

JOHN BELL OF BARRETT TOWNSHIP,
HUNTINGDON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

A Record of his Ancestors
and Descendants

by

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Carlisle, Pennsylvania

1937

Introduction

John Bell, who died in Barree Township, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania in 1833, was a son of George Bell of Jacks Valley (Mifflin County) and a grandson of William Bell of Paxton (Dauphin County). Each of these three men pioneered in his own generation and each played a part in the Revolution. All were sturdy farmers of Scotch-Irish stock and staunch Presbyterians.

William Bell of Paxton

The first definite record of William Bell is his settlement about 1737 (according to the early land records) on 200 acres along Paxton Creek in Paxton Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (now Susquehanna Township, Dauphin County - about two miles from the city limits of Harrisburg). He was then about thirty years old. Tradition says that he was born in Ireland, settled first in New Jersey, and about 1731 married Jane Lea; this has not been confirmed. William Bell was a pioneer settler in Paxton, which was then the frontier. His name appears on various petitions and on the assessment rolls between 1749 and 1782. He is listed as an elder in the New Side Paxton Presbyterian Church from 1746 to 1763. During the Revolution (1778) he supplied the army with two bushels of wheat and 24 bushels of forage. He died October 29, 1783 on the farm on which he had settled. His will is recorded at Lancaster. All six of his sons and two of his grandsons served in the Revolution. He had eleven children:

1. John Bell B.1732 D.1810 in Cecil Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania. Farmer. He married about 1762 Elizabeth Boyd (daughter of Robert) B.1735. In 1772 John Bell moved from Paxton to what is now Frankford Township, Cumberland County. In 1780 and 1781 he and his oldest son, Robert, were privates in the 2nd. Company of the 2nd. Battalion of Cumberland County militia under Capt. James McFarlane. John Bell was an elder in the Big Spring (Newville) Presbyterian Church. In 1803 he moved from Cumberland County to Washington County, where he died seven years later. Issue: Robert, William, Jane, Joseph, George, John, Thomas, Catharine, Andrew.

2. George Bell (see below)

3. Jean Bell B.c.1736

4. Sarah Bell B.c.1738

5. Mary Bell B.c.1741

6. William Bell, Jr. B.1743 at Paxton D.Dec.11,1813 at Erie, Pennsylvania. He married about 1783 Dorcas Forster (daughter of John) B.1764 D.Apr.10,1826. In 1776 he was captain in the 4th. Battalion of Lancaster County militia. He was captured by the British at Fort Washington (New York City). In 1781 and 1782 he was a private in the 5th. Company of the 10th. Battalion of Lancaster County militia under Capt. Andrew Stewart. About 1800 he moved from Dauphin County to Erie, where he was associate judge from 1800 until his death. His wife helped to make Perry's flag in July 1813. Issue: Catherine, Lucinda, Jane, John, Nancy, Elizabeth, Sarah, Juliet Montgomery, William, Maria Dorcas.

7. Dorcas Bell B.c.1746

8. Thomas Bell B.c.1748 at Paxton D.c.1814 in Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania. Carpenter. Married about 1800. While living in Jacks Valley 1780-1782 he served as a private in the 8th. Battalion of Cumberland County militia under Capt.

Robert Means. In 1787 he moved to Barree Township, Huntingdon County with his brother, Arthur. Issue: George, William, Sarah.

9. Margaret Bell B.c.1750

10. Arthur Bell B.Jan.11,1753 at Paxton D.Aug.6,1834 near Westfield, New York. Farmer. He married about 1784 Eleanor Montgomery (daughter of John) B.Sept.2,1768. On Mar.30,1768 he warranted 312 acres of land in Dry Valley, Derry Township, Cumberland (now Mifflin) County, Pennsylvania. On Apr.14, 1774 he sold it to Arthur Forster. In 1776 he was a private in his brother William's company. From June to December 1776 he served as 4th. sergeant in the 1st. Company of the 1st. Regiment of the Flying Camp under Capt. John Reed. He was in the battles of Long Island, Westchester, Eastchester, Mile-square, and White Plains. He was acquainted with George Washington at Fort Lee (New Jersey). His pension application is on file at Washington. In April and May 1778 Arthur Bell served under his brother, George, and was stationed at Bald Eagle. In December 1778 he made a tour with the 5th. Company of the 4th. Battalion of Lancaster County militia. In 1779 he was a private in the 7th. Company of the 4th. Battalion of Lancaster County militia under Capt. Andrew Stewart. In 1781 and 1782 he was a private in the 8th. Battalion of Cumberland County militia under Capt. Robert Means. After his marriage he lived in Jacks Valley until 1787 when he moved to Barree Township, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania. In 1802 he moved to Westfield, New York, not far from Erie, Pennsylvania. Issue: William.

11. Andrew Bell B.c.1755 at Paxton. In 1776 he was a private under his brother William. The same year he was a private in the Flying Camp with his brother Arthur. In 1778 and 1779 he was a private in the 7th. Company of the 4th. Battalion of Lancaster County militia under Capt. Andrew Stewart. In July 1778 he made a tour of duty to Fort Muncy and in August 1779 to Northumberland County. In 1781 and 1782 he served under Stewart in the 5th. Company of the 10th. Battalion. There is no record of him after Dec.20,1784 when he left Paxton. He may be the Andrew Bell who married Elizabeth ---- at Carlisle, Pennsylvania in June 1789 and died in Washington County, Pennsylvania May 20,1822, leaving Jane, Mary, Andrew, Walter, Nancy - who later moved to Carroll County, Ohio.

George Bell of Jacks Valley

George Bell, second son of William Bell of Paxton, was born about 1734. He married Mary Bell about 1755. He moved from Paxton to Derry Township, Cumberland (now Mifflin) County about 1766. He was a pioneer in this section, as his father had been at Paxton. He probably lived in Dry Valley from 1766 to 1773 on the land of his brother, Arthur. On May 6,1773 he improved land in Jacks Valley, then Northumberland County, now Decatur Township, Mifflin County. Here he lived until his death in March 1816, except for one interval spent at Paxton. During the Revolution Jacks Valley was "a frontier settlement - - much exposed to the inroads of the savages". In the summer of 1777 Indian outbreaks became so severe that George Bell took his family to Paxton. On July 31,1777 and again on May 14,1778 he was commissioned captain of the 8th. Company of the 5th. Battalion of Cumberland County militia. In April and May 1778

he was stationed at Bald Eagle (Milesburg). While there on May 8, 1778 one of his men, Simon Vaughn, was killed by the Indians. After things quieted down George Bell returned to his family at Paxton. He did not bring them back to Jacks Valley until 1786; for at the close of the war his father died and the estate was not settled until 1786. While George Bell was at Paxton, his brothers, Thomas and Arthur, and his son, John, were living in Jacks Valley. George Bell may have served in the Flying Camp in 1776. In 1781 and 1782 he is listed as a private in the 5th. Company of the 10th. Battalion of Lancaster County militia under Capt. Andrew Stewart. He had ten children:

1. John Bell (see below)
2. Jane Bell B.c.1759
3. William Bell B.c.1762 D.Sept. 1827 in Decatur Township, Mifflin County. Farmer. M.c.1790 Margaret McCartney (daughter of John) D.1842. Issue: John Henderson (1791-1838), George, James, Sibella, William, Johnston, Margaret, Arthur.
4. George Bell, Jr. B.c.1764 D.c.1840 in Decatur Township. Farmer. M.c.1789 Eleanor McClenahen. Issue: John, Mary, George, Eleanor, Rachel, Catharine, Elizabeth, James Johnston, William, Sarah, Charles McClenahen.
5. Mary Bell B.c.1766 D.c.1835 Never married.
6. Elizabeth Bell B.1769 D.Oct.25,1845 M.Feb.1,1791 Charles McClenahen B.Aug. 1760 D.Feb.26-1836
7. Sarah Bell B.c.1771 D.c.1845 Never married.
8. James Bell B.c.1773 D.Sept.23,1815 in Decatur Township. Tailor. M.c.1795 Elizabeth Carson B.1773 D.Mar.29, 1855. Issue: Catherine, Mary, Margaret, George Thompson, Jane, John Davis.
9. Arthur Bell B.c.1775 D.1851 at Dayton, Ohio. Farmer. M.c.1800 Sarah Carson. Issue: Agnes, John Carson, Jacob, George R., Elizabeth C., Arthur Foster, James.
10. Margaret Bell B.Dec. 1777 D.Feb. 1850 M.c.1794 John McClenahen B.1772 D.1830

John Bell of Barree

John Bell, oldest son of George Bell of Jacks Valley and grandson of William Bell of Paxton, was born at Paxton about 1756. About 1782 he married Ann Drummond (daughter of a Col. Drummond). He remained in Jacks Valley during most of the Revolution. In 1777 and 1778 he was an ensign in the 8th. Company of the 5th. Battalion of Cumberland County militia under his father. He was a lieutenant under Capt. Robert Means in the 8th. Battalion of Cumberland County militia 1780-1782. He was an excellent marksman and a number of stories are told of his prowess. In 1794 he moved from Jacks Valley to Barree Township, Huntingdon County, where his uncles Arthur and Thomas were living. He lived there until his death in 1833. He had seven children:

1. George W. Bell B.Dec.31,1782, while his great-grandfather Bell was still living. D.Apr.22,1864 in Huntingdon County. M.c.1819 Margaret McMahan B.1799 D.Aug.13,1844
 - a. Eleanor Bell B.Nov.30,1820 D.Feb.27,1848 M.Levi Port
 - b. Margaret Drummond Bell M. George Scott
 - c. Sarah Bell, never married
 - d. Lucinda Bell, never married
 - e. Ann Bell B.1829 M.Alexander McMurtrie
 - f. Elizabeth Bell B.1830 M.Reuben Massey

g. John H. Bell B.1832 M.Marietta Yocum. Issue:
Walter S., Annie(Miller)

h. Amelia Bell, never married

i. George W. Bell, went to Iowa. M.Martha Living-
stone. Issue: Beulah, Bertie, Cecil

2. Alexander Bell B.May 24,1784 D.Aug.22,1864 in Hunt-
ingdon County. M.c.1805 Elizabeth Moore B.Apr.30,1788
D.Oct.8,1875

a. John Bell B.Oct.24,1806 D.1877 M.Feb.10,1831
Eleanor Carson. Issue: Mary (Musser), James A., Elizabeth
(Burns), Jane M. (Hough), Margaret (Burns)

b. Robert Bell B.Oct.22,1808 D.Jan.26,1850 M. Rachel
Copenhagen. Issue: Elizabeth Ann (Ayers), Mary Jane (Owens),
John B., Fanny (Bratton)

c. George Bell B.Feb.7,1811 D.Aug.18,1872 M.Margaret
Anderson. Issue: James T. (1838-1904), Alexander (1843-1918),
Anderson (1843-1914), Calvin (1845-1909)

d. William Bell B.Apr.8,1813 D.Apr.18,1866 M.--- Myers
Issue: Laura Virginia (Stickney)

e. Jane Bell B.Sept.1,1815 D.June 17,1864 M.(1) David
Jackson. M(2) James McManigal

f. Thomas Bell B.Nov.30,1817 D.May 4,1894 M.Feb.18,
1847 Mary Ann Stewart. Issue: Franklin Stewart (1848-1932),
Nancy Elizabeth (Sausser), Margaret Jane (Peightal), John
Dwight (1862-1908), Annie Thomas (Miller)

g. James A. Bell B.July 5,1820 D.Mar.18,1870 M.(1)
Rebecca C. Lemmon. Issue: Lemmon. M.(2) ---- McCracken.
Issue: Frankie, Mary

h. Margaret Bell B.Dec.13,1822 D.Feb.11,1873 M. Frank-
lin Wingate

i. Joseph J. Bell B.Apr.26,1825 D.Shasta Co., Cal. No ch.

j. Rebecca C. Bell B.Sept.26,1827 D.1890

k. Elizabeth M. Bell B.Feb.23,1830 D.1888 M.Elijah Gillam

3. William Bell B.1789 D.Ind. M.c.1816 Elizabeth Henry

a. John D. Bell B.Aug.16,1825 D.May 25,1853,never mar.

b. Ann Eliza Bell M. John Barr

c. Mary Martha Bell B.1835 M. Adolphus Thompson

4. John Bell, Jr. B.c.1791 D.c.1816, never married

5. Arthur Bell B.1795 D.young, twin of Thomas

6. Thomas Bell B.1795 D.Aug.9,1833 in Huntingdon County.
M.(1) c.1822 Elizabeth Wilson D.c.1828

a. Elizabeth Bell B.Oct.5,1823 D.Sept.3,1891 M.Geo.Scott

b. Margaret Bell B.Feb.3,1824 D.May 11,1866 M.Es.Watson

M.(2)c.1831 Margaret Ewing B.Dec.6,1796 D.Dec.20,1875

c. William Bell B.Mar.29,1832 D.June 19,1907 M.1852
Anna Mary Hutchison. Issue: George Thomas (1854-1928) /gal

d. Jane Bell B.July 16,1834 D.Sept.17,1883 M.Jas.McMani-

7. Ann Bell B.c.1797 D.Nov.2,1872 in Huntingdon County
M.c.1817 John McMahan B.Aug.17,1794 D.Sept.13,1884

a. Benjamin McMahan B.Dec.1,1818 D.Sept.5,1894 M.
Catharine Warfield

b. George W. McMahan B.1822 M.Rebecca McManigal

c. Marshall McMahan B.1822 M.Margaret Harris

d. John McMahan D.young

e. James McMahan B.1827 D.1860 M:Lucretia ----

f. Margaret McMahan B.1828 M.Jonathan Johnston

g. Jackson McMahan B.July 18,1829 D.June 1, 1891 M.
Amanda Hutchison

h. Mary McMahan M. Robert Wilson

i. Sarah E. McMahan M. David Little