

**GREATER JEFFERSONTOWN**  
**HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

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**June 2013 Meeting**

The June meeting will be **Monday, June 3, 2013**. We will meet at 7:00 P.M. in the meeting room of the Jeffersontown Library at 10635 Watterson Trail. The Greater Jeffersontown Historical Society meetings are now held on the first Monday of the even numbered months of the year. Everyone is encouraged to attend to help guide and grow the Society.

Our speaker will be Steve Wisner and he will be talking about **How Louisville Streets Got Their Names.**

**Thanks**

Your president/editor wants to thank Anne Bader and Beth Wilder for all the assistance they have provided me at our meetings the last several meetings while I have been recovering from a broken leg, and this month, travelling. Beth has made sure the meetings are recorded, making it possible for me to give you the substance of the presentation. Anne, for all that she has done for GJHS, providing great presentations and hospitality by hosting meetings at her business in the Conrad-Seaton House, and providing a projector for the speakers.

Congratulations to Anne on all the exposure in *Courier-Journal* Corn Island Archeology is receiving as a result of the great work she and her team are doing, bringing our past to the present for all of us to enjoy.

**April Meeting**

**Richard Clough Anderson of Soldier's Retreat**

Richard Clough Anderson was a Revolutionary War officer who served under a number of notable commanders including George Washington and Major James Monroe, who would later become the fifth President of the United States. Anderson's original veterans land grant of 400 acres covered most of the community now known as Hurstbourne. He was married twice and both of his wives were related to notable American leaders. We will briefly mention a couple of his children and contributions they made to the history of Kentucky and the nation.

The Andersons we are concerned with started in Herefordshire, England in 1585 with the birth of the first Richard Anderson, who married Elizabeth Hawkins, the daughter of Admiral John Hawkins, a sailing companion of Sir Walter Raleigh, one of the English heroes who defeated the Spanish Armada.

In 1635 when Richard was 50 years old, he and Elizabeth sailed to the colonies to join their sons whom they had sent earlier. They settled in Gloucester County, Virginia, where two of their sons, John and Thomas, started a ship building business. From here we have to jump several generations because many Gloucester County records were destroyed, first in an 1820 county courthouse fire, then the surviving records were destroyed in a Civil War fire in the Richmond Courthouse where they had been transferred.

Richard's and Elizabeth's son John (born in 1614), had a son, Robert born in 1645. Mel called him Robert the first (Robert I) since there were many Robert Andersons. Robert I was born in York, Pennsylvania and died in 1712 in Virginia. Robert I had a son he named Robert (Robert II), who was a captain in the Virginia militia, and he married Elizabeth Overton. They had twelve to fifteen children depending on which records you research. A busy family anyway you look at it. Robert II sent his sons back to England and then they returned. Mel thinks Robert II did this because of the "head right." Because the government was trying to increase the population in the colonies, the Virginia Land Company would give from one to a thousand acres to anyone willing to cross the Atlantic and settle in the colonies. You could claim 50 to 100 acres if you were a land owner and paid for the transportation of anyone coming into Virginia. Hence the reason Robert II would send his sons to England and bring them back. They have their own land or Robert's holdings are increased.

Another of Robert II's sons, Robert III, born in 1712, married Elizabeth Clough (rhymes with plow). He was born on the Gold Mine Plantation in Virginia and he died there in 1779. The person who lived on the plantation next door was a fellow named Patrick Henry. You might have heard of him.

The son of Robert Anderson III was Richard Clough Anderson, who is the Anderson important to us in this presentation. He gets his first name from his great-great-great grandfather, who we started out with here, and his middle name from his mother. He was born in Hanover, VA. At age sixteen he disappointed his father by accepting the patronage of a rich merchant named Patrick Coots. Richard sailed on Coots' ships that brought goods into the colonies to sell in his stores from many places, but mainly England. Mel guesses he was there to protect the goods from pilferage from the crew while the goods were on board the ships.

Richard happened to be on board a ship in Boston harbor when the Boston Tea Party took place on December 16, 1773. There is no evidence he took part in dumping the tea, but he observed it. He returned home and told his neighbor, Patrick Henry, about it. When the war broke out he joined the Hanover County Virginia militia and in 1776 he was commissioned as a captain in the 5<sup>th</sup> Virginia Continentals.

Prior to General Washington's army crossing the Delaware River to attack the Hessians at Trenton, NJ on Christmas night in 1776, Richard was sent across the river on a scouting mission. Unfortunately they were surprised by a small Hessian patrol and in the skirmish four Hessians were killed. When they returned, Washington was said to be very perturbed because they had been instructed not to engage the enemy. However, nothing came of it because apparently small bands of Continentals from New Jersey frequently harassed the Hessians.

As we know Washington's force surprised the Hessians in what is known as the First Battle of Trenton. The Hessian forces suffered 22 fatalities, 83 serious injuries, and 896 were captured. The Americans suffered only two fatalities and five injuries from war wounds. British General Rall was mortally wounded and died later in the day. It is said when they searched his pockets, a note was found warning him of Washington's attack. There is a local legend in Trenton that when the Hessians took the town, one very nice looking wife of a doctor stayed behind when all others left. She offered him the comfort of her large home and the legend says General was quite occupied when Washington attacked. Another story says the Hessians were well into celebrating Christmas and were drunk.

In the second Battle of Trenton in 1777 Anderson was wounded. After recovering he participated in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown before spending the winter in Valley Forge. He fought in

the battle of Monmouth in 1778, and in 1779 was promoted to the rank of major in the First Virginia Regiment.

When the British in an unexpected move, attacked the southern states Georgia and South Carolina and captured Savannah, Washington sent troops to combat them and Richard Anderson was among them.

Mel diverted here to talk about another European that came to the colonist's aid in a roundabout way, Casimir Pulaski. Pulaski was one of the leading cavalry commanders in Poland who fought against Russian domination of the Poles and Lithuanians. When this uprising failed, he was driven into exile in France, where he met Ben Franklin, America's ambassador to France, and following the endorsement of Franklin he immigrated to North America and joined the cavalry as an enlisted man. He distinguished himself heroically throughout the revolution, most notably when he saved the life of Washington at Brandywine. The British were out flanking the Continentals and scouts were sent out to find an escape route. When one was found, Pulaski gathered as many of the cavalry as he could and attacked the flank of the British. This bold move allowed Washington and his troops to escape. He quickly became known as the man who saved General Washington's life. On Washington's recommendation Congress promoted Pulaski to brigadier general and he was put in charge of all the cavalry in the Continental army. Because of his youth and instant fame many Continental officers were jealous of Pulaski. He spent the remainder of 1777 and all of 1778 re-aligning and training the cavalry. His training methods and strategies were used by the cavalry going into the Civil War and beyond. He quickly became known as the "Father of American Cavalry." His Pulaski Legion took part in the battles of Germantown, Trenton, and Little Egg Harbor where his cavalry suffered heavy losses. He recruited other Europeans for the American cavalry and offered the Hessians captured at Trenton a deal they couldn't refuse. Why work for the British as a serf, their German owners had essentially sold them to the British, when you could join the Continental army and come out being a land owner in America?

In February of 1779 Washington ordered both Pulaski and Anderson to South Carolina to recapture Savannah and stop the British. On October 9, 1779, at the disastrous Battle of Savannah, while leading a daring charge against British forces Pulaski, was mortally wounded by grapeshot. Anderson also was wounded by a sabre blow. Both had become friends and back in the hospital area Anderson comforted his friend and helped relay messages from Pulaski to his officers. Pulaski was taken on board the privateer merchant brigantine Wasp where he died two days later at the age of thirty-one, and reportedly buried at sea. However, others say he was taken off the Wasp to a plantation near Savannah where he died and was buried. Although largely forgotten now, he was held in great esteem at the time, and many cities and counties were named for him. The United States erected a statue of him in Washington, D.C. in 1910, and the DAR lobbied Congress for a postage stamp of him. A two-cent stamp was issued in 1931 honoring him. President Hoover declared in 1929 every October 11 as General Casimir Pulaski Memorial Day.

According to Anderson family legend, while both Pulaski and Anderson were being carried off the battlefield together, Pulaski presented Anderson his sword and stiletto in appreciation for his service. The Anderson family later presented the stiletto to the Coastal Heritage Society of Georgia and it is on display there. The stiletto has a "CP" engraved in the handle and experts say the stiletto fits the design of stilettos of that period carried by European officers. Mel says he hasn't been able to confirm anything about the sword.

Following the Battle of Savannah, in April 1780 the British formed a fighting force of 14,000 troops and ninety ships to lay siege on Charleston and its 5,000 defenders that included Richard Anderson.

The city surrendered in May and Anderson was captured and was released nine months later in a prisoner exchange. Captured with him were three signers of the Declaration of Independence, Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward, Jr., and Arthur Middleton. Mel has a great personal interest in this event, since his fifth-great grandfather, Obediah Moore was also captured with Anderson. (Obediah Moore was born in 1754 in Princess Anne County, Virginia, and died September 20, 1839 in Autauga County, Alabama.) Mel likes to believe that his grandfather met and knew Anderson and the signers of the Declaration of Independence. The SAR and DAR dedicated the Obediah Moore Cemetery in Chilton County as a National Cemetery because of Obediah's Revolutionary War service.

Following his release as a POW Anderson was promoted to lieutenant-colonel, but the rest of Anderson's military service is very sketchy. There indications he was with Gen. Daniel Morgan at the Battle of Cowpens in January 1781 where a large part of Lt. Gen. Lord Charles Cornwallis' Army of the South was soundly defeated. That defeat led Cornwallis to turn north to chase Nathaniel Greene and Morgan. That chase eventually led Cornwallis to Yorktown, NY, and his defeat.

Anderson remained with Gen. Morgan during the chase that led into Virginia where Gen. Washington had sent the Marquis de Lafayette to support the Virginia Militia. Washington sent Anderson to Lafayette, who was being hard pressed by Cornwallis. Lafayette sent Anderson over to Gen. "Mad Anthony" Wayne's camp to request for support from his forces. Wayne was kind of ornery and upset about Lafayette's status. Wayne told Anderson he didn't have time to assist Lafayette. Anderson reported this back to Lafayette who sent him back to Wayne with the same request. Again Wayne responded that he didn't have time to send support. Lafayette sent Anderson back again, this time with a messenger and instructions to ask Wayne every hour to come to his aid and send a report back every hour. When Anderson received the same reply on his arrival, he requested writing paper, and made his request every hour and sent the messenger back with his answer every hour. After several hours of this "harassment", Wayne reportedly screamed in frustration to Anderson, "Tell him I'm coming, tell him I'm coming, I'm coming tomorrow!"

In 1824 when Lafayette made a triumphant return to the United States, he notified Anderson he was going to stop in Louisville. When Lafayette walked off the steamboat at the Portland wharf and spied Anderson, Lafayette screamed, "tell him I'm coming, tell him I'm coming, I'm coming tomorrow!"

Following Cornwallis' surrender, Washington sent Anderson to assist Thomas Nelson, Jr. of Virginia. Nelson was born in Virginia and sent to England to be educated at Cambridge. Sometime after he returned in 1761, he was elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses. That body was dissolved in 1774 by John Murray, the Earl of Dunmore, because he didn't like the body discussing how they were going to address what they saw as British abuses. Nelson had been serving on a provincial council, formed outside of the House of Burgesses as did Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and other founding fathers, that led to the first Continental Congress.

Anderson assisted Nelson in reforming the Virginia Militia and ridding it of British loyalists because the militia had been under the control of Lord Dunmore. Anderson ended up at the Battle of Yorktown with General Nelson instead of with Lafayette.

Yorktown had special significance for Nelson because he had been born there, and some of the family lived there until the British captured it. By coincidence, Gen. Cornwallis chose the Nelson family home that was built by Nelson's grandfather, for his headquarters. When told of this and asked what Nelson wanted to do, Nelson said to bring it down. The story goes that one of the first cannon balls

fired, landed on the dining room table where Cornwallis was eating a meal, rolled down the table, and flew out a window at the end of the table. The house still stands with cannon balls stuck in its walls.

Thomas Nelson was elected governor of Virginia in 1781, following Thomas Jefferson. Robert Anderson became Nelson's aide.

Following the defeat of Cornwallis, General Knox conceived a society of Continental officers for the purpose of communication, support and social mingling, to be called the Society of Cincinnati. Membership was open to all commissioned officers of the Continental Army and French Army during the Revolutionary War with three years or more of service. ( Ed. Note – The Society is still in existence today.) Robert Anderson was reported to be a charter member, but not a founder. Its first meeting was held in May of 1783 in Fishkill, NY, even before the British had completely vacated New York City. Lt. Col. Alexander Hamilton presided over the first meeting and the members agreed to stay in contact, even though the war. Anderson was appointed Surveyor General of the society, a very important post, since all Revolutionary War veterans were to be given land grants for their service. These lands were in Kentucky, Ohio, and the Northwest, that at the time was mostly Indiana and Illinois.

After assisting many veterans find their land, he found himself a large plot for a plantation in Kentucky, about ten miles from the Falls of the Ohio. A place he called Soldier's Retreat. Its walls were two feet thick to protect from attacks from any enemy. By the time he built Soldier's Retreat attacks by enemy forces had mostly stopped, but attacks by roving Indian bands did occur.

The Soldier's Retreat we see today is a replica built by the Highbaugh family on the original foundation, with some outbuildings that are original.

In 1784 Benjamin Logan, militia leader of the Lincoln County, Kentucky District, invited other leaders to Danville to discuss the Indian problem. By this time large Indian attacks were very rare, but there were still small bands of marauding Indians destroying crops, burning cabins and barns, and stealing horses. Without his horse, a settler had trouble plowing his fields and getting around.

Remember at this time Kentucky was still part of Virginia with three counties, Jefferson, Fayette, and Lincoln. Virginia had passed a law forbidding the Kentucky District county militias to chase Indians across the Ohio River after an attack. The Virginia legislature was occupied with rewriting a new constitution, so was very slow responding requests for state militia protection or for needed supplies, such as gunpowder, for the settlers to defend themselves.

Richard Anderson was one of nine Jefferson County delegates to the Danville meeting that was held during the last week of 1784 and the first week of 1785. Isaac Shelby was made chairman and the conditions of the territory were discussed at length. Notes and actions taken at the meeting are scarce. This was the first of ten meetings or conventions that led to Kentucky's separation from Virginia and to statehood in 1792.

When James Wilkerson and Benjamin Sebastian circulated a proposal at one of the meetings for Kentucky to separate from the states and become a Spanish colony, Anderson strongly opposed the idea as did many others. Economic development for Kentucky depended on river transportation to move goods and Spain did not recognize US claims to use the Mississippi River which they controlled. The proposal by Wilkerson and Sebastian became known as the "Spanish Conspiracy" and really only profited those pushing for its passage.

Wilkerson planned to supply Spanish Governor Miro in New Orleans a list of all influential Kentuckians, and had divided them up into four groups, from very agreeable to the proposal to very opposed. He also placed beside each name a monetary amount that ranged from \$300 - \$1500 that would help seal their agreement. Anderson was in the last group with a suggested \$1000 incentive. A note by Anderson's name said, "A man of ordinary ability, but great influence."

The Spanish proposal fell through, and the move toward statehood for the Kentucky District picked up support. The bribe list did not become known until after Wilkerson's death when it was found in his papers. And there was never any evidence of the list ever reaching the Spanish governor.

On November 24, 1787, Anderson married Elizabeth Clark, sister of George Rogers Clark, whose family owned a plantation, Mulberry Hill, south of Louisville. The Clarks had one son and three daughters. The original Clark house was torn down in 1917 when the property was claimed to build US Army Camp Taylor during WW I.

Richard Anderson was very active in civic affairs. As Surveyor General for veterans receiving Revolutionary War land grants he received visits and entertained many Revolutionary War fellow officers and other veterans seeking advice about available land confirmation of grants. Soldier's Retreat served as a repository of many land grant records for Kentucky, Ohio, and the Northwest Territory. He received visits from President James Monroe, Aaron Burr, Andrew Jackson, and Simon Kenton, who could neither read nor write, but had claimed more land than anyone, thousands and thousands of acres. He never received a patent or followed up on any of it. He would give it to someone who would work it a while and then just abandon it. Officials would come back to Kenton for taxes and he would tell them that he had given it away. But the paperwork was never done and he was still listed as owning the land. Attempts to arrest Kenton were made many times, but his friends always protected him, even when he moved to Ohio.

In 1788 Anderson served in the Kentucky Constitution Convention. In 1793 he was a state elector during Washington's second term election campaign. In 1795 Elizabeth Clark died and two years later Anderson married Sarah Marshall, first cousin of Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall. They had eight children, one was Robert Anderson, who was commander of Fort Sumter at the beginning of the Civil War, and whom we heard about last December from Don Rightmyer of the Kentucky Historical Society.

Richard died on October 26, 1886, and is buried in the family cemetery on Soldier's Retreat along with fifteen other family members.

Mel said Richard Anderson was a significant person in our history serving his country, holding important positions, interacting with and advising the leaders of our country during its most formative years. He goes out of his way sometime to drive past the obelisk that marks Anderson's burial site and is filled with gratitude and awe for all he accomplished.

### **Contact Us**

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