My McDowell Family | home

Settling the Frontier

John McDowell (born c1670, a brother of Ephraim McDowell of the Battle of the Boyne and later of Virginia, b. 1672), was believed to have not made the voyage to America. It was thought that perhaps he remained behind in Ireland, had died prior to other family members departure in 1729-31, or had died during the fateful voyage of the George and Ann in 1729. However, John and his brothers Alexander and William McDowell had imported themselves earlier to America around 1718-1719. Settling first in Monmouth and Somerset Counties in New Jersey. Alexander McDowell purchased former Penn land at Peapack on the Raritan River in Somerset County, New Jersey. John McDowell owned land in nearby New Castle County, Delaware. Both John and his brother Alexander were described as mariners in early colonial records. Alexander and his family ran ships out of Perth Amboy, New Jersey. It is at Perth Amboy, in about 1731, that Ephraim McDowell met up with his brothers before continuing westward into Pennsylvania and finally Virginia in 1736. Their brother William had settled at Parnell's Knob in 1719 and was well known in Chester and Lancaster Counties in Pennsylvania. John McDowell of New Castle County, Delaware died in 1738. John's death set about a new migration of his family members that eventually resulted in the initial population of McDowells in Anson County, North Carolina between 1748 and 1750.

When John McDowell of New Castle County, Delaware died in 1738, Charles and Joseph McDowell (later of North Carolina) removed to the area of present day Winchester, Frederick (old Orange) County, Virginia. His son Robert McDowell of New Castle County, bought land in Caln and Nottingham townships in Chester/Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Robert went down to Virginia with Ephraim's family in 1737, but did not stay and later returned to Pennsylvania, possibly upon receiving news of his father John's death in 1738. Robert and his family, however, did later removed to Anson County, North Carolina by 1750 joining Charles McDowell, “Hunting” John McDowell, Mary McDowell, and Joseph McDowell in receiving their grants at the Royal Assembly at New Bern.

Ephraim, his son John, and his nephew Robert had all been present at the Orange County Virginia Court of Common Pleas on 28 February 1739 to receive their Virginia Headrights. Headrights were grants of 50 acres of land per “head” (or per white male over the age of 16) to those men who transported themselves to the colonies. By this reckoning, (provided his sons James and William were over 16 years old) Robert McDowell was entitled to 150 acres of land in Orange County Virginia. The Scots/Irish chose lands in America that closely resembled the areas from which they had come in Northern Ireland. Preferring the rolling hills and highlands of the Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountains and fertile Cumberland and Shenandoah Valleys of Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The frontier McDowells, like other Scots/Irish families, originally occupied the hills around the settlements in Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, McDowells made their home in settlements like Carlisle, Caln, Nottingham, Donegal, and Stranbane. When Lancaster County was established on 10 May 1729, it became the prototype for the sixty-three counties to follow. The original three counties, Philadelphia, Bucks and Chester, were created as copies of typical English shires.

The frontier conditions of Chester County's backwoods, from which Lancaster was formed, presented knotty problems to the civilized Englishmen. Lancaster County, therefore, was an experiment in pragmatism erected on the periphery of William Penn's "Holy Experiment". Pennsylvania's "first western county" would test the genius of English government and political common sense. Political control of Pennsylvania at this time, however, firmly rested in the hands of the Quakers. The pacifistic Quakers did not look with favor upon the arrival of the bellicose Scots/Irish, who generally moved toward the frontier and whose contempt for the English was only slightly milder than their hatred of the "red savages." A new county might cause competition, for surely the Scots/Irish would demand representation in the Provincial Assembly. Then, there was also opposition from the Germans in the hinterlands. More local government would mean more regulations and higher taxes. Fortunately, on the banks of the Susquehanna River at Wright's Ferry there existed a settlement of remarkably competent Quaker politicians who adjusted intelligently to the challenges of the frontier, including the Indians and Scots/Irish.

Eight magistrates, all of British ancestry and mostly Quakers, were appointed to subdivide the Lancaster County into townships. By 5 August 1729, the settled portions of the county had been organized into seventeen townships with names chosen by the usual jockeying for honors. Two honored the Welsh (Caernarvon and Lampeter); two had Indian names; Conestoga and Paxtank (or Peshtank, Paxton); six were English (Warwick, Lancaster, Martic, Sadsbury, Salisbury and Hempfield); four kept the Scots/Irish happy (Donegal, Drumore, Derry, and Leacock); one was German (Manheim); one

came from the Bible (Lebanon); and one was the Anglicization of the family name Graf or Groff (Earl). Late in 1729, an eighteenth township was created: Cocalico, an Indian name.

Lancaster County was entitled to only four representatives in the Provincial Assembly, the three older counties being given six assemblymen each. Initially, each election in the county was a contest between the Scots/Irish and the English Quakers, with new faces appearing only to be defeated the following year. By 1731, however, troubles with the Indians tipped the balance in favor of the rugged Scots/Irish at the expense of the pacifistic Quakers. By 1734, James Hamilton, an Ulsterman and proprietor of Lancaster town and the son of the distinguished lawyer Andrew Hamilton, won a seat in the Assembly and became the political leader of the county.

Those Scots/Irish who had indentured themselves to reach America, had set out for the frontier immediately upon fulfilling their indenture. The other persons of means supplied themselves with the materials required on the frontier; muskets, dried and salted provisions, seed for planting, implements, blankets, etc. The McDowells who arrived were of the latter type. In fact, at least one son of Ephraim (John b. 1714) had brought along his servant from Ireland, named John Rutter. This was not an uncommon practice by persons of means. Of course, once in America, the servant could later qualify for his own headrights upon his release from service. The “frontier” was 40-50 miles west of Philadelphia, and south in the foothills of the mountains in Western Maryland or along the Chesapeake Bay, the Potomac River, or their tributaries. These frontiersmen marked their property by cutting their initials in trees on the boundary of what they considered to be theirs, then cut circles in the bark to kill the tree. Some often refused to pay for the land, since they believed God owned it. Their Scots/Irish language, religion, culture, and customs continued in America.

The immigrant wives spun flax, milled the corn, worked in the fields and often bore 10-15 children for whom the mortality rate was extremely high. They also educated their own children. The Scots/Irish fell trees and cleared around the stumps, rather than clearing the land properly, as the German immigrants had learned to do. Homemade whiskey was important for trade and made a harsh life more tolerable. A common item on a Scots/Irishman's farm was a still, and distilleries sprang up along many of the plantations. In one account of the 1840's era, it was reported there were six distilleries in the neighborhood. “Brown Betty”, as the product was often called, was a common item at weddings and other social events. The Gaelic word Ceilidh apply fits for this type social event - music, dancing, singing, drinking, and socializing. The church was, however, the mainstay of the early settlers' social life. Little contact was made with the neighbors, except in the churchyard on Sundays. It should also be noted that all of the early churches were Presbyterian (Associate Reformed Presbyterian included). The Scots/Irish were known for drinking, arguing, singing, and dancing but neighbors gathered to clear land, build houses, harvest crops and then they held the Ceilidh.

The Scots/Irish were used unknowingly to form a cordon around the English and the Germans. Actually, the Germans were settled a little further inland than the English, to provide a buffer between the English and the Indians, and the Scots/Irish were settled a little further into the frontier than even the Germans. This was another example of the English solving two problems at once. It was recorded that for every Indian killed, 50 Scots/Irish settlers were either killed or kidnapped by Indians and a kind of moral bankruptcy took place in the Scots/Irish which would be termed racist genocide today. The Scots/Irish continued their movement down the Cumberland, along the Blue Ridge into Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley down into the Carolinas.

In September of 1737, Ephraim McDowell (already an old man at the age of nearly 65) and his sons John and James McDowell and his daughter Mary Elizabeth McDowell Greenlee and her husband James Greenlee were in camp on Linville (or Linn's) Creek in Rockingham (old Orange) County , Virginia. They were journeying down what was sometimes called the Indian Road, Great Wagon, or Pennsylvania Road. They were heading for the South River in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. James McDowell had come in advance and had planted corn in 1736 in the valley opposite Woods Gap in the Shenandoahs. These McDowells had come out of County Antrim sailing from Larne or Belfast with their kin, the families McElroy, McCune, McCampbell, McKee, Moffett, and Irvine (the family of Ephraim's wife).

John Lewis, the son of Andrew and Mary Calhoun Lewis of Donegal and a close kinsman to the McDowells, had founded the Augusta settlement in the Shenandoahs in 1732. The McDowells had aided John Lewis in fleeing Ulster to America. A bounty of 50 pounds sterling was placed on him for his capture after he had killed his Irish Laird (landlord) Campbell. It seems that the young Laird, the son of Laird Mingho Campbell, at seeing the prosperity of John Lewis, decided that Lewis' rent on his estate should be increased. On going to Lewis' house with several of his hired ruffians, he was rebuffed and refused entry, whereupon he attempted to break in and take the Lewis' possessions. When this failed, one of the members of the Laird's group fired a musket through the view ports of Lewis' home, mortally wounding John Lewis' sick and bedridden brother and the same musket ball also struck John Lewis' wife Margaret's hand. Upon witnessing this, John Lewis flew into a rage, grabbed his shillelagh, and **“clefted the Laird's skull in half, spilling brains and blood all about”,** killing him instantly. The McDowells, Calhouns, Kyles, MacLarrans and other kinsmen, sided with Lewis in this affair and provided him safe hiding until he could escape from Ireland to America. The MacLarrans and Kyles were kin to the McDowells from the days back in Scotland.

The early McDowells that had died in Pennsylvania before moving on included John McDowell (died 17 October 1738). John McDowell is buried at Christ Church burial ground (resting place of Benjamin Franklin) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. John McDowell, probably a son of Alexander McDowell of Perth Amboy, became a mariner and captain of the ship *Jolly Bachelor.* John died onboard his ship at Cape Fear, in Brunswick County, North Carolina in 1735. John left his property to his brother James, sister Jane McDowell Nesbit, and a friend - Lydia Jones. He also gave a legacy of ten pounds to his uncle John McDowell of New Castle County, Delaware, 10 pounds to the Presbyterian church in Dover, Delaware, and five pounds

to the Episcopal church in the same place. He wished that a “small brick wall be put around (my) grave with two marble stones set up, one at the head and one at the foot, as is commonly used in such cases at Philadelphia”.

The opening of William Beverly's Manor on the headwaters of the Shenandoah River under the patent issued by Gov. William Gooch (himself Scots/Irish) on 6 September, 1736, and the information that Benjamin Borden had received a patent to a tract of land in Frederick County, on the Shenandoah issued 3 October, 1734, which was to be known as “Borden's Manor” (or Borden's Tract) beckoned to the Scots/Irish settlers who had grown discontented with things in Pennsylvania. The Penn Proprietaries had decided that some present occupants of lands in Lancaster County could be “retire” to new lands, farther west, to make way for the survey of a manor in the Lancaster area. This coupled with the Dutch Quaker neighbors policy of refusal to condone any means of self-defense against the Indians made the Scots/Irish settlers ready to answer the call to the Valley of Virginia. Quite often a member of the family came up the valley, located a tract, engaged it, and returned to Pennsylvania for the other members of his family and his kin. Then they, and others, who were impressed with the report of the new lands, would form a caravan heading for the Virginia frontier. This is probably exactly what occurred with some of these early pioneer McDowells.

By 1731, Charles and his wife Rachel McDowell and family had left Pennsylvania, coming down the Susquehanna River into Maryland, joining other McDowell family members there, including William and Ruth Ann Roberts McDowell. Charles and Rachel lingered for a time, growing corn in the Conowingo settlement in Cecil County, Maryland. Conowingo, is situated on what was once the hunting grounds of the Susquesahanocks, members of an Iroquois speaking tribe who followed the course of the great river Susquehanna in their fishing and trading expeditions. The great river, which bounds the community on the west, was for centuries a natural artery for travel. The Indians established a palisaded village at the mouth of the Octoraro Creek near an area known to the Indians as Conewago or Conowingo, which in the language of the Susquesahanocks meant “at the rapids”. Captain John Smith left records of his exploratory voyage from Jamestown in 1608, to a point only a few miles down stream from Conowingo where falls in the river (now known as Smith's Falls) made further passage of his ship impossible. The first settler in the area was an Englishman by the name of Richard Hall, who is supposed to have arrived in 1640. The river hills soon after became peopled with other pioneers for there are numerous abodes that date back to colonial days. These early settlers were farmers, fishermen, and slaveholders that included the Cathey and McDowell families. The settler men were of English or Scots/Irish stock, and the early churches were Quaker and Presbyterian. The Cathey family had lived in Conowingo, Cecil Co., Maryland as early as 1719. It is possible that Charles McDowell's wife Rachel was a member of this Cathey family. Members of the Cathey family continued to live alongside the McDowells in Virginia, South and North Carolina, and Tennessee for several generations.

The Charles McDowell family later left Conowingo, bound for the Beverly Manor, but instead settled on what was part of the Joist Hite (Heyde) grant in Winchester, Frederick (old Orange) County, Virginia by 1738. Charles and Rachel's only son John was born in 1714 in Gleno, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. They were soon followed into Virginia, as mentioned, by other members of the McDowell family led by Charles' uncle Ephraim, the old Presbyterian warrior and veteran of the Siege of Londonderry (1689) and the Battle of the Boyne (1690).

Ephraim McDowell with at least two of his sons (John and James), and daughter Mary Elizabeth McDowell Greenlee and her husband James Greenlee moved on from Pennsylvania and Maryland in September of 1737, enroute to their destination of Beverly's Manor in Virginia. It was just after the McDowells had established their camp in Virginia, that Benjamin Borden came along and arranged to spend the night with them. He told them he had received a grant from King George of 100,000 acres of land along the waters of the James River, provided he could find it. To the man who would show him the boundaries, Borden would give 1,000 acres. John McDowell, the son of Ephraim, replied that he was a surveyor, and would accept the offer. John McDowell showed his surveyor's equipment to Borden, and Borden, in turn, showed his grant papers. Later, at the home of the McDowell's kinsman (through Ephraims mother - a Calhoun) John Lewis in the Augusta Settlement, where they remained a few days, a more formal contract was entered into. This document of 1737 reads:

“This day John McDowell of Orange County in Virginia have agreed with Benjamin Borden of the same place that he and the said McDowell would go now with his family and his father and his Brothers and make four Settlements in the said Borden's land which was granted to the said Borden on this side of the blue ridge in the fork of said River, and said McDowell has also agreed with the said Borden that he sd McDowell would cut a good Road for Horses loaded with common Luggage and blaze the Trees all the way plain, and also the said McDowell has agreed with the said Benjamin Borden that he the said McDowell would go with the sd Borden and take account of the Settlement of Borden Land on the River at the place called Chimbly Stone and on Smith Creek and be evidence for the said Borden of all his settlements aforesaid, and in consideration of the premises the said Borden is to give one thousand acres of Land when he the said McDowell build in the sd fork of the sd River and the sd Borden is to give the said McDowell good lawfull Deed as the said Borden can get of the King clear of all charges excepting the quitrents & also the said Borden do here agree to give to these the other three Settlements six hundred acres of Land clear of all charges as before excepted and the said McDowell is to go down with a Compt (count) of all Settlements as aforesaid with Borden to his House by the tenth day of October next to go with said Borden to Col. Willis to price the Settlements as aforesaid as witness my hand.”

BENJAMIN BORDEN

Accompanied by John McDowell (b. 1714), Ephraim's son, Borden went on from John Lewis' home and camped at a spring where Midway, Virginia is now, down to the outlet of the spring to the South River and continued to the mouth of the stream, and returning by that same course. Borden could now see that he was within the boundaries of his grant. John

Lewis had built a cabin in 1732 on the farm that was later occupied by Andrew Scott in 1806. John Lewis' home was the 1st white man's settlement in the Borden Tract. John Lewis's gravesite is located on the outskirts of Staunton, Virginia not far from the Frontier Culture Museum. Before the chance meeting with Benjamin Borden, the McDowells had never heard of the Borden Tract, and it had been their intention to locate in Beverly Manor. William Beverly had received a grant from King George in September of 1736 for 118,491 acres of land in Virginia, north of what became the Borden Tract. Once the surveying of the tract was completed, Benjamin Borden wanted John McDowell to select his land on Hays Creek. John McDowell, having a keen eye for land would not accept brushy upland, which he deemed barren. He brought suit for a selection of land on Timber Ridge and won, to the chagrin of Borden who wanted that particular land for himself. The Houston family lived at Timber Ridge also and reported that during these times, the bison (buffalo) were plentiful and provided both meat and blankets. In the messages left behind by Samuel Houston, he provides a vivid description of pioneer life. Their homes were squared log cabins with massive fireplaces to burn whole logs. The plentiful poplar wood was used to carve into both cups and plates. It was a stark and severe life. Later, in April 1753, a smallpox outbreak took many in the Borden Tract including some of the John and Magdalene Woods McDowell (Borden Bowyer)'s children.

On 28 June 1738, Charles McDowell was ordered by the Frederick (Orange) County, Virginia court to help clear a road from Joist Hite's mill to John Nation's place. In these days, the courts used road work as a form of tax on men over the age of sixteen. The gristmills were among the first order of business for many of the early comers, and the roads leading to them were among the most important. The road to the courthouse was usually the first to be improved. The gristmills allowed the settlers to turn their corn into cornmeal, or their wheat into flour. The settlers soon had enough excess crops to sell in larger markets to pay off their farms. Thomas, Lord Fairfax was the Overseer of this “Dutch Road” project, below present day Winchester, Frederick County, Virginia. Charles McDowell received 600 acres for 18 pounds (currency) on 20 July 1740, along the Opequon Creek that was part of the Joist Hite Grant (3,395 acres) of 1732. This tract is located on the west side of Meadow Brook, a branch of Cedar Creek. Frederick County Highway 625 once ran along the west line and was the dividing line between the 600 acres and John Hite's 444 acres. Old County Highway 633 was the dividing line between the 600 acres and Charles' son-in-law Charles Barnes' 200 acres. My son and I visited the old property of Charles and Rachel McDowell (and later his brother Joseph McDowell) in the Lower Shenandoah Valley near Winchester, Frederick County, Virginia in late August of 1998. The county highways, of the preceding paragraph used as references, have long since vanished, but we could still discern its boundaries lying along the Opequon Creek, west across to Cedar Creek (and the battlefield there), to Meadow Brook in the present-day area south of Kernstown to Stephens City, outside of Winchester. The landscape is marked by rolling hills and the long meadow, bordered with oak and mulberry trees filling in the hollows and hilltops. The majestic Blue Ridge and Appalachian Mountains rise up in the distance. Springdale, (built in 1754) was the home of John Hite (the son of Joist Hite) - who purchased Charles and Rachel's land in the late 1740's, and still stands along Highway 11 (Valley Pike) where it crosses the Opequon. Closeby lie the ruins of Joist Hite's fort (c. 1734), just south of Springdale, which was the gathering place from Indian attacks. At the southern end of the old McDowell property is situated the Inn at the Springs of Vaucluse, a historic home of the Jones family who purchased the land from the McDowells and a quaint country bed and breakfast. This was property was repurchased by Joseph McDowell shortly after his brother Charles' departure from the area to the Carolinas around 1750.

In May 1744, Charles was a member of the 1st Grand Jury of Frederick County. This grand jury presided over cases such as: selling liquor without a license, perjury, overcharging by a mill owner for grain grinding, swearing and disturbing the peace (by a constable), breaking the sabbath by plowing on Sunday, and getting drunk and swearing two oaths.

Charles and his wife Rachel sold 290 acres of the 600 acre tract to their son John McDowell for 20 pounds on 2 May 1745. Charles and Rachel later sold the remaining section (still referred to as “600 acres”) of the their tract to Caspar Measner for 100 pounds. Their son John McDowell sold the 290 acre section to John Hite (the son of Joist Hite) for 100 pounds on 3 October 1749. Charles' brother Joseph (b. 1715) later purchased the 600 acre tract (less the 290 acres once owned by his nephew John McDowell (son of Charles). Joseph McDowell had been assigned an additional 272 acres by his brother Charles who had purchased it from Thomas, Lord Fairfax on 20 September 1750. He bought an additional 250 acres northeast of the 600 acre tract on both sides of Meadow Brook. Joseph's land holdings in Winchester totaled more than 830 acres. Joseph and his wife Margaret O'Neil McDowell later sold 129 3/4 acres to John Hite for 40 pounds on 12 August 1751, and then 8 1/4 acres to Charles Barnes on 28 April 1763, and the remainder of all three tracts to Lewis Stephens for 407 pounds on 4 September 1765. Shortly after their 1749 land transactions, Charles, Rachel, and their son John's family moved from Winchester, traveling down the Shenandoah Valley to an area of Anson County, North Carolina. Charles had received a grant for 200 acres on the Broad River in Anson County on 4 April 1751. Charles' daughter Rachel McDowell Eagan, who married Barnaby S. Eagan, had made their home on the South River in Shenandoah County, Virginia near Ephraim's descendants (of Rockbridge and Augusta Counties) until her death before 30 November 1780.

The Rev. Alexander McDowell of Pennsylvania and Delaware was first a traveling Presbyterian minister of the Old Donegal Presbytery of Pennsylvania, visiting and preaching in Frederick (Orange) County, Virginia from 1739 through at least 1754, possibly staying with his relatives there. The Donegal Presbyterian church was formed in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania where the McDowells had once lived. He was licensed July 30, 1740. He was ordained to go as an Evangelist to Virginia, and to itinerate in New Castle Presbytery. The Synod's school was entrusted to him, and was finally removed to Newark, Delaware. In 1767 the school was chartered as an academy by the Proprietary, John Penn. Dr. Ewing and Hugh Williamson visited Great Britain to solicit funds for its endowment; they were successful, and Ewing brought back six or seven thousand dollars, a large sum for those times. In 1771, Newark Academy had 71 students. Alexander died 12 January 1782. Alexander had visited Virginia in the 1740's as recorded in records from Orange County and visited his relatives there. Moving to Virginia, North Carolina and further South and West, they prospered and in some cases, accumulated large wealth.

Mary Elizabeth McDowell Greenlee, the wife of James Greenlee and the older daughter of Ephraim McDowell, is recounted as being a woman of extraordinary beauty, intellect, as well as being incredibly articulate for a woman of her time. In fact, so much so, that her contemporaries considered her so unusual, that she must be a witch in league with the devil. One story relates that during a quilting session, one of the other women present made a comment on being hungry. Mary's response was to quote an old adage “It's the riden mare that deserves twice fed.” Through ignorance on the part of the other attendees at the session, this was construed to be a reference by Mary to the “truth” of her being a witch, and to her “riding out into the night to feed on Christian souls”. Needless to say, Mary was shunned by her “Christian” neighbors from this point onward. However, on one occasion, she was asked by her neighbors and kin, the Lewis' to intervene, using her “talents” as a witch, to recover the young Alice Lewis (the daughter of John and Margaret Lewis), who was called “white dove” by the Indians. Her parents feared she had been kidnapped by the Indians and would be scalped, when in fact, she had been “stolen away” by her Indian boyfriend. Mary agreed to attempt to retrieve the girl for the price of one horse to bring her back on and which she would keep. The Indians liked Mary. Whether this was because they thought her a bit “touched” or more likely, she was intelligent enough to reason with them on their own terms. Either way, Mary was successful in negotiating Alice's safe return to her family. Mary and James Greenlee ran a Tavern near Timber Ridge until James' death in 1763. At the age of 97, the county courts of Augusta and Rockbridge called upon Mary McDowell Greenlee to give depositions regarding land ownership. They again requested her testimony three years later. Mary amazed the Justices of the Peace with her astonishing memory, giving many details of the early settlers. Her depositions left us much history that would have otherwise been lost to time. Mary moved near Natural Bridge to live near her son in 1780, she died on his farm at age 102. Mary's grave was marked in 1944 by the Association for Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. Sallie (Locher) Letcher was the latest owner of the farm upon which Mary McDowell Greenlee lays to rest. Before her death, a poet, who lived nearby went to make her a visit, and proposed to write her epitaph, on condition she would give him a quart of whiskey, to which she consented, and he wrote,

"Good old Mary died of late,
Straight she went to Heaven's gate,..."

The poet showed this to her and she was so delighted that she gave him a pint of the whiskey in advance. He drank it and wrote in continuation,

"But Abraham met her with a club,
And knocked her back to Beelzebub".

Mary was so infuriated at this that she chased him out of the house with a broom stick.

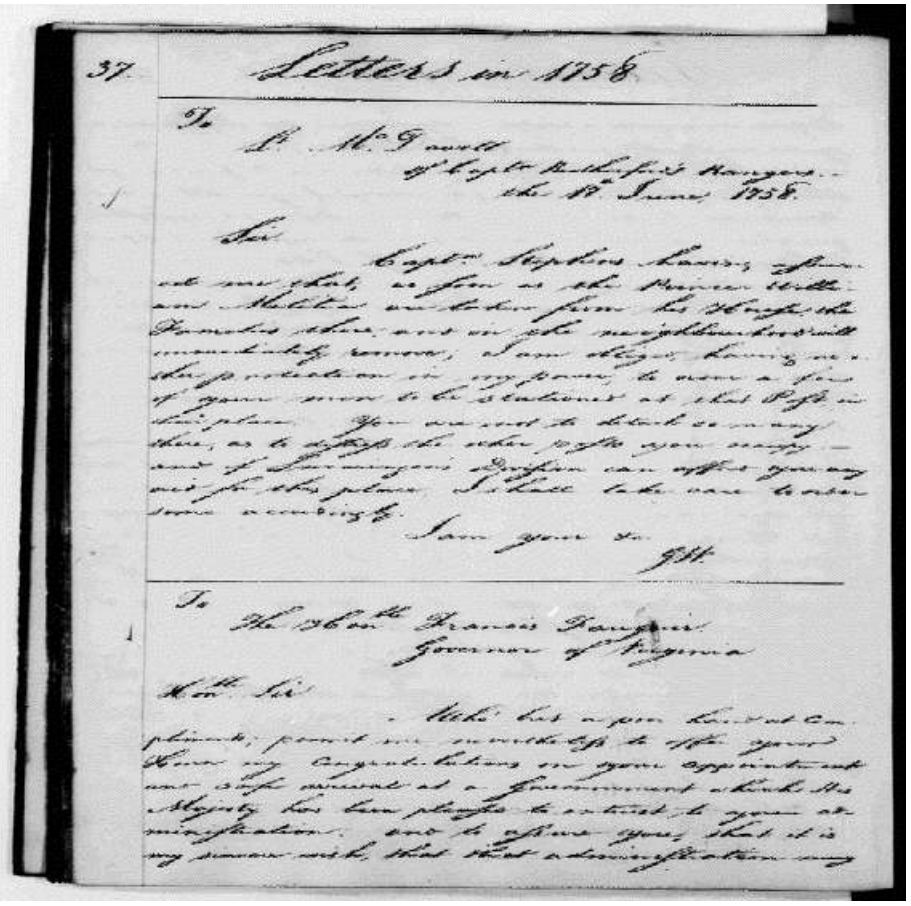
The McDowells of Rockbridge and Augusta were founding fathers of not only the settlements of the Borden Tract but also the emerging latter communities of Lexington and Staunton. The McDowell Hotel on Main Street in Lexington flourished in the 1830's and had its own livery stable. If the horse became ill and was in need of a doctor, an old Negro man named Caesar could be found at the Burton Hotel. Caesar was a man of many peculiarities, but was “well mannered, full of witty sayings, and was loved and respected by all. (Many of our Virginia kinsmen are originally from and still live in this area of Virginia.

After moving to the Carolinas along with his son “Hunting” John McDowell and his family, Charles purchased several hundred acres, at least 200 of which was on the Broad River in Anson County, now a part of Cherokee County, South Carolina. This land was later inherited by his daughter Rachel McDowell Eagan of Augusta County, Virginia. Charles McDowell's son “Hunting” John McDowell, also of Anson County, received a grant of 640 acres on the south side of the Broad River on a branch of Little River on 18 November 1752. He later sold the 640 acres to James Harris for 16 pounds 5 shillings on 4 December 1754. “Hunting” John McDowell (b. 1717) was the nephew of Joseph McDowell (b. 1715) of Quaker Meadows. “Hunting” John McDowell died in North Carolina on 18 October 1796.

Charles McDowell, born c1697 in Ulster, died in May of 1754 in Anson County, North Carolina. In his will, his son John, received 10 pounds local currency, while the daughters received equal portions of the estate. Charles' wife Rachel received 1/3 of the entire estate and the property in present-day Cherokee County, South Carolina and was requested to make her home with their daughter Hannah McDowell Keller, if see saw cause. The land on the Broad River, which was bequeathed to Rachel McDowell Eagan, was later sold by Rachel and her husband Barnaby S. Eagan by their attorney, Charles' great grandson John McDowell, of Haywood County. The land was granted to Charles on 4 April 1751, and is now in South Carolina. His will, written on 24 January 1754 and probated on 4 June 1754, stipulated that his well beloved brother Joseph McDowell of Frederick (Orange) County, Virginia was to receive “one brown broad cloth coat, one beaver hat, and one pair of snow boots”. These garments were handsome in that day, and denote high social standing and wealth. Joseph and his family also later relocated to North Carolina after selling their land in Winchester in 1763. The lands these McDowells later owned in North Carolina became the plantations of McDowell Station at Quaker Meadows (Joseph), Pleasant Gardens (“Hunting” John), while Pennsylvania's James McDowell's son John McDowell (b. 1743) owned the land later known as Cleghorn Estate.

Before leaving Virginia, members of the Carolina McDowells became involved in the French and Indian War. Lt. Joseph McDowell of Winchester, Frederick County, Virginia served under Major George Washington. It is said that Lt. Joseph and his older brother Charles McDowell had been among the militia that provided escort to the surviving remnants of the

British forces after Braddock's defeat. What is known is that Charles left Virginia about 1750, while Joseph, though also receiving grants in Anson County, North Carolina, did not permanently relocate there until 1763.


37 Letters in 1758

To
Lt. Mc Dowell
of Capt. Rutherford's Rangers
the 17th June 1758

Sir

Capt. Stephens having assured me that, as soon as the Prince William Militia are taken from his House, the Families there, and in the Neighbours also will immediately remove; I am oblig'd, having it no otherways in my power to Order a few of your Men to be station'd there in their place: you are not to put so many there, as to distress the other Posts you secure; and if (Capt. Van) Swearingen's Division can afford you any for this place, I shall take care to Order some accordingly.

I am your &c.
GW

To
The 16th Francis Taughnit
Comm of Virginia

Displayed here is a letter from Maj. George Washington sent during the French and Indian War to Lt. Joseph McDowell of Winchester, Frederick County, Virginia, an officer in Capt. Rutherford's Rangers. Source: The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.--Vol. 02 (photocopy). It reads:

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of Capt. Rutherford's Rangers -
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I am your (obedient servant),
G.W. (George Washington)