

John Turner
Ancestor of Mary Wylie Cely

The family of William and Margaret Turner arrived in Charleston in 1767 on the snow "James and Mary." Among the immigrants from County Antrim, Ireland were their children Alexander Turner, 20, John Turner, 16, and James Turner, 12. Alexander Turner was a surveyor of land grants and when the royal land grants ended he had accumulated large tracts of land in South Carolina. Hew was a loyalist and Tory and served in the Revolutionary War and may have been killed in the service of the King in 1783. His wife was named Jane and most probably Jane McAllister, as his son was named William McAllister Turner. William McAllister Turner died at the age of 31, leaving a large estate. Hew willed most of it to his mother, and his uncles John and James Turner. His land totaled 3,300 acres.

John Turner, our great-great-great-great-grandfather, served as Captain in the Revolutionary War. He was married to Margaret Adger of County Antrim, Ireland in 1773. Hew was a man of considerable wealth, owning many tracts of land, a number of slaves, a grist mill, a cotton machine, a carriage and large stock of horses, cows, sheep and hogs. He lived in northeastern Fairfield County near Mt. Olivet Presbyterian Church. The Biography Directory tory of South Carolina Legislature reads:

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Turner, John (1750-1807)

"John Turner, a native of Ireland, immigrated To South Carolina prior to the American Revolution. He settled in the area that became Fairfield County,. A planter, he owned 300 acres on Wateree Creek in Camden District and 100 acres and three tracts at undisclosed locations. His residential plantation contained 250 acres. An inventory of his estate recorded 22 slaves. During the Revolution, turner served as a captain (1779). At his death he held the rank of major. The District between Broad and Catawba Rivers elected him to the Second Provincial Congress (1775 - 1776) and the First General Assembly (1776). Following a special election, Turner qualified on 1 March 1786 to represent his home district in the House during the Sixth General Assembly (1785 - 1786). Reelected to the House, he continued to serve the District between Broad and Catawba in the Seventh (1787 - 1788) and Eighth (1789 - 1790) General Assemblies. After the Constitution of 1790 established Fairfield County as an election district, Turner represented Fairfield in the House in the Tenth (1792 - 1794), Eleventh (1794 - 1795), and Twelfth (1796 - 1797) General Assemblies. Subsequently, the election district of Fairfield, Chester, and Richland counties elected him to the state Senate of r the Thirteenth (1798 - 1799) and Fourteenth (1800 - 1801) General Assemblies. His other offices included the following: Commissioner of the high roads in Chester District (1784); County court judge for Fairfield (1785, 1794); and justice of the peace for Fairfield (1786).

Married twice, Turner first wed in 1773 Margaret Adger. She was probably the mother of his seven children: Mary Margaret m. John McCrorey, Agnes m. David Boyce, William Alexander, Marjory m. Samuel Law, Roselyn, Martha m. James Law, and Elizabeth m. William Hughs. He mentioned his second wife, Jean, when he wrote his will shortly before he died. John Turner died on Thursday, 30 July 1807."

The Biographical Directory of the Senate of the State of South Carolina adds that John Turner was one of Gen. George Washington's escorts on his visit to South Carolina in 1791.

The statement below is copied from a biography of Hon. John Turner printed years ago and found in DAR papers.

"The Hon. John Turner of Scotch parents emigrated from the north of Ireland and settled in South Carolina previous to the Revolutionary War in which he took an active part and distinguished himself as a valiant soldier, a devoted patriot, and a true friend of his adopted country. To these noble traits of character were joined those of the devoted humble Christian. For many years he was a member of the Presbyterian Church and devotedly attached to her doctrines and simple forms of faith. As a patriot he was esteemed and honored by all who knew him. The people of his district as a proof of their appreciation of his services in behalf of his country and his personal worth elected him to a seat in the State Legislature for 14 years in succession. He was a resident of Fairfield District."

