

EXCURSUS: Coulter

The progenitor Samuel Wherry's wife was born Dorcas Coulter, probably in Ireland. She was a sister of John Coulter, Revolutionary War soldier of Pennsylvania and later resident of Wilkinson County, Mississippi. He received a Revolutionary War pension according to the Law of 1818. He died in Mississippi before October 18, 1819. ~~But the pension sums were paid out to someone pretending to be John Coulter until "his" death on March 23, 1831, in Adams County, Mississippi. One wonders how many people were involved in this cleverly worked out scheme to defraud the Federal government. there was at least one Federal judge involved, since he signed a sworn statement after 1819 saying that he knew John Coulter and that he was still living in Mississippi and was deserving of the pension allowance.~~

In case anyone is interested, John Coulter's will in Mississippi gives these heirs of the unmarried Revolutionary veteran: 1). Deceased sister Sarah, who married David Read, and had John, James, William, Jenny and Sarah Read, the last of whom married William Brice, probably of Fairfield or Chester County, S.C.; 2). Deceased sister Rosanna, who married James Brice and had William, John, James and Mary Brice, the last of whom married Josiah Alexander. This last couple had Dorcas Alexander, who married James Hays; 3). Deceased sister Dorcas, who married Samuel Wherry and had William, Andrew, Thomas, Samuel, John, Margaret, Mary and Hannah Wherry. The will was signed on January 25, 1818. The executor was Rev. Dr. David Cooper. The document which proves that John Coulter was dead in 1819 is a deed found in Chester County, S.C., records, Book Y, pages 337-339

No trace. This was another John Coulter who died in 1831. Have not established if the 2 Johns were connected  
E.J.

THE QUARTERLY

York County, South Carolina

December 1993

Volume V

Number 3

pages 2.

1. On 14 Dec. 1774 the Rev. John Simpson pastor of Upper Creek Presbyterian Church, Chester S.C. visited people of his congregation making a record of visit to James Brice & wf. Rosanna.
2. 16 Oct 1819 Chester District, S.C. John Brice authorized to go to Miss to collect portion of John Coulter's estate see Wherrys. John Brice is spelled Bryce at times but the references in the Wilkinson Co Miss. records spell it both ways. Also in the Miss. probate minutes is James and William Brice.
3. Some of the Wherry are buried at old Hopewell Presbyterian Church on the Nation Ford Rd. to Columbia. & Bethesda Presbyterian Church, York Co. S.C.

Evelyn J.

225 25th Street, S.W.  
Roanoke, Va. 24014-2360  
August 3, 1994

Dear Miss Tatum: (or, Dear Cousin:)

Miss Louise Pettus of Rock Hill, S.C., sent me a copy of your letter of July 21st in regard to John Coulter of Wilkinson Co., Miss. I do not know a great deal about the Coulters, but I am absolutely certain that the John Coulter whose sisters married into the Brice, Reed, and Wherry families of South Carolina was never married and that he left his entire estate to the families of his sisters.

I am a descendant of Samuel Wherry and his wife, Dorcas Coulter, sister of John Coulter of Pennsylvania and Mississippi. I myself went to Mississippi (Woodville was the town, I believe) many years ago to try to find a will for John Coulter. I was given permission by the Clerk of Court to ramble in a section of old wooden drawers filled with early Mississippi documents, dating from the period before Mississippi was made a state. And to my utter amazement, when I opened either the first or the second drawer, there was the original will of John Coulter, died 1819, lying on top of the pile of old papers. I was stunned. I took the will out and carefully examined it, and then I made a detailed abstract of the document, the substance of which abstract I included in my article on the Wherrys in a recent issue of the York Genealogical and Historical QUARTERLY. I believe that you have a typewritten copy of that section of the article which dealt with John Coulter.

From what you said in your letter, it appears that perhaps there was another John Coulter in Mississippi at the same time as our mutual uncle John Coulter. I have never heard before this time of another John Coulter in Mississippi, but that does not mean that there was not another John Coulter. It simply means that I do not know a great deal about the old Mississippi settlers. If it is true that there was not another John Coulter there, then, as I said in the article, somebody down there in Mississippi in the early 1800's "ripped off" the Federal pension fund for veterans of the American Revolution. Your uncle, and mine, John Coulter, died in 1819, and that is so stated in the Mississippi records that I examined. Also, there is a deed in Chester Co., S.C., in which the Wherrys of Chester County authorize certain men to go to Mississippi in 1819 and collect for them their share of the estate of John Coulter, deceased in that year.

I wish you luck in your search. Just be certain of this: John Coulter left NO DESCENDANTS EXCEPT NIECES AND NEPHEWS and their children even unto the present generation...including you and me. Do not let anyone else tell you anything different. I have seen the will itself and I have duly recorded the date of death from the estate record in Woodville. If there was another John Coulter there, he CERTAINLY IS NOT YOUR UNCLE AND MINE. End of sermon!!!

Let me know about anything you find. I have been looking for forty years for a descendant of the Brices of Fairfield who were collateral descendants of John Coulter. YOU are the first that I have ever found. I hope somebody writes a sketch and traces the Brice descendants from the 1700's.

Sincerely yours, Am. B. Whitz, Jr.

I cannot establish a Fairfield Co., S.C. connection, E.S.