

Series /  
St. Clair / Observer  
January / 1974

# A Tribute To Those Who Sounded The Trumpet

BY MATTIE LOU TEAGUE CROW

Two years from now our nation will celebrate its 200th birthday. Already word is getting around. In fact the grapevine is working overtime with news of how each of the fifty states will observe this most auspicious occasion. Imagine, if you can, a mass birthday party with 200 candles on the cake, and the whole world singing in unison, "Happy birthday to you...." on July 4, 1976.

From Christopher Columbus to the astronauts, people who have set foot on this land have been adventurers, explorers, forever pushing back the frontier. Among those who came a-pioneering into the wilderness that later became the state of Alabama — in the early nineteenth century — were men who had fought for freedom's cause at Lexington and Concord, Bunker Hill, and Yorktown.

As far as has been determined, no less than twelve Revolutionary War Veterans lie buried in St. Clair County soil. As we plan for the celebration, two years in the future, let us do a bit of research in order to learn where these old soldiers are buried and some facts about their lives. We shall need help, so if you have a Revolutionary War veteran ancestor whose grave is within the county, please notify the OBSERVER.

Today's story will be the first of the series.

Jacob Nathaniel Green and his wife, Fanny Acre Green, made the hazardous journey from York County, South Carolina, to St. Clair County, Alabama, in the early 1820's. At that time Jacob Green was fifty-three years old and a veteran of the American Revolution, having fought at an early age with South Carolina troops.

By following an old Indian trail which had been somewhat widened to take care of incoming traffic — ox wagons, mule teams, a stage coach — the Greens found a beautiful grove of oaks and chestnuts. Near at hand was a spring of wonderfully cool freestone water. Here the large caravan of children, children-in-law, grandchildren, and slaves made camp.

The place was so perfect for a homesite that Mr. Green journeyed to the nearest Federal Land Office at Huntsville and entered land in Townships 13 and 14.

Soon the commodious two-story house, built by Richard Crow, was ready for occupancy. One of the Green sons was sent, with wagons and slaves, back to Georgia to secure brick for the two massive chimneys. Some years later Mr. Green sent to Huntsville for the hand-planed weatherboarding which today covers the log structure.

Since the Green home was in a strategic location, the stage coach used it as a stop for the passengers to rest and refresh themselves and to make a change of horses. Today this old house is the only pioneer stagecoach inn left standing in this part of Alabama. One wing is entirely gone, as is the log kitchen that stood in the back yard. Since the roof is in a deplorable condition, the house is doomed. Properly restored it would surely be good for another one hundred and fifty years. And what a tourist attraction it would be!

Records in the Ashville Courthouse show that Jacob Green was a true pioneer. He bought and sold many acres of land. He served as foreman for grand juries, signed bonds for men who had been elected to office and served as guardian for orphan children. In 1832, he sold his first home and moved to the river where he owned a township of land stretching along the Coosa. This move came about because Federal agents constantly advised that a ferry be located on the Coosa and a post office established there.

Again Green employed Richard Crow to build his house and it was a magnificent house for that day. Six rooms and each room with its own chimney. Soon the house was known as "the house of chimneys." Several generations of Greens have occupied this interesting structure, the last being Mattie Lee Wright Green, widow of Pete Green, who was the son of Abraham and the grand-

Continued On Page 13



**JACOB GREEN STAGECOACH STOP**  
 ...Built In Early 1820's. Still Standing

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*Jacob Green*

Hopewell Cemetery  
Jacob Green (1767 - )  
PVT SC Troops  
Rev. Soldier

Series 1



*Neely Henry Covered Old Green House*

This house was built by Jacob Green in 1832 at Greensport and occupied by the Green family until 1968 when the waters of H. Neely Henry Lake covered the area and the house was demolished. At

that time it was the home of Mrs. Mattie Lee Green, widow of the late Pete Green. The house faced the river and in flood times, the water often came up to the steps — never any higher.

## Revolutionary War Tribute

Continued From Page 1

son of Jacob.

In 1964, the house which was the very quiddity of southern hospitality was sacrificed to progress and today the waters of H. Henry Neely Lake completely cover the land that was once Greensport.

Greensport was ever an exciting place to live, from the early days when the ferry — a huge log raft powered by heavy oars which were manned by slaves — to the year 1845, when the first steam boat went side-wheeling up the river to Rome, Georgia. This first

boat was built in Cincinnati, sent down the Ohio River, then on the Mississippi to New Orleans, through the Gulf to Mobile, and up the Alabama-Coosa to Wetumpka.

On account of the "shoals" or "narrows" between Wetumpka and Greensport, the boat had to be dismantled, loaded on ox wagons, and hauled over treacherous roads to Greensport. It was then painstakingly reassembled and, with the letters "USM Coosa" painted on its starboard, it made its maiden voyage to Rome.

With the advent of the steamboat, Greensport had a post office, with Champ Lankford as the postmaster. The "USM Coosa" ushered in a new era, and soon there were many and larger boats plying the river, all loaded with cotton, farm products, and passengers. The Greens soon built other homes and they built huge warehouses to take care of the freight. Then came the locks. The Federal Government's goal was to open the Coosa for commerce from Rome to the Gulf. This plan never came to fruition but Greensport was a lively place during the lock-building days. Three were completed before the project was abandoned.

The Jacob Green family and Greensport were synonymous. With members of each generation marrying and establishing their own homes, there were soon family connections throughout the state. The Revolutionary War veteran and his wife are buried at the Hopewell Cemetery on the Ashville-Gadsden road. The land for this cemetery was deeded in the early days by Jacob Green for that purpose. In August of 1937, the Roanoke DAR Chapter of Lumpkin, Georgia, and the Christopher Gadsden DAR Chapter of Gadsden, Alabama, after an appropriate ceremony, placed a beautiful marker at the grave of Jacob Green.

Revolutionary War

SECOND IN A SERIES ON REVOLUTIONA

# Beason Landmarks Abc

BY MRS. VIVIAN QUALLS

St. Clair County citizen's increasing interest in preservation of places and incidents of historical value is evidenced by the work of the St. Clair Historical Society in restoring the Looney house; in the restoration of Truss Cemetery; in dreams of obtaining and preserving the Pell City depot; in the erecting of the historical marker at Cropwell; by the listing of the Inzer home in the National Register of Historic Places; in the gracious reception of Mattie Lou Crow's History of St. Clair Co. and by the hopeful anticipation of my revised edition of History of Steele area which is soon to come off the press.

Furthermore, private individuals are undertaking projects. A descendant of Captain Edward Beason, a Revolutionary War veteran, recently erected an extensive chain link fence to enclose Beason's Union United Methodist Church, the church grounds and the cemetery on Steele, Route one where Captain Beason and six generations of Beasons are buried.

The donors of this gracious gift are Mr. and Mrs. Edward E. Beason of Birmingham. (Mrs. Beason, the former Alma Kirby, is the daughter of Stewart Kirby, a former St. Clair Countian, whose family is prominent in medical, educational, religious and civic areas of the state). The gift was presented in memory of Edward E. Beason's parents who are buried at Union. They were Edward Brown Beason and Delia Early Beason, also a descendant of a prominent St. Clair County family.

Captain Edward C. Beason, born in North Carolina, served in the Revolution in Infantry, Captain David Brown's Company, Colonel Thomas Dugan's North Carolina Regiment; was married three times and had three children by each wife.

He was buried in Carlton Cemetery, Etowah County, in 1837. About 1920 his grave was moved to Beason's Union Cemetery, St. Clair County by the Daughter's of American Revolution, who also placed a monument to his grave there.

In 1972 Mrs. Lucille Ford Moore a descendant of Captain

Beason erected an impressive monument to his memory at Union.

Captain Beason fought with General Andrew Jackson and the Tennessee Volunteers in the War of 1812. He must have been favorably impressed with St. Clair County for after the war, he, and his second wife, Ann Pennington and twelve-year-old son, Curtis Gruff, Sr., settled near Ashville in 1814. St. Clair County Beasons descended from Captain Edward. They spell their name B E A S O N while his earlier children and other members of the family spell their name "Beason."

Captain Beason's son, Curtis Grubb Sr. was an influential man in this area of the state. He was Tax Collector of St. Clair and Blount Counties, 1844-1845. He was state senator and a delegate to Alabama Constitutional Convention in 1865. He owned and operated the Beason Trading Post and State Coach Inn which was located in Ashville where the Farmer's Exchange is today.

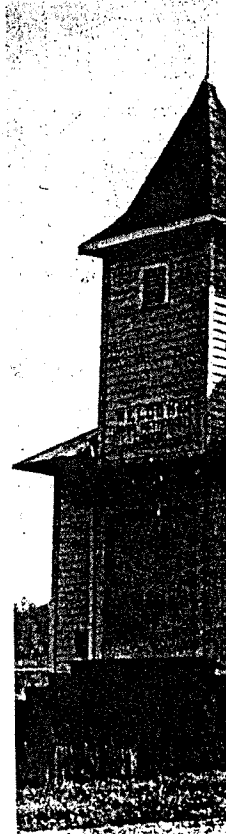
His antebellum home, built some years before the Civil War is located about one mile from Union Cemetery and is occupied by the Joseph Francis Fountain family.

Curtis G. Beason, Sr. was the father of eleven children, eight of whom owned farms in Beason's Cove. Four sons fought in the Confederate Army and two daughters married doctors. One son William Spruell and wife Juliann Deerman Beason gave the land for Union Church and cemetery, whose history dates back years before the Civil War.

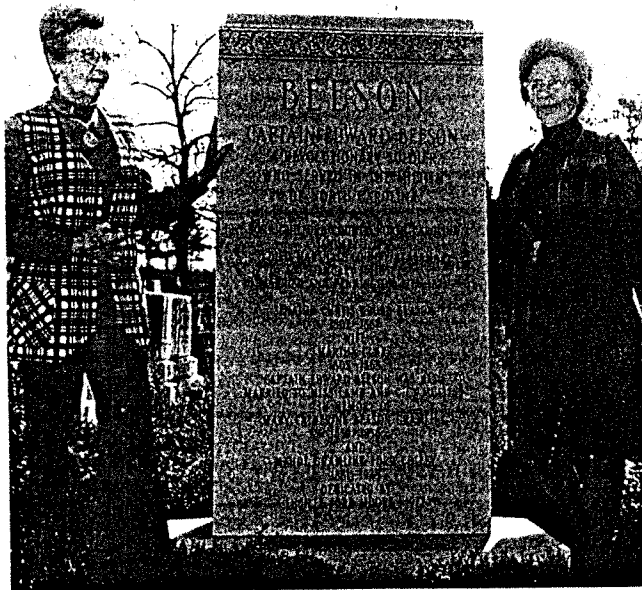
Descendants of Captain Beason include Gibbs, Beasons, Thomasons, Stalons, Robinsons, Gramlings, Buffingtons, Partlows, Awbrey's, Engles, Bowlins, Montgomerie's, Swanna, and others.

Regular services are no longer held in the church but the building, which was erected in the 1920's, still in fair condition, is used for funerals and the Beason family hold their annual reunion there on the third Sunday in August. Relatives of the deceased keep the cemetery in good condition.

More about this family and other pioneer families of this area will be included in my book which will be available in the not-too-distant future.

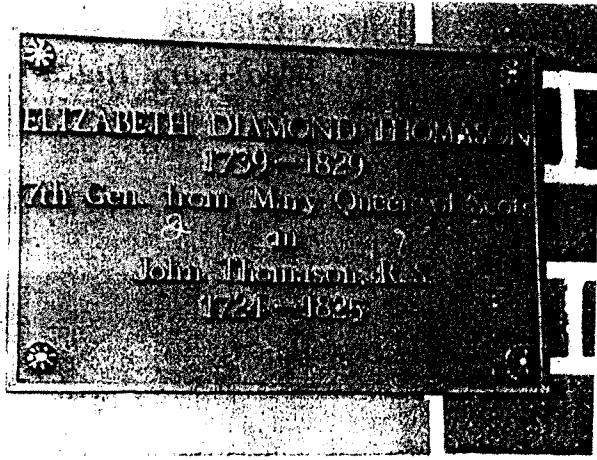


Series 2  
1-31-74



Mrs. Qualls, Mrs. Made Burttram At Beason Monument





PLAQUE AT ARMORY BEARS THOMASONS' NAMES

TEAGUE CROW

A top a hill on the town's northern boundary stands the William Dempsey Partlow Armory. Here a company of young men meet periodically for instructions in military strategy. They are members of the Company B, 1-152 National Guard Captain James Deason's command whose duty it is to stand ready in an emergency that might require the services of the military. They are dedicated soldiers and are well trained.

Few of these young men are aware that, underneath the armory, there lies the bones of a man who fought in the war which gave us our freedom from England and which made our nation—the United States of America—possible. This hill where the armory is located was Ashville's first cemetery. The town was literally carved out of the wilderness in 1820 for the purpose of being the county seat of St. Clair County, which was created in 1818. Court Square was the center of the thirty acres which comprised the new town and people soon built homes and businesses around the square. The town was incorporated in 1822. Until 1831, when Ashville's first church was built and the land near the church was set aside for a cemetery, those who died were "laid to rest" on the little hill which the armory now occupies. Perhaps a dozen graves were there, but only one was marked with a stone. When the armory was built in 1930, this marked grave—that of a young lawyer by the name of Earle—was relocated in Ashville's present-day cemetery. The descendants of the others buried there asked that the graves not be disturbed.

And so, underneath the building where today's young soldiers learn the lessons of modern warfare lies John R. Duett Thomason, who was born in 1734 and died in 1825. This man was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and held a commission in a Carolina Regiment. He was wounded in the battle of King's Mountain. After the war he emigrated from North to South Carolina, on to Georgia, and later to Alabama. He came into many acres of land in St. Clair County in a land lottery open to men with Revolutionary Service. The land was near the town of Springville and at St. Clair Springs.

By the side of John R. Duett Thomason is the last resting place of his wife, Elizabeth Stuart Diamond Thomason. "A

Thomason," printed in 1945 by Scribners of New York and found in the Genealogical Section of the New York Public Library states that John Diamond of the Province of Bute, Scotland, married Elizabeth Stuart of the House of Stuart, Scotland, and that Elizabeth Stuart was a niece of Queen Anne. Elizabeth Stuart's name was listed in Burke's Peerage until she was married to John Diamond—a commoner. The name was thereafter dropped.

John and Elizabeth Thomason were the parents of ten children. Since he was born in 1734 and her birthdate was in age when they came to Alabama. Their fourth son, James Thomason, served as St. Clair's first county judge. He was appointed to this office by Governor Bibb when the county was organized, to serve until an election could be held. He was judge for one year, when John Ash was elected to the office. His appointment brought the Thomasons to Ashville, as it was then necessary that the county judge (later designated as Probate Judge) reside at the county seat.

James Thomason's son, John Isham Thomason, was elected to the office of county judge in 1848. In 1887, James Thomason Greene, whose mother was Elizabeth, the daughter of James and the sister of John Isham, held the office of Probate Judge, thus becoming the third descendant of John and Elizabeth Diamond Thomason to hold that office.

Elizabeth Thomason Greene's husband, John Greene, was born in Ireland and came early to St. Clair County. It was he who built the old inn which stood flush with the sidewalk on main street in Ashville. Elizabeth was a dyed-in-the-wool rebel, and during the dark days following the Civil War, when Ashville was under military rule, it is said that she upped the Confederate flag on a fishing pole each morning to show her contempt for the presence of the Federal troops. And legend says that she slept under the flag every night and declared that this gave her a feeling of complete safety and security.

The descendants of John R. Duett and Elizabeth Diamond Thomason are today scattered throughout the United States. Many live in Alabama and there are some in St. Clair County.

they are an colorful, energetic people and there are many interesting legends found recorded in their family history. It was Francis Marion Thomason, son of Arnold and grandson of John R. D., who developed St. Clair Springs into one of Alabama's leading resorts during the last century. Francis Marion's wife was Evalina Cornelia Hall, and the first post office at the Springs was named Cornelia for their little daughter who bore her mother's name.

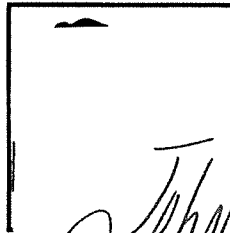
One of John R. Duett's great grandsons, Gardner Greene (son of Judge James Greene and Margaret Ashley Greene) was killed in the First World War during the Saint Mihiel offensive, September 12, 1918. His military rank was that of Major and he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross before his death.

Some years ago a bronze marker was placed on the wall of the National Guard Armory at Ashville (by Mrs. J. L. Crockett (Marie Greene) to mark the graves of her ancestors. This plaque was dedicated on June 16, 1969, with Mrs. Howard Hill, member of Broken Arrow Chapter D A R, presiding. Mrs. Hill was assisted by Mrs. Willis Hodges, the prayer of dedication was offered by the Rev. Leonard Franklin, and Mrs. Terry Stewart sang: "Faith of Our Fathers." The plaque bears the following inscription:

Elizabeth Diamond Thomason  
1739-1829  
7th Generation from Mary,  
Queen of Scots M.  
John Thomason, Revolutionary  
Soldier  
1734-1825

This is the third of a series of articles relative to Revolutionary War veterans who are buried in St. Clair County.

Information for this article came from Bridgton, Maine; Houston, Texas; and Huntsville, Alabama.



*Series 3  
St. Clair Observer  
3-7-74*

Jesse Ginn-

# Revolutionary Soldier

(Fourth in a series)

BY  
MATTIE LOU TEAGUE CROW  
(Bicentennial Chairman,  
Broken Arrow DAR)

On the Sunday afternoon of November 14, 1971, approximately one hundred people traveled to the old Ginn family cemetery which is located near Wolf Creek two miles below Eden, a town older than Pell City and now a suburb of that city. The people stood about under the oak and chinquapen trees waiting for the ceremony to begin. The winter sun, clear and bright, forced its way through the leaves to form dancing, dappled patterns on the old moss-covered grave stones, most of which bore the Ginn name. For it was here that the members of that family had buried their dead since the year 1840.

The occasion for the gathering was the unveiling of a bronze marker placed at the grave of Jesse Ginn, a veteran of the American Revolution. The members of the Broken Arrow Chapter, D.A.R. were responsible for having the marker placed at the grave and they were there to present a beautiful and touching

dedicatory ceremony. Mrs. Harris Blackmon, chapter regent, presided. The members of the Pell City High School band, dressed in their colorful uniforms, began the program with a medley of patriotic music. After the salute to the flag, Mr. Paul Turner welcomed the visitors. Mrs. Blackmon then recognized the State Regent, Mrs. John Blevins Privett, who spoke briefly. The highlight of the program was the life history of Jesse Ginn, given by the Reverend John Drawhorn.

Jesse Ginn came to America from England where he was born in 1760. He first made his home in Virginia and entered the military service there. Legendary stories relate that he was first a drummer boy, later served as a sergeant from the Colony of Georgia, was under General Francis Marion for a period of time, and fought in the Battle of King's Mountain. It has been verified that he was in the service of his country throughout the entire conflict. A relic of his service which has been handed down in his family for generations is an old blue military surcoat (an outer coat worn over armor) which is now in the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Montgomery, Alabama. This coat is handmade and is of beautiful broadcloth.

After the prayer of dedication, the marker was unveiled by two Pell City Brownies, Ena Elaine Scoggin and Teresa Diane Graham. Others participating in the ceremony were Mrs. Julia Lewis, Miss Betty Scott, and Mrs. Howard Hill, all members of the Broken Arrow Chapter, D.A.R.

As the shadows lengthened, the silence of the forest was broken by the sounding of taps. The many descendants, the relatives and the friends who had gathered to honor a man for his service in our country's fight for freedom silently left the little cemetery.

Jesse Ginn was twice married. He and his first wife were the parents of nine children. After her death, he was married to Tabitha Brewer in 1824, and they made their home in South Carolina, later moving to Tennessee. Tradition says that, in 1836, he divided his property among the children of his first wife — keeping a child's portion for himself — and he and Tabitha migrated to Alabama. They settled on Wolf

Creek in St. Clair County. To them were born nine children.

Without a doubt descendants of Jesse Ginn have seen service in every war in which our country has been involved. At the time of marking his grave, more than one of these descendants were fighting in Vietnam. There is no way of knowing how many ancestors of this man were soldiers for a cause in the old country and in ancient times. Only God knows the number who will fight in future wars.

As we approach our country's bicentennial celebration, surely we should do so with a prayer in our hearts that the prophecy of Tennyson, the English poet, will come true in its entirety and that battle-flags the world over will be permanently furled.

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,

Saw the visions of the world, and all the wonders that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,

Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew

From the nations' airy navies, grappling in the central blue;

For along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,

With the standards of the peoples plunging through the

## Learning

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thunder-storms;  
Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furled

In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World, There the common sense of

most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,

And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

—From Locksley Hall, written by Alfred Tennyson in 1842.

Series 4

Jesse Ginn

ts 36 Days Every

Deed Record C p. 51

11

Last Will and Testament of Jesse Ginn

In the name of God amen. I Jesse Ginn of St. Clair County & State of Alabama being in bad health and weak in body but in perfect mind & calling into mind the mortality of my body and knowing that its appointed unto men once to die do make and ordain this my last Will and Testament that is to say after my just debts being paid the balance of my property I give and bequeath to my wife Sabitha to have and to hold during widowhood or life time for the purpose of raising my Children having given to my first Children a small portion of my Estate to commence the world with that is some stock & household furniture wishing to do Equal justice to all my Children if any of them now living with me shall marry before the death or intermarriage of my wife I wish them to have something near an equal share with them that are married provided they can without disfurnishing the widow & the balance of my Children & wish my property to be kept together with the exceptions above named during my wife's widowhood or life time then to be equally divided among my Children first giving to them not of age nor married Equal share with them that are married the remaining part to be Equally divided as them and their Executors may think profitable either by sale or a division among themselves further more should my wife Sabitha Ginn marry then she can take a third or a child's part as she may think proper & I do further appoint & ordain Reuben Dollar & John Collins Executors of my last Will and Testament and I do now revoke all other Wills or Testaments and I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 27<sup>th</sup> day of November in the Year of Lord 1840

Witness John Collins  
Jesse Garrett  
Reuben Dollar

(Signed)

Jesse Ginn Seal

The State of Alabama St. Clair County Before me John S. Thomason Judge of the

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# Noel Battles, A Freedom Fighter

BY MATTIE LOU TEAGUE CROW  
Bicentennial Chairman  
Broken Arrow Chapter DAR

Plans have been in the making since 1974 for the celebration of our country's Bicentennial. This is well and good as the struggle for freedom began years before that, memorable day, July 4, 1776, when the final draft of the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

At the onset of the conflict the Colonists had no thought of declaring their independence from the Mother Country. They simply were desirous of setting right the wrongs visited on them — British subjects — by the British government.

Abigail Adams wrote to her English friend, Catharine Macaulay, in 1771: "Should I attempt to describe to you the complicated miseries and distresses brought upon us by the late inhumane acts of the British Parliament, my pen would fail me."

As early as 1770, in North Carolina, an organization calling themselves the "Regulators" was formed to resist the extortion and oppression practiced by the officers of the King's government. Settlers in Anson, Orange, and Granville Counties had long carried on a struggle against corrupt officials who deprived them of their land and charged them excessive fees. A battle was fought between the Regulators and the King's militia at Alamance River, which ended in defeat, for the Regulators. They were branded Outlaws and many of them were hunted down and hanged by Governor Tryon.

During this period in our history, life in America became tense. Times were in a turmoil. Whigs and Tories, who had previously been close friends, became bitter enemies. In some communities the Whigs continued to suffer indignities at the hands of the Royalists, while in others the Tories were literally "tarred and feathered." The Boston Massacre and the Boston Tea Party are dramatic examples of events, which led to our nation's birth. Then came Lexington and the Revolutionary War had begun.

During 1974, The Observer printed stories of four Revolutionary War veterans whose graves are in the boundaries of St. Clair County. They were Jacob Green, John Thomason, Jesse Ginn, and Edward Beason. According to pension records there are sixteen others who applied and received pensions while living in the county. Some are buried here, while some moved away to live with their children. One who was buried in this county was Noel Battles, whose story follows.

From the book, *Gone to Georgia*, by William Stewart, we learn that the Battles family settled in Tidewater Virginia about 1647. In 1776, Noel Battles was living in Albemarle County, fourteen miles from Charlottesville, when he enlisted in Captain Clough Shelton's Company which saw service under Colonels Edward Stevens, John Green, and

Samuel Cabell, respectively.

After the war, Noel Battles married and moved to Georgia, and from there he migrated to St. Clair County, Alabama. Courthouse records at Ashville show that he made application for a pension for his war service on November 7, 1832. His (oral) will also is recorded, dated September 26, 1836, in which he names his wife, Rhoda, and which was witnessed by Elizabeth and Nelson Battles. Land mentioned in the will included acreage purchased from David Sibert in 1835.

Noel Battles' wife, Rhoda, was a member of old Shiloh Baptist Church and, although the graves are unmarked, it is legend that Noel and Rhoda are buried in old Shiloh Cemetery. This church and cemetery were originally within St. Clair County. When Etowah County was created in 1866, the county line placed Shiloh about a quarter of a mile across the line within the new county.

In the Southern Room of Birmingham Public Library there is on microfilm Noel Battles' personal account of his three years' service in the American Revolution. The writing is old Spencerian, badly faded, and difficult to read. By careful perusal with the aid of a magnifying glass, I was rewarded with this exciting account.

Noel Battles fought in the Battle of Trenton and stated that the battle was brief and bloody. The enemy was soon overcome as many of them were drunk after the long Christmas celebration. On January 2, the Americans left their camp fires burning brightly at Trenton and slipped away for a surprise raid on Princeton. Later the Battle of Brandywine Creek was a painful experience as they were badly beaten by General Howe's men. Seven hundred were killed or taken prisoner and Noel received a flesh wound in his right arm. He fought under General Green at Germantown and remembered that they became lost in a heavy fog. American forces fired on each other in the confusion. He was wounded in the knee by a musket ball in this foray. They wintered at Valley Forge.

Battles recalled the terrific heat when the Battle of Monmouth occurred in June of 1777. He was slightly wounded when a sharp piece of wood passed through his left arm at Stony Point in 1779. He described an experience that occurred in this battle in the following statement:

"Colonel Fleury undertook to cut down the flagstaff with his sword. I stepped in and cut down the flag and gave it to Colonel Fleury."

Noel Battles served three years in the Revolutionary War, and those years were packed with danger and excitement. He was allowed pension on his application which was executed on November 7, 1832, at which time he was 78 years old and resided at "Chandler's Beat" in St. Clair County.

Noel Battles  
St. Clair Observer  
2-27-75

Series 5



Jacob Buzbee of Ashville -

# One Of Marion's Men

BY MATTIE LOU TEAGUE  
CROW  
BICENTENNIAL CHAIRMAN  
BROKEN ARROW CHAPTER,  
DAR

Two and a half centuries after Columbus had stumbled upon the New World, colonial life had acquired a distinct pattern. Events which occurred during the first half of the 18th century gave a preview of the emerging American Story. The years from 1700 to 1750 were packed with excitement and with a maturing community spirit.

The efforts of the English to force upon their subjects acceptance of the teachings of the Church of England and their unfair tax laws proved to be a powerful colonizing force among the people. The colonies began actively seeking religious and political freedom. This seeking would soon be described as man's "inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The American Revolution, which came in the last half of the century was the product of powerful forces rooted in the colonial past. The work of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Paine, and many other "apostles of freedom" led to the Declaration of Independence. Thousands of unsung, ordinary run-of-the-mill citizens united in winning that independence from the most powerful empire in the world at that time.

This series of articles-this is the sixth-is about such common men-especially those men who came to make their homes in the wilderness county of St. Clair in the new state of Alabama. These men applied for and were granted pensions while living in this county. Today's story is about Jacob Buzbee.

Jacob Buzbee was born in 1762 in Orangeburg District of South Carolina. He came with his wife, Jane, and their four sons to live in St. Clair County in 1820. He entered land on Canoe Creek near Ashville. His sons married here-William to Elizabeth Rey in 1821, Joshua to Susan Moore in 1829, Jacob, Jr., to Lurena Allman in 1831, and Jeremiah to Alla T. A. Elliott in 1833. These marriages are recorded at Ashville court house. He applied for a government pension on January 20, 1834, and his request was granted: \$66.33 per annum.

From micro-filmed records stored at Birmingham Public Library comes the first-person account of Jacob Buzbee's nineteen months service during the Revolutionary War. The account begins with--

"Between the age of fourteen and fifteen I was tending stock for my father on the headwaters of the Edisto River in the District of Orangeburg of South Carolina, when I was made a prisoner of one Kit Neeley, a Tory major and detained as such for the space of three weeks..."

He further stated that the Tory camp of Kit Neeley had an epidemic of smallpox and, with so many sick, he was able to make his escape undetected. He walked many days, without food and sleeping on the ground. By the time he reached a house he was very ill and knew that he had smallpox. His call of "hello" brought a lady to the door, and he told her, first, that he feared he had the dread disease and warned her not to come near him. He then explained his predicament, saying that he was only fifteen and did not know what to do.

After giving the matter thought, the lady told him she would place water and provisions, bedding and dry clothing in a shed near her house. When he was safely inside she would go for help. He knew then that she was a Whig sympathizer. Many hours later she returned with a man who called to him, saying that he was William Watson, a captain in the Whig militia. Captain Watson promised to keep a scouting party near the place until Jacob Buzbee was recovered.

As soon as he was well, the young boy joined Captain Watson's company as a volunteer soldier and was soon under fire for the first time in a skirmish against the Tories. Although the wars were not the same, the boy's description of this experience might have come from Stephen Crane's book, *The Red Badge of Courage*.

From Watson's company he was transferred to that of Captain Taylor and he saw Taylor killed in a skirmish at Gregg's Ford on Broad River. He was next under Captain Jacob Frazier and later with Captain James Turner. His company defeated a parcel of British cavalry commanded by one Campbell at Goose Creek. He was active in another confrontation on Goose Creek against a Tory commander named William Cunningham, where there was great loss of life. He recalled one action against the Tories between Broad and Little Rivers.

His company followed an enemy party to the Blue Ridge but never came up to them. The only battle of note in which Buzbee participated was that of Eutaw Springs. During his entire service, when he was being shifted from one to another company, he was under the direct command of General Francis Marion. History tells us that Marion's troops were poorly equipped and insufficiently fed, but that they played a very important role in the war. They made communication impossible for the British posts in the Carolinas. They took many prisoners and often came to the aid of troops who were surrounded by the enemy. British Colonel Tarleton, who was ordered to take Marion, said that it was impossible to catch the old "swamp fox."

Jacob Buzbee closed his account of his service by stating--  
"I was disabled by my horse dashing me against a tree and breaking my leg, which caused both it and my thigh to perish away. As a result of this injury I was compelled to abandon the service."

This injury left him with a decided limp for the remainder of his life.

Along with Jacob Buzbee's story, there are affidavits signed by James L. Lewis, who was the first pastor of Ashville Baptist Church; Archibald Sloan, Ashville's first postmaster; and Polydor Naylor, a young lawyer who became St. Clair's third county judge. Each of these men stated that he was well acquainted with Jacob Buzbee and knew him to be a man of integrity and that he was known by all citizens of the community to have been a volunteer soldier in the Revolutionary War.

Jacob Buzbee died on August 22, 1839. Soon thereafter his wife, Jane, applied for and received benefits from his service. Though their graves are unmarked, it is believed that they were buried in Ashville Cemetery.

Series 6

Jacob Buzbee

St. Clair Observer 3-6-75

# A Soldier Of The American Revolution

**John Ballenger, A Soldier of the American Revolution**  
The Bicentennial celebration, marking the 200th anniversary of our country, began in March of 1975 and will end December 31, 1976. This is a time for Americans to review and reaffirm the principles on which this nation was founded, for those principles are as valid today as they were then. One good way to review the happenings of that trying time of long ago is to learn—first hand—of the part played in the dramatic story of our nation's birth by men who later came to make their homes in St. Clair County.

In today's article, one such veteran of the Revolutionary War—John Ballenger—tells his own story. This story is recorded on micro-film and stored at Birmingham Public Library.

State of Alabama  
St. Clair County  
Circuit Court  
Fall Term, 1832

On the 8th day of November personally appeared in open court before the Honorable Anderson Crenshaw, presiding judge of the Circuit Court now sitting, John Ballenger, a resident of county and state aforesaid, aged about 73 years, who being first duly shown according to law, doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the Act of Congress passed June the 7th, 1832.

That he was born in Culpepper, Virginia, in the year 1759, that he has no record of his age but that his knowledge of same is traditional. That he was living when called into service in the county and state mentioned. That after the close of the war he removed to the state of South Carolina, thence to the state of Alabama and the county aforesaid about eight years since, where he still resides.

Claimant further states that he entered the service of the United States as a regular enlisted soldier on the 16th of January, 1777, in the county of Culpepper, Virginia, as aforesaid. That he attached himself to Captain John Gillison's company. That in or about March following, he marched with said company to Newcastle, within the state of Delaware, whence himself and a part of the company were inoculated for the small pox, thence they marched to headquarters at Middle Brook, New Jersey.

The company to which this claimant belonged was attached to the regiment which Colonel Edward Stevens commanded. Shortly after they had thus reached headquarters, they were marched under Colonel Stevens to the state of New York; but had no engagement with the British who about this time quit the state of New York and sailed around to the mouth of Elk Creek in the Chesapeake Bay.

Nothing remarkable occurred this year in the regiment to which the claimant belonged. They were marched the ensuing winter to Valley Forge some twenty miles, perhaps, in Philadelphia, where they went into winter quarters the major part of the Continental Forces.

On the campaign opened the following spring, Colonel Stevens resigned his commission and the claimant, still Captain Gillison was attached to the 6th Regiment

can recollect in or about the month of July (note: Battle of Monmouth fought June 28, 1778).

The claimant was in the battle. It took place as he believes in the county of Monmouth. Claimant does not recollect that any distinguished officers fell on either side. The American forces were led in this battle by General Charles Lee, who afterwards—this claimant believes—was discharged for disobeying orders. The American troops the succeeding winter, being that of 1778-79, went into winter quarters at Middle Brook, New Jersey.

The succeeding spring, the claimant was taken from the regular army and attached to a regiment of light infantry under General Wayne. An officer by the name of Shelton was his immediate captain. They made several marches in the course of the year, but had no engagement with the enemy worth relating, save that at Stony Point on what was then called the North—now Hudson—River in the state of New York which they attempted and succeeded in storming on the night of the 16th of July, 1779. In this engagement Colonel Hays was wounded but not mortally. Also another officer whose name is forgotten by the claimant.

The claimant has thus given a general but imperfect—but nevertheless correct—statement of the part he took in the Revolutionary conflict, so far as his recollection serves him right.

In January, 1780, at the city of Philadelphia he received a written discharge from Colonel Febiger, which made the term of his service three entire years. Claimant further says that he has long since lost or destroyed his discharge, supposing it never could or would avail him anything.

Claimant further avers that he holds no documentary evidence nor is he acquainted with any living person whose testimony he could procure who could testify to his service as a soldier of the Revolution, and lastly that he relinquishes every claim whatsoever to a pension or annuity except the present and declares his name is not on the pension roll of any agency of any state.

his mark (X)

John Ballenger  
Sworn to and subscribed  
the day and year aforesaid  
in open court,

J.L. Lewis  
Clerk of Circuit Court.

Attached to the record are three affidavits:

(1) One signed by James L. Lewis, clergyman, and Zacharia Cooper, which states that they are well acquainted with John Ballenger, know him to be about 73 years of age and that he is an upright honest citizen. They believe that he was a soldier of the American Revolution.

(2) A statement signed by Judge Anderson Crenshaw, to the effect that he accepts the testimony given by the claimant and recommends that John Ballenger be granted pension.

(note: Judge Anderson Crenshaw, an early settler from South Carolina named for him. He rode circuit the state of Alabama.)

Very little is known about the claimant. He came to St. Clair County in 1826. In 1827 he purchased 79 acres (two "forties" description given in the deed—Church in Slasham).

The property is on the road to the cemetery and which led to Jester Springs. This, evidence Ballenger family as there is no other acreage.

It is possible that his grave is in the Springs cemetery, which is overgrown with bushes, and brambles. It was a grave, even if there is a marker.

John Ballenger was granted a pension allowance of \$80.

# The American Revolution

month of July (note: Battle of 1778).

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Judge Anderson Crenshaw, to testimony given by the claimant Ballenger be granted pension.

(note: Judge Anderson Crenshaw was a distinguished early settler from South Carolina. Crenshaw County was named for him. He rode circuit as a judge for many years in the state of Alabama.)

Very little is known about the family of John Ballenger. He came to St. Clair County in 1824. He served on the county grand jury in 1826. In 1827 he purchased from one George Wood 79 acres (two "forties") located—according to the description given in the deed—back of Gum Springs Baptist Church in Slasham.

The property is on the road which led past the older part of the cemetery and which led to a place called, in old days, Jester Springs. This, evidently, was the home of the Ballenger family as there is no record of his having owned other acreage.

It is possible that his grave is located in the old part of Gum Springs cemetery, which is badly grown up with trees, bushes, and brambles. It would be difficult to locate the grave, even if there is a marker.

John Ballenger was granted pension in 1833—an annual allowance of \$80.

*Feb 17*

*St. Clair Observer  
3-13-76*

*John Ballenger*

# They Wintered At Valley Forge.

MATTIE LOU TEAGUE CROW  
BICENTENNIAL CHAIRMAN  
BROKEN ARROW CHAPTER DAR

(Fourth of a Series)

The Battle of Saratoga in the fall of 1777 was a great victory for the American forces. In fact, it was the turning point of the war. As a result of this victory the nations of Europe began to take a new interest in the American Revolution.

England's enemies, France, Spain and Holland, saw their chance to strike a blow at the mistress of the sea. In a few months France signed an alliance with America, agreeing to send men and ships to the Colonies. England, alarmed by this turn of events, offered the Colonies everything they asked for - except their independence. The Americans chose to go on fighting, and there were still years of bitter suffering and bloodshed ahead.

After an unsuccessful attempt to drive the British from Philadelphia, General Washington took up winter quarters at Valley Forge, some twenty-four miles northwest of Philadelphia.

Valley Forge! A word synonymous with suffering, with bitter cold, and with death. The army numbered about 11,000 and at Christmas time of 1777 Washington wrote to Congress, "We have more than 2873 men in camp who are unfit for duty because they are barefoot and otherwise naked." That winter served to separate the men from the boys. More than 3,000 died. Many deserted. Only dedicated patriots remained through this darkest period of the Revolution. The ragged starving Continental soldiers endured the suffering for they had a powerful cause - their freedom - was at stake.

Many of these men, who were later citizens of St. Clair County, stated in their requests for a pension: "We spent the winter at General Washington's headquarters at Valley

Forge." Today we review the testimony of William Whitefield - often spelled Whitfield - who made a pension application in May of 1829, saying that he was born in Goochland County, Virginia, in 1751, and entered the Continental army for one year's service on February 16, 1776, in said county.

His company commander was Captain Morris. "marched us out to Valley Forge. Our company was taken over by Captain Curtis Kendall in the rear. We were commanded by Colonel Richard Parker. We remained at Valley Forge throughout the remainder of that winter." Whitefield was discharged February 16, 1777, in Middlebrook, New Jersey.

Most of this old soldier's testimony, taken before Judge Taylor, presiding judge of the Circuit Court, fall term 1829, in Ashville, in St. Clair County, had to do with the fact that he was destitute; he had no home, no bed, no food. He said he had reared twelve children, all of them - except one - had recently died - were married, but financially unable to give him a home.

Mr. Whitefield was old and sick, and badly in need of assistance. He was granted a pension of \$96 annually. His testimony was taken by Charles C. P. Farrar, an early St. Clair County doctor who also served as clerk of the circuit court from 1827 until 1831.

In recent years letters have come from Kentucky, Georgia, and from Massachusetts asking for information relative to William Whitefield. I have searched early deeds, tax and marriage records, and have been unable to supply the requested information. Should any person who has this account have knowledge of this family and of the place of William Whitefield, will you please notify the St. Clair Observer.

*St. Clair Observer*

*2-20-1975*

*Series 8*

# The First Shot..

BY MATTIE LOU TEAGUE  
CROW  
BICENTENNIAL CHAIRMAN  
BROKEN ARROW CHAPTER,  
DAR

During the spring of 1775, things were heating up between the "bloody-backs," as the English loyalists were called, and the Colonists. It seemed to all concerned that war was just around the corner. A very tiny spark was all that was needed to set off the conflict. An order from General Thomas Gage, British Military Governor of Massachusetts, served as the necessary catalyst and on April 19, 1775, the peace was shattered by the "shot heard round the world."

Gage was sending 700 troops from his Boston garrison to capture a supply of gunpowder which the Rebels had stored at Concord. How the news of the General's troop movement reached the ears of the local spy ring is uncertain, but—thanks to Henry W. Longfellow—every school child knows the story of "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere." The defenders of the arsenal must be warned, the Minutemen alerted, and John Hancock and Sam Adams spirited away to a safe hiding place.

Check your dry history books for the exciting story of the Minutemen at Lexington Green, at Old North Bridge at Concord, and the march of the Red Coats back to Boston with Rebel snipers blasting away from behind fences and trees.

As dusk fell on April 19, 1775, —200 years ago—the battle was over but the war had begun.

Let me tell you the story of one man who was living in St. Clair County, Alabama, in 1832, and how he told of the part he played in that long ago war. This man was Robert Reed (or Reid) and the personal account of his Revolutionary War service is recorded at the Birmingham Public Library. The account begins:

"State of Alabama  
(Saint Clair County)

On this thirteenth day of August, one thousand, eight hundred and thirty-two, personally appeared before John H. Garrett, Esq., Judge of the County Court now sitting, Robert Reed, a resident of aforesaid county and state, age 75 years, who being duly sworn according to the law, doth on this oath make the following acclamations:"

Now, let us set the stage for this dry and uninteresting bit of history.

In the year 1832, Ashville was 10 years old (incorporated 1822). The little village had literally been carved out of the wilderness and, as the sculptors were untrained in their art, the edges were a bit rough and uneven. Hosea Holcomb, an early Baptist preacher who came to Ashville to hold a protracted meeting in the early 1830's, states in his History of the Baptists in Alabama, that Ashville was a notoriously wicked town.

Robert Reed, about whom we are writing, gave his testimony in the little log court house which stood where Rexall Drug Store is now located. He gave this testimony before the county judge, John H. Garrett. A few years later (1836), when Cherokee County was organized from Indian land and part of the territory first allotted to St. Clair, Judge Garrett moved to Centre, the county seat of the new county. He became an influential man in the public affairs of that county and many of his descendants live there today.

Now, who attended this session of county court "sitting" on the 13th day of August, 1832? We know that the judge and Veteran Reed were there, for their signatures appear on the documented record. Also affixed are the signatures of Champ Lankford (county tax collector), John Massey (at that time a member of the state legislature), and William Gibson (a Revolutionary officer then siding in St. Clair County).

These men bore witness that they knew Robert Reed to be an est and upright citizen. Joshua W. Hooper recorded Reed's y as he was the clerk of the county court. James L. Lewis, a ist preacher, testified that he believed Mr Reed's story of his ervice was a true account. Ralph P. Lowe, an Ashville Justice

of the peace, stated that he had heard the testimony of Robert Reed and had seen the witnesses sign their affidavits. He stated further, "I, too, in all respects believe that full faith can be given to Reed's oath."

We know that these eight persons were present on this occasion. We know, by tradition, that court day brought the country folks to town. Their horses and oxen were hitched on the town square which had been set aside for the fine brick courthouse of the future. The women likely stayed with their wagons to sell their butter and eggs, jams and jellies which they always brought in. The men, without a doubt, crowded into the small courtroom. There could have been a few Creek and Cherokee Indians mingling with the crowd or peering inquisitively through the open windows. What an audience Robert Reed had for the telling of his story! It is possible that some of the spicier parts had to be deleted, but certainly this was the old soldier's day!

Robert Reed first entered the army for a five-month period as a substitute, for which he was well paid. He signed up with the Lincoln County, North Carolina Militia. In his words he was just a young sprout who thought that he would like to learn about soldiering. And learn he did—from Osborn Bennetti, his captain, who made him an orderly sergeant. He was marched from North Carolina, through South Carolina and on to the Savannah River to young sprout who thought that he would like to learn about soldiering. And learn he did — from Osborn Bennetti, his captain,

Their General was Rutherford who believed that a happy soldier was a fighting soldier. To Reed's surprise he came through the five months and numerous skirmishes with the enemy all in one piece. He received his discharge, which he destroyed or lost, thinking that it could never be an advantage to him.

Very soon thereafter, he began to feel restless and a bit useless, so he volunteered for another three months of soldiering. This time he was sent to Charleston, South Carolina, just before the British took the city. Someone relieved him when his three months ended and he learned later that that person was taken prisoner by the enemy the very next day after Robert Reed got his second discharge, which he lost or destroyed.

He was out of the service briefly but soon re-enlisted—this time in the infantry and again for a three month period. His Captain was Robert Holmes and he got promoted to sergeant. He received his third discharge—and lost it!

Soon he signed again, this time with a company of horsemen who were used as scouts among the Tories. They were not attached to any regiment were pretty much on their own. Their captain, Francis Cunningham, liked action with a bit of danger and this was perhaps the liveliest three months of Robert Reed's entire life. Again he received a discharge. Again he lost it.

His next adventure was a two month period as a horseman against the Cherokee Indians at the head of the Catawba River in Burk County, North Carolina. His younger brother, Richard, was with him during this interval. Captain Cunningham signed his discharge this time and again said discharge was mislaid.

His next service was for three months as a militiaman under Charles McDowell. This time he served under Captain Jonathan Camp as quartermaster sergeant. Part of the time they "lay" on Broad River but were generally on the move after the Tories in the upper part of North and South Carolina. He saw his captain killed in a skirmish near the headwaters of the Pacolet River. He was given a discharge, but no volunteer came to relieve him and he remained another three months.

By this time Robert Reed thought that he had learned a little about soldiering, so he enlisted for the duration as a substitute for one Richard Perkins. This enlistment took place in Burk County, North Carolina. Mordicae Clark was his captain until "broken" by a court martial for taking bribes for letting men go home.

The only real battle that Robert Reed participated in was the

Robert Reed

St. Clair Observer  
4-17-75

Series 9

# .. April 19, 1775

Battle of Eutaw Springs. Again his brother Richard was with him. This battle ended the campaign in the South, and although it was an undecided engagement, the Continentals were left in possession of the field. The war continued for many months and the story of how it ended is worth the reading. A provisional treaty was signed and on April 19, 1783—exactly eight years after the Battle of Lexington—General George Washington declared the conflict ended.

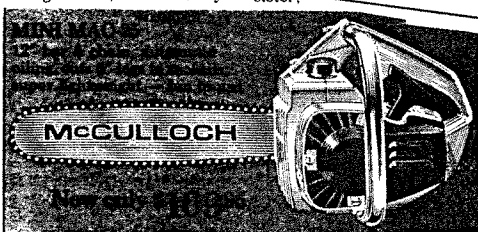
they shared and he presented this to the court.

This old soldier told the people in the crowded court room that after the war ended bands of Southern fighters continued to keep up a deadly round of their favorite pastime—sniping at the Red Coats from behind rocks and trees and bushes. They kept the British in a constant state of confusion and worry. But Robert Reed took no part in this action as he was very much opposed to "guerrilla warfare."

Robert Reed stated—for the last time—that he was given a discharge. He was at the Forks of the Yadkin in Rowan County, North Carolina, and remembered that the discharge was signed by Lieutenant Francis Locke of Salisbury, N.C., but he had not a remote idea what he did with it. He said that there was no one in St. Clair County who could testify to his war service. His brother Richard had sent a statement from North Carolina as to the service

The conclusion drawn from the foregoing account is that this man was an adventurer sure enough. No record of his having owned land in St. Clair County has yet been found. Research is still in progress in an effort to identify him with others by the name of Reed who were early settlers here. We would like to know of his place of residence and where he was buried. He applied for a pension and his request was granted: an annual allowance of \$65.

bell visited reed  
mingham, Sunday. Sister



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THE TAX SAVER

# Archibald Meharg Of Ashville Was Among Freedom Fighters

BY MATTIE LOU TEAGUE CROW  
Bicentennial Chairman  
Broken Arrow Chapter DAR

The American Revolutionary War is ONE war which has stayed WON! America is still a free and independent nation! The story of the American Revolution is still vital and inspiring and always new, and the men and women who lived it are still our heroes. In a way, this war was primarily a civil war, for it was fought by Englishmen, who lived in America, to maintain their rights which were granted to Englishmen by the Magna Charta.

George III was not an Englishman; his only English blood came from a Stuart grandmother six generations back. Otherwise his ancestry was German. His ideas of government were mid-European, and many of his English ministers and generals were shocked by his views. But in those days the throne was sacred and the almost unquestioned prerogative of kings to rule as they saw fit was accepted as right.

To begin with, the Colonists were determined to keep their rights as Englishmen-loyal to the Mother Country. They wanted desperately to believe that the Throne would see reason. The First Continental Congress, which met in Philadelphia in 1774, respectfully petitioned King George to undo the wrong that Parliament had done and abolish all the objectionable laws made since 1763.

Then, to put some teeth into their request, the Congress agreed that the Colonies would buy no goods from England and send no goods to England until their request was granted. The King replied furiously that he considered the New England governments in a state of rebellion and that "blows must now decide whether they are to be subject to England or independent." So it was really George III himself who first used that awful word-independent.

The fighting with words was over; the fighting with arms was about to begin. Men prepared to fight at a minute's notice thus the Minute Men. Each colony had for its defense a military outfit, similar to present-day National Guard, which they called the Militia. There followed Lexington and Concord, the Battle of Bunker Hill, and the Second Continental Congress.

Here the idea of complete independence became a prevailing sentiment. Some men-among them Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Paine-had long decided that political independence was the only cure for the evils under which the Colonies groaned. But it was Richard Henry Lee who, on the 7th of June, 1776, arose in Congress and read aloud the resolution:

"These United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; and all political connections between us and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."

John Adams, who surely had expected something of this kind, came to his feet to second the motion.

And then, what a time they had! The first day of July was set as a dead-line for a final vote on the resolution and in the meantime a committee was appointed to draw up a declaration to be sent to the King should the resolution be adopted. Thomas Jefferson, age 33, was the man to do the writing. The June weather was hot and muggy, the delegates perspired copiously. When the windows were opened they suffered from a plague of flying insects from a nearby stable. There was much heated debate; so much in fact that it was the fourth day of July before the final vote on the resolution was taken.

At 2 o'clock on this day the final decision was announced. It was followed by a deep silence throughout the assembly. This was a solemn and awful moment for the Colonists. Thousands of anxious citizens had gathered in the streets of Philadelphia, awaiting the news. The old bellman in the steeple had placed a small boy at the door below to give him the signal when the announcement was made. As, throughout the day, hour after hour went by the old man shook his head and said, "They will never do it!" Suddenly the small boy clapped his hands and shouted, "Ring, ring! Ring for liberty!"

Continued On Page 3

## Meharg-

Continued From Page 1

The British Colonies in America ceased to be the United States of America was born! Following the bitter struggle for victory must be recalled on October 19, 1781 the British furling their colors and surrendered to General Washington. Two years after surrender-June 5, 1832-the United States passed an act which provided for a pension to be paid to every person who had served in an open court and prove his service in a Revolutionary conflict. Most of these soldiers were old and feeble, many of them in need of assistance. On the seventeenth day of January, 1833, there appeared before Judge John H. Garrett, Judge of the Court of St. Clair County, Archibald Meharg (Meharg) who applied for a pension. Meharg stated that he was a resident of Ashville, aged seventy-odd-he did not remember the date of his birth. He declared that he entered the military service of the United States as a volunteer in the month of May, 1781, in Lawrence County, South Carolina. He gave the names of his officers and said that part of his service was directly under General Greene. Most of the time his company was a company of rangers and horsemen. Their duties were to keep a close watch on the marauding Indians. They were constantly on the move on tours which lasted from six to eight weeks. Meharg had no discharge or other paper to prove his service. He told the court that part of his service was done in the company of his father, whom he killed during their last tour. James L. Lewis, a preacher, vouched for Mr. Meharg's honesty, and that he had known the old man for many years. Charles C. P. Farrar, an Ashville physician, under oath that he remembered his father and Archibald Meharg having long conversations relative to his experiences while fighting in the Revolutionary War. They had been neighbors back in South Carolina. In signing affidavits as to Archibald Meharg's age and integrity were John Massey, Archibald Peyton Rowan, and Joshua W. Hooper. These statements were accepted as proof of his military service and he was granted an annual pension of \$10.00.

Archibald Meharg was married to Temperance Meharg of Ashville on August 23, 1823. It is not known if he previously been married. Temperance was his pension allowance at his death in 1840. Ashville and those in surrounding communities searched for the grave of this old soldier and her has as yet been found. Court house records in Oldham. This property is located near North in Township 14. At the time of sale the heirs of Archibald Meharg were living in Lawrence County.

On July 4th, as we begin the celebration of our Bicentennial, we should pause to give thanks to Archibald Meharg and thousands like him who faithfully the cause of American freedom. On let every household proudly display the Stars and stripes and-at the stroke of 2-let every town and church bell "Ring, ring! Ring for liberty!" And every true American citizen breathe a prayer that our freedom will prevail during the next two hundred years.

St. Clair Observer

7-3-75

Series 10





That as long as he was able he would not call upon  
the government for help; about six years ago however  
enfeebled by age, low in circumstances & unable to pro-  
cure a comfortable subsistence he did make an  
application for a pension and hath frequently re-  
newed, as yet however he has been unsuccessful  
through as he in charity to the officers of government  
believes, his own ignorance in knowing how to make  
his application.

And in pursuance of the act of first of  
May 1850 I do solemnly swear that I was a resi-  
dent Citizen of the United States on the 18<sup>th</sup> day  
of March 1818 and that I have not since  
that time by gift sale or in any manner dis-  
posed of my property or any part thereof  
with intent thereby so to diminish it as to  
bring myself within the provisions of an  
act of Congress entitled an act to provide  
for certain persons engaged in the land and  
naval service of the United States in the Rev-  
olutionary war" and passed on the 18<sup>th</sup> day  
of March 1818 and that I have not, nor  
has any person in trust for me any property  
securities contracts or debts due me, nor have  
I any income other than what is contained in  
the Schedule hereto annexed and by me  
subscribed.

### Schedule

Necessary clothing and bedding excepted - this  
exception is unneccessary made as he has but  
little clothing and no bedding, besides his

No other real property of any kind whatsoever  
William G. Whitfield

that he has ever learned any <sup>trade</sup> but  
followed the occupation of a farmer having  
married <sup>Mc</sup> ~~Mc~~ <sup>William</sup> all of whom are married  
and living to them  
and none of them are able to

protect or maintain him, that they would thereby  
by such protection give serious <sup>inconsequence</sup> to themselves, that  
he has no one living with him nor has he a home  
and is from age and increased debility unable  
to procure a living from labour & depends for a  
support at present alone upon the generosity  
of those with whom he associates.

That since the 18<sup>th</sup> March 1818 he  
hath made but one change of property,  
he had then a mare which afterwards  
he swapped for a horse and gave ten  
dollars to boot which horse he thinks to  
have been worth about twenty five  
dollars, as he very values to that sum,  
the mare might have been worth there-  
fore fifteen dollars, the mare he swapped  
to a stranger on the road, his name not  
now known or recollect, and the horse  
in 1825 died, that at the same time he had  
a saddle and bridle supposed to be worth  
one dollar, and since the death of his  
horse they have been of no use to him  
but have hung up in the smoke house  
belonging to one of his friends unused by any one &  
it is thought now entirely useless.

William H. Whitfield.  
Master

Sworn to and subscribed on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of Nov.  
1829 before John M. Taylor Judge of the circuit  
of St. Clair County State of Alabama in open  
Court

J. M. Taylor.

Soldiers of the Revolution Lived, Died In St. Clair County

At least twenty-one Revolutionary soldiers are known to have lived in St. Clair County during their lifetime after the American Colonists fought and won their war for independence.

One of the soldiers of the revolution, John Dill, originally from Maryland, is known to have lived in St. Clair as late as 1850. He was 86 years old at the time.

Data on these first American fighters for freedom was taken from the yellowed-with-age pension rolls.

Those listed together with other information are as follows: Joseph or James Garner came to St. Clair in 1820 from Clark County, Georgia, William Whitfield, originally from Goochland Co., Va., John Ballanger of Maryland, Noel Battles of Virginia, lived with son William in 1820, Capt. Ed Beeson of North Carolina, married Hannah Clay in 1819, Jacob Busbee of South Carolina, William Hall South Carolina, Thomas Johnston of Virginia, died Dec. 29, 1832 at age 75, Arch Maharg of South Carolina, age 71, James Robertson of South Carolina, age 71 in 1816, Robert Reed of North Carolina, age 65, Andrew Townshend of South Carolina, age 71 in 1820, John Dill, Maryland, 86 years old in 1850, James Hardwick, John Nicks, Samuel Reed, John Thomason whose wife was Elizabeth Diamond, Jesse Ginn, born in England in 1760, died in St. Clair County 1840, Jones Hardwick, Willy Pope.

Most of these names have lived in St. Clair County until the present day. Many bearing the above revolutionary names are very likely direct descendants of the early American hero's.

Does anyone know of any of the above? Does anyone know where any of them are buried? Any such information would be extremely interesting to the Alabama Historical Society.

Rutha Tune widow of Revolutionary Soldier John Tune  
in 1870 St. Clair Co. Census