked-billet May 1, 1778.

¹⁰ William Kelly b 28 Feb 1755 Letterkenny Twnshp, Franklin, PA Died 15 Oct 1837 in Worthe Centre, PA RevolutionaryWar Pvt., in Capt McCoy's Co., Col. Bull's Reg't., of Penn'a Line Cumberland County In July, 1776, he joined a one-hundred-man company of volunteer Riflemen command by Capt. McConnel, Lieut. McClure and Sergeant Leathers. William enlisted at Shippensburg, Cumberland Co., Penn. William made the declaration in order to qualify for a pension passed by an act of Congress on 7 June 1832. WILLIAM KELLY stated on his military pension application #25704, the following:" . . . We marched in the said month of July, 1776, by the way of Lancaster to Philadelphia. Our company was then placed under the command of Colonel Watt. Immediately we were taken by water in a 'Row Galley,' as it was called, to Trenton. We remained there one night. From thence to Princeton, Elizabethtown to Amboy. We remained there 2 or 3 weeks and were then marched to a place called Bergen Point. There we were stationed a month or more. From thence we were marched to Fort Lee and if I recollect right, it was under the command of Col. Bull. Our company was not taken within the garrison, but was stationed a small distance from it. We sheltered ourselves in little huts covered with Brush. We marched from Fort Lee immediately after the taking of Fort Washington in the middle of November, 1776, where my brother, SAMUEL KELLY, was taken prisoner. All the garrison of Fort Lee abandoned it also."The company to which I belonged then formed a part of the army on their retreat, under Gen'l WASHINGTON, which marched to Trenton and crossed the Delaware. Our company remained with the army under the command of Col. WATT until the day after Christmas when the whole army was divided into three divisions to attack the Hessians on the opposite side at Trenton. The division to which our company belonged, did not succeed in getting across on account of the great freezing during the night. The captive Hessians were brought over the next day and Captain McCONNEL's company, to which I belonged, guarded part of them to Philadelphia. We then returned under Col. Watt to Trenton, having remained only one night in Philadelphia. At Trenton I remained until January, when I returned home. I received no written discharge. My officers returned as well as the men."In the month of April, 1778, I was drafted in the militia. I then resided in Cumberland County. My Captain's name was ROBERT McCOY. Only one company marched. We joined the Battalion at the Crooked Billet, sixteen miles from Philadelphia, then in possession of the British. One of the Battalions [was] commanded by Col. WATT, the other by Col. SMITH. Our company had arrived on the first day of April and on the morning of the 12 of May, the enemy attacked us. All the troops were dispersed and I was wounded with a sabre on the forehead, which fractured my skull [and] also the . . . arms. "I was taken to Philadelphia and placed in the Hospital, where my wounds were examined by the Surgeons -- one of whom was Dr. WILFORD. He dressed the wound on my head and took from it a part of the Skull. This wound can be yet seen. When the British evacuated Philadelphia, I with other, was left, and as soon as I sufficiently recovered, I returned home to Cumberland County. (The inference to be drawn from this statement of Kelly's, is, that after being wounded, he fell into the hands of the enemy, the British, by whom he was carried a prisoner to Philadelphia, where his wounds were dressed by the British surgeons as noted. W.F.W.) The wound I received on my head was from a Horse man. The name of one of the prisoners I can recollect is ABRAHAM SMITH, also ROBERT LEATHERS, JAMES CALHOON, WM. W. GRIFFOLK, DAVID WILLS, they were in the Hospital with me."[The Court then asked WILLIAM KELLY several Questions.]* Where and in what year were you born? "In Cumberland Co'y on the 28, Feb'y, 1755."* Have you any record of your age, and if so, where is it? "I have a record. It is now in my possession."* Where were you living when called into service? Where have you lived since the RevolutionaryWar? And were do you now live? "I lived in Cumberland County. I have lived for forty-six years in Centre County, where I now live."* How were you called into service, were you drafted or did you volunteer? "My first service was as a volunteer. My second service drafted as a militia man."* State the names of some of the Regular officers, who were with the troops where you served, such Continental and Militia Reg'ts as you can recollect and the general circumstances of your service? "I can recollect Gen'l WASHINGTON, Gen'l

PUTNAM, Col. BULL, but our company being a Rifle company, we had not a very good opportunity of becoming acquainted in any way with the officers of the Regular army. We were never paraded with the main body until we were retreating through the Jerseys. Then we were generally in front or the rear and whatever orders Col. WATT received, were obeyed. These are the reasons why I cannot now recollect more of the names of the officers of the Regular army. Capt. M'COY, under whom I marched when drafted, was killed at the Crooked Billet." WILLIAM KELLY was granted his Revolutionary War pension on 19 Dec 1833 and "inscribed on the Roll of Penn'a at the rate of 26 Dollars 66 Cents per annum to commence on the 4th day of March, 1831."

¹¹ A June 2, 1809, petition of Martha Dean, widow of Wm, late of Peters Twp, Franklin Co, PA states he was killed in service of the country at Battle of Crooked Billet, as soldier under command of Capt. Robert McCoy, US Army, 1 May 1778 or 1779. Widow received pension from State until 22 Nov. 1806 and has certificate from orphans' Court, Franklin Co to prove same. Asks Indiana Co Court to take action for immediate relief. James Calhoun was sworn before Robert Beatty, Armstrong Co, 1 Jun. 1809, that he saw Wm Dean Killed. On 13 Jun. 1809 Martha Dean was granted \$60 for 1yr, 6mo from 20 Nov. 1807 when last order of Franklin Co Court was made. The listing of Heads of Families for the 1790 Federal Census listing for Armstrong Township, Westmoreland County, lists Martha (Marthow) Dean five lines above the listing for James Calhoun (Cahown). The Census enumeration would have proceeded geographically, from household to household, which indicates that the widow Martha Dean lived in close proximity to James Calhoun.

¹² Mercersburg Church records. See note for Robert McCoy.

¹³ 1801-1803: Genealogical Data contained in the Statutes at Large, Commonwealth of PA 60. An act for the relief of ISAAC WILEY and JAMES CALHOUN. Whereas Isaac Wiley, of Cumberland county, was wounded on 2 May, 1782, while serving as a militia man, under the command of CAPTAIN SAMUEL LEAMAN, in COLONEL SAMUEL HUNTER's battalion, defending the frontier inhabitants of Northumberland county against the Indians, and whereas it appears James Calhoun, now resident in Westmoreland county, was in May 1778 wounded and taken prisoner by the British, at the Crooked Billet, while serving as a militia man under CAPTAIN ROBERT M'COY, in COLONEL WATT's regiment, and whereas it appears that Isaac Wiley and James Calhoun, in consequence of the wounds received in defence of this state, are unable to get a livelihood, and now in very indigent circumstances, and that neither of them have ever received any pension from this state, therefore, Isaac Wiley and James Calhoun are hereby allowed an annuity of forty dollars each, during the remainder of their lives, to be paid half yearly. 29 Mar 1802.

¹⁴ Joel T. Livingston, A History of Jasper County Missouri and Its People, Volume II, The Lewis Publishing Company, 1912. Digitized by Google. PDF copy on file.

¹⁵ Walker family history. History and Family Lore of Our Walker Family. This history is inconsistent on this point, as it also indicates that he served until 14 July 1778. Also, his name does not appear on the muster roll listing of the Valley Forge National Historical Park maintained by the National Park Service.

¹⁶ Indiana County was formed 30 March 1803, from a part of Westmoreland County and a part of Lycoming County. Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, Provincial Papers: Warrantees of Land in the Several Counties of the State of Pennsylvania 1730-1898, Vol.1, p. iv, 1898.

¹⁷ A listing for Jacob Anthony, father of Elizabeth Anthony (wife of Hon. John Calhoun) is found two lines above the listing for James Calhoun. The Census enumeration would have proceeded geographically, from household to household, which indicates that Jacob Anthony lived in close proximity to James Calhoun. The 1871 F.W. Beers & Co. Atlas of Indiana, Pennsylvania, p. 23, shows Calhoun and Anthony homesteads in close proximity within the Anthony District of Armstrong Township.

¹⁸ Other reports indicated that James Calhoun is buried in the church yard of the West Union United Presbyterian Church in Parkwood (Stewartsville), Armstrong Township, Indiana County. His name does not appear on transcriptions for either cemetery. Walker family history. History and Family Lore of Our Walker Family. <http://www.wrwalker.com/page14.html> PDF copy on file.

¹⁹ Pine Township was created from territory in Kittanning Township and reduced in size with the creation of Boggs Township. Source: Page(s) 247-258, History of Armstrong County, Pennsylvania by Robert Walker Smith, Esq. Chicago: Waterman, Watkins & Co., 1883.

²⁰ GLADE RUN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND ACADEMY.[Extract from historical sketch by rev. G. W. Mechlin, D. D.] from History of Indiana County, PA By J. A. Caldwell 1880. PDF copy on file.