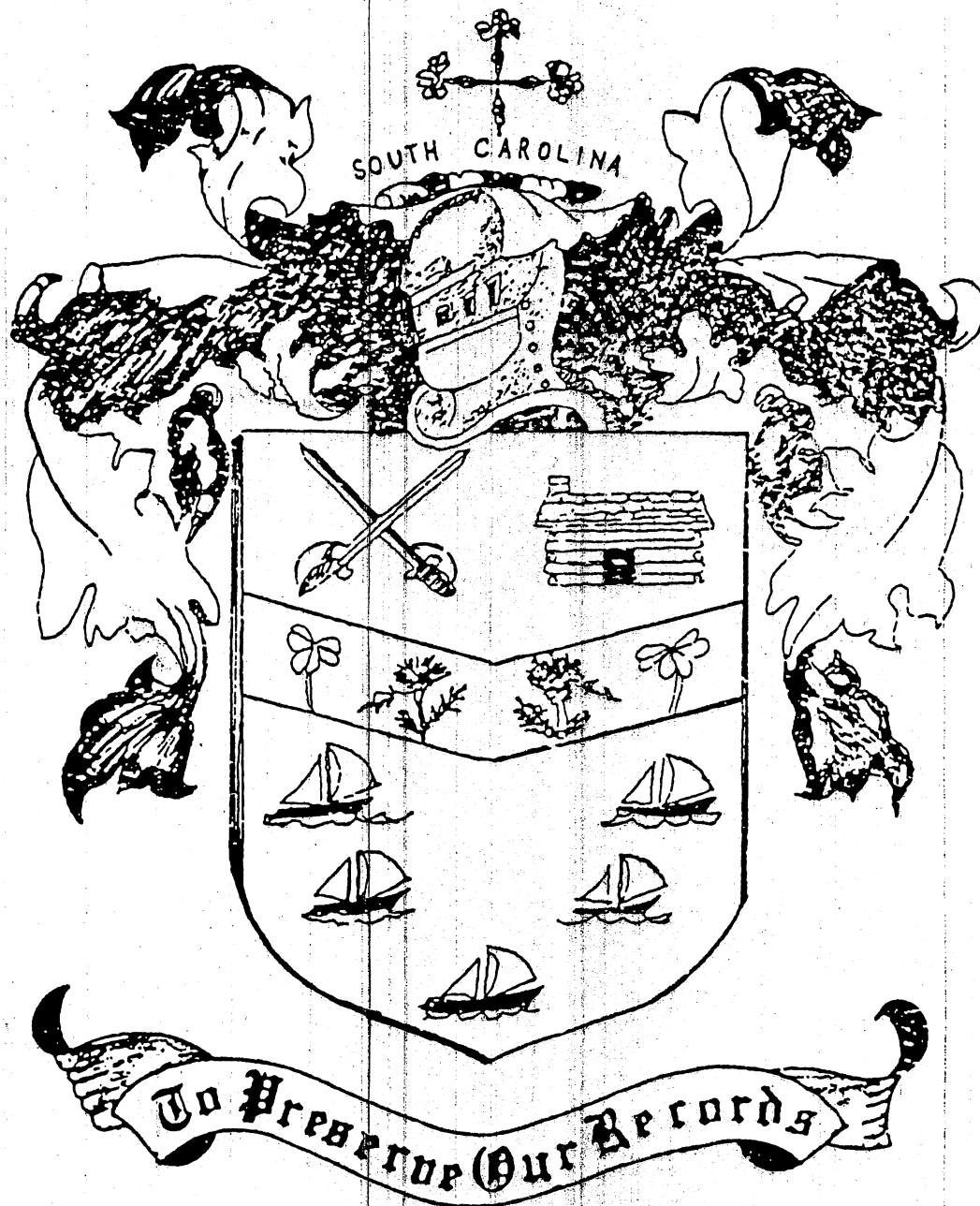


THE BULLETIN



CHESTER DISTRICT GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

SERVING CHESTER, FAIRFIELD, LANCASTER, UNION AND YORK COUNTIES

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THE FIRST GILLS IN CHESTER COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

By Elmer Oris Parker

The family ties that existed between the first members of the Gill family who came to present Chester County in the 1760s has been a matter of much speculation and uncertainty since the demise of those who could have provided the answers. The solution to this puzzle has now emerged.

The eminent antiquarian Dr. Lyman Copeland Draper of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin visited South Carolina in 1871 in his quest for documents and information relating to the American Revolution in the South, and in particular to the battle of Kings Mountain, and General Thomas Sumter and his men. When Draper returned to Madison he continued his efforts by engaging in extensive correspondence with any and all elderly persons believed to possess information in the form of recollections with old participants in the war. It was his desire to produce a



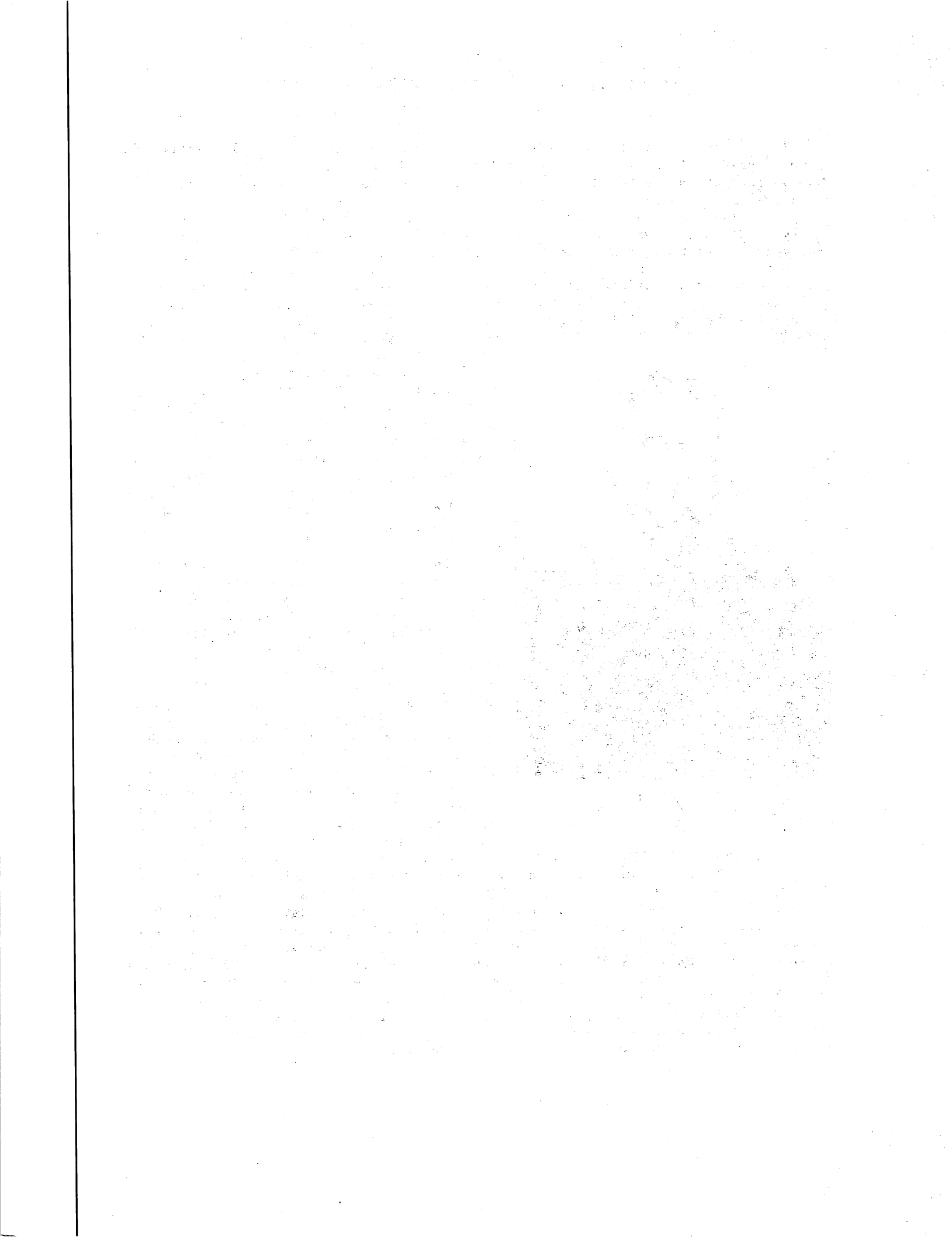
Lucinda J. Morrow

definitive history of the battle that proved to be turning point in the war and a life of the great partisan commander Sumter. The former came to full fruition in his *King's Mountain and Its Heroes* (Cincinnati, 1881), and it has proved to be the best account of the battle and the events that led up to it. Unfortunately, his life of Sumter never was completed but the raw data which he had collected for its preparation is now available on microfilm in many large libraries and in state archives for reference use by any interested researcher.

One of Draper's correspondents provided the solution to the Gill mystery. Mrs. Lucinda Jane Morrow, widow of John Alexander Morrow (1797-1869), of Plantersville, Dallas County, Alabama, wrote in part in June 1877: "I was born & raised & married in So. Carolina. My maiden name was Gill. I am the daughter of Abraham Gill who lived & died on Fishing Creek 10 miles northeast of Chester-ville. My mother's maiden name was Agness Walker--her Father was wounded in the Revolutionary War & died from the wound at last. Col. John Mills' wife & Col. George Gill was (sic) cousins to my Father. Col. [William] Bratton lived five miles from Father's near where there was a Battle ground [Huck's De-feat] but I was only 15 years of age when my

Father and Mother died in six weeks of each other so what I know about the incidents of the Revolutionary War are mostly from History." In April she had written Draper, "I am 76 years of age. My husband has been dead 8 years. He has only one brother living. I would like to oblige you but my frame is fast sinking away."

A word of clarification seems appropriate--in this period the use of the term "cousins" meant first cousins. Col. John Mills' wife according to contemporary records was Mary Gill (1758-1841), daughter of Robert Gill (1720-1804) and his wife Eleanor (1721-1801). Col. George Gill (1761-1844) was a son of John Gill (c.1727-1797) and his wife Sarah Duncan. Capt. Abraham Gill (1765-1815) was a son of George Gill (c.1730-1795), a clockmaker and silversmith by trade. Hence, it is readily apparent that if Mary Gill, Col. George Gill, and Capt. Abraham Gill were all first cousins, then their Gill fathers were brothers.



But we cannot leave Mr. Simpson and the Fishing Creek congregation without paying our respects to the ladies. We do not know how to form an opinion of a community without taking the character and condition of women into consideration. In 1780 an association of the young ladies of Fishing creek congregation was formed for the purpose of reaping and garnering the wheat of every man who would remain in the army and do his duty as a soldier. The names given are Mary, Margaret and Ellen Gill, Isabella and Margaret Kelso, Sarah Knox, Margaret, Elizabeth and Mary Mills, Mary McClure and Nancy Brown. "These young women went day after day from one farm to another and reaped the crop with the assistance of the matrons and a few old men. The question they asked was, "Is the owner out with the fighting men?" Thus for five or six weeks they toiled on and the state of the atmosphere being favorable, gathered in the crops of 'the fighting men'." Perhaps at the head of these noble women stood the widow, Mary McClure, the wife of the gallant Col. John McClure, who received his mortal wound at the battle of the Hanging Rock. But I might here add the testimony of the late Maj. Samuel Morrow of Spartanburg to the virtue of the Fishing creek establishment in 1780 and 1781 Samuel Morrow belonged in the congregation and was just grown up in 1780. He went into service and among other actions was at Sumter's defeat and even there did some shooting, but made his escape. Just after the war joined the church, was married by Mr. Simpson to Jeanette Nelson recently from the Emerald Isle, and settled on Dutchman's creek in Spartanburg county. He was soon an elder of the Fairforest church. I became his pastor in 1840 and in 1842 saw his body deposited in the grave. He bore a noble testimony to the worth of Rev. John Simpson and all his Fishing creek people. Samuel Morrow himself in the estimation of all I ever heard speak of him was a noble specimen of manhood and a truly devoted Christian.

In 1849 his widow, Jeanette Nelson, died. Just as the famous snow storm - April 15, 1849 - was falling I was preaching in the pulpit of the Fairforest church and her coffin was brought in and placed before me. As the doors were opened for the purpose of admitting the corpse and its attendants the snow was blown across the house. But Jeanette Nelson was a woman of a warm heart as long as its pulsations continued. A worthy helpmeet for a husband whose tongue uttered no guile and whose hands were always ready for a good work.

I may remark in conclusion that the young ladies who made up the famous association of reapers mostly had sweethearts in the army and became wives at the close of the war. Their descendants have been among the good people of the county. Mary Gill was married to Col. John Mills and was the mother of the late R.G. Mills whose virtues as a citizen have been excelled by few natives of the county. A man of intelligence, industry and great public spirit. A tombstone in the Fishing creek cemetery marks his place of rest near that of his wife, Selena Neely, and also near that of his father, Col. John Mills.

Missing Items From The Library.

Would you please check among your research material to see if you have any books or material belonging in the library. Several are on loan, we know of, but there are still others listed in the card catalogue which are missing. We are glad for you to use them, but if kept too long, they may accidentally be packed away or forgotten.

Thank you!

HERITAGE HISTORY OF CHESTER COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

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Chester County Court House Built 1852
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THE DESCENDENTS OF JAMES GILCHRIST

My great-great grandfather, James Gilchrist was born in North Carolina around 1774, according to the 1850 census. In 1797, he received 100 acres of land in the Pinckney District on the waters of Sandy River, from James Timms in Chester County, South Carolina. In 1817, he bought at public auction, another 100 acres on the waters of Broad River in Chester County.

In a court proceeding to settle the will of John Roden, we find a daughter, Mary Roden, married to James Gilchrist. John Roden's wife was Sarah.

James and Mary Gilchrist had a number of children unknown to me other than their daughter, Harriette Gilchrist, my ancestor. I have no knowledge of the date of James' or Mary's death or their place of burial.

Harriette Gilchrist was born January 12, 1823. She had four children, Harriette L. Gilchrist; Jonathan M. Gilchrist, who died young; Mary Catherine, who married Jonathan Page; and Garland Rhett Gilchrist. Harriette Gilchrist died February 4, 1889 and is buried at the now abandoned New Bethel Baptist Church Cemetery, in York County, South Carolina.

Garland Rhett Gilchrist was born in Chester County, March 26, 1860. He was married to Mary Ellen Hill, daughter of William E. and Martha Morgan Hill. They had four sons, John Frazier, Clarence Angus, Russell Claude, and Robert Mack. Garland was a farmer. He died May 4, 1911 and Mary died March 16, 1913. They are both buried at Bullocks Creek Presbyterian Church Cemetery in York County.

John Frazier Gilchrist was born March 20, 1891 in Chester County. On April 8, 1925, he married Ira Elizabeth McDaniel, who was born April 25, 1903, in Chester County. Frazier attended college in Hot Springs, North Carolina. He was a member of the Woodmen of the World, the Masonic Lodge at Lockhart, South Carolina, the American Guernsey Cattle Club, and a trustee with the Chester County schools for many years.

John Frazier was a dairy farmer and owned all registered Guernsey cattle. In the early 1930's, Frazier and Ira started bottling milk to sell to the people in nearby Lockhart. After Frazier's death in 1948, Ira continued running the dairy business with the help of Frazier's two brothers, Mack and Claude. In the early 1950's they sold to Pet Milk Company and about 1955 they sold to Sealtest Company.

Ira taught school at Mt. Pleasant School in Chester County and was a tremendous help with the farm and dairy.

Frazier and Ira Gilchrist had five children: Mary, born October 4, 1926; James F. born January 2, 1929; Betty J., born December 25, 1936; Garland Robert, born January 5, 1939; and David I., born June 2, 1941.

John Frazier Gilchrist died October 17, 1948 and Ira died October 31, 1965. They are both buried at Bullocks Creek Presbyterian Church Cemetery in York County.



JOHN FRAZIER GILCHRIST



John Frazier Gilchrist, Ira Elizabeth McDaniel at their marriage 1903

I, Betty Gilchrist O'Dell, was born December 25, 1936. I am married to Walter Murray O'Dell and we have two children, Dianne and Donald. I live on the same homestead as my great-grandmother, Harriette Gilchrist; my grandparents, Garland and Mary Gilchrist; and my parents John Frazier and Ira Gilchrist. Betty Gilchrist O'dell

COLONEL GEORGE GILL

GEORGE GILL was born in 1761 in New Jersey, a son of John and Sarah (Duncan) Gill, who moved to Chester County before the Revolutionary War. According to his obituary in the *Camden Journal*, he "was enlisted into the public service by his cousin Col. Archy Gill, in the year 1779, being then about 18 or 19 years of age. He had previously, with great difficulty, been restrained by his father from entering the service, but after Huck's defeat had restored the drooping spirits of the Whigs of York and Chester, and given that onward impulse to the cause of liberty which was never again checked till the enemy were expelled from the country, the ardor of our youthful hero could no longer be restrained by parental authority. The first engagement which he was in was at the taking of Mobley's meeting house under Capt. (John) McClure. He was under the same officer at the investment of (Lt. Col. George) Turnbull's Fort at Rocky Mount, in an unsuccessful attempt to take that place. From thence he went down to the Congaree, and was at the taking of Congaree Fort, by Sumter, who caused the garrison to surrender by throwing up a breast work in the night which threatened to demolish the place. He was also at the taking of Motte's Fort, on the Congaree, where the lady proprietor in her devotion to her country, furnished the patriot army with the

means of firing her own splendid edifice to dislodge the enemy. He was at the investment of Ninety-six, under Gen. Greene, and being out on a scouting expedition, and having made prisoner of a British soldier, and being as yet ignorant of Greene's retreat, he entered within the British line, and the picket guard closed upon him — but putting spurs to his spirited charger, he escaped amid a shower of bullets.

"He was after this retreat of Greene in the swamps with Gen. Sumter, until the battle of Eutaw Springs (September 8, 1781). He belonged at that time to the State Troops, under Gen. Wade Hampton. The day previous to this well-contested battle, they employed themselves for that scene of havoc, which is told to us even at this remote day, by the dry bones which are bleaching on the sanguinary field. The fight commenced at Williamson's Branch, three miles from the Eutaw Springs where (Col. 'Light Horse Harry') Lee's Legion charged the vanguard, and the State Troops, the British infantry. After the battle was over, our hero had fearful evidence of his proximity to danger and death, from the fact that (Samuel) Barnett his inseparable companion, was slain, and blood was dripping from the point of his own sword."

Colonel Gill died on July 8, 1844, at his home near Rodman, and was buried with the honors of war at Fishing Creek Church. Participating in paying their last sad tribute to the departed hero was Capt. McDill's Rocky Creek Rifle Company with its excellent band of music, Capt. Simpson's Lewisville Rifle Company, Capt. Walker's Chesterville Company of Cavalry, and Capt. Backstrom's Rich Hill Troop of Cavalry. The citizens of the neighborhood, "numbering over one thousand were in attendance to witness the solemn rites, and mingle the tears of sympathy and sorrow with the afflicted family."

Colonel Gill was married twice. By his first wife, Margaret Strait, daughter of Christopher and Mary Strait, he had five children: 1. JAMES (Jan 9, 1787-Nov. 29, 1852). 2. MARY (1790-1847), married George Gill Robinson. 3. SARAH DUNCAN (1793-?), married a Terry. 4. THOMAS PORTER (June 20, 1796-Nov. 28, 1845), married Elizabeth M. — (1806-1856). 5. CHRISTOPHER STRAIT (June 26, 1797-Oct. 11, 1845), married Louisa A. — (1832-1861).

After the death of his first wife, Colonel Gill married in 1809, Jane Cooper (Mar. 4, 1781-Mar. 1847), eldest daughter of John and Elizabeth (Walker) Cooper, and by her had one child: 6. JOHN GREEN BERRY (Oct. 7, 1810-Aug. 18, 1873), married Elizabeth Gill (1822-1883), daughter of Capt. George Gill (-1847). Elmer Oris Parker

JOHN GILL

JOHN GILL settled first in New Jersey but before the Revolutionary War migrated to Chester County, S.C., where he died in 1797. He and his wife Sarah (Duncan) Gill were the parents of these children:

1. THOMAS (Aug. 27, 1755-Aug. 30, 1838), married Hannah (- 1828). He served under Capts. Philip Walker and Alexander Pagan and was in the battles of Coosawhatchie, Ramseur's Mill, Rocky Mount, Hanging Rock, Fishing Creek, and Biggin Church. After the war he moved to Crawford County, Illinois.

2. RACHEL (1757-), married Dec. 17, 1778, Josiah Porter who after service in the Revolution moved first to Virginia, and then to Tennessee where he died in 1814.

3. JAMES (April 14, 1760-April 14, 1842); served during the Revolution and was in the battles of Rocky Mount, Hanging Rock and Fishing Creek; married in 1796, Mary Ann Fox (1775-1850), and moved to Davidson County, Tenn. in 1811, to Tuscaloosa County in 1818, and finally to Greene County in 1823 where he died.

4. GEORGE (1761-July 8, 1844), Revolutionary soldier, married (1) Margaret, daughter of Christopher and Mary Strait, and (2) Jane (March 4, 1781-March 1847), daughter of John and Elizabeth (Walker) Cooper.

5. ROBERT (Aug. 19, 1765-), Revolutionary soldier, became a Presbyterian minister, moved to Logan County, Ky. where he changed to Shaker, or Quaker, came under the influence of Robert Dale Owen, social reformer, removed to Gibson County, Ind., and then to Clarke County, Ill. where he was living in 1845.

6. SARAH (c.1767-), married a Porter. I believe this may have been John Porter.

7. JOHN (c.1769-1791). Elmer Oris Parker

GILLESPIE

In 1772, JOHN GILLESPIE, who served in the Revolutionary War under MARION and is buried in PAUL'S Graveyard, left County Antrim, Ireland to come to Chester District with Rev. WILLIAM MARTIN'S

Covenanter group, leaving his wife, the former SARAH (or SUSAN) WEIR and their family to come in 1776. Their sons, THOMAS and JAMES were born in Ireland as were perhaps their daughters, MARY and SUSIE. He settled in or near Rocky Creek, since their son, JAMES's land transaction in 1811 mentions his own land "on the waters of the dividing ridge of the Rocky Creeks, bounded by lands surveyed for GEORGE WEIR on the east and JOHN GILLESPIE on the southeast." In that GEORGE WEIR's land adjoined, we would assume that he was a close relative of SARAH GILLESPIE. JOHN was son of THOMAS GILLESPIE and SARAH (or SUSAN) Scott, and had a brother, THOMAS, a Revolutionary soldier.

In his will in 1808, JOHN names his wife, SARAH; his four children — THOMAS, JAMES, MARY AND "wife of ALEXANDER KELL"; a son of each of these named, JOHN and granddaughters — JANE, daughter of JAMES, and PEGGY BIGHAM, "married but not of mature age."

THOMAS GILLESPIE, the son, was deceased by 1808, leaving his wife, MARY and several children, including these that we find dividing his land in the 1820's — JANE (or JANNET) who had married ARCHIBALD BURNS, son of SAMUEL and AGNES; THOMAS (perhaps JOHN THOMAS) whose wife was MARGARET; DAVID and wife, JENNET, and JAMES. PEGGY BIGHAM, mentioned in the will was not found, although we assume her to be a daughter, since "if she died before — mature age — all was to fall to her mother and children."

JAMES WEIR GILLESPIE married MARTHA MORTON, daughter of THOMAS MORTON and BETSY PAUL. Their ten children — SARAH, ELIZA JANE, MARY, JOHN, SUSANNAH, MARGARET, THOMAS, JOHN, an infant son, and JAMES were all born and the two older daughters were married near Chester. SARAH was married by Rev. JOHN HEMPHILL to STUART BURNS, son of SAMUEL and AGNES, and JANE married about 1825 ALEXANDER McCLURE. In 1830, JAMES and MARTHA with all of their family, moved to the adjoining counties of Perry, Randolph, and Washington in Illinois.

MARY GILLESPIE married JOHN RODMAN and had two known children. JOHN born 1801, married his first cousin, SARAH KELL, died age 33 and is buried PAUL'S Graveyard. He had a son, ALEXANDER KELL RODMAN, who married MARY WATERS and had a son, JOHN LAFAYETTE RODMAN. SARAH RODMAN born 1803, married first JAMES HOOD who soon died, leaving two daughters — MARY JANE, who later married JOHN SLOAN and MARGARET, who married DAVID MITCHELL. SARAH married second, THOMAS McCLURKEN and moved to near Oakdale, Washington County, Illinois. They had nine children — THOMAS, ELIZABETH, NANCY, JOHN, DAVID, SARAH ELLEN, JAMES, ANDREW and CLARA. Of these THOMAS married ELIZABETH WALKER, and SARAH ELLEN married THOMAS WALKER, children of JOHN WALKER and

ELIZABETH HOOD; grandchildren of JAMES WALKER and ELIZBETH WYLIE and also of ROBERT HOOD and ELIZABETH McCLURKEN all residents of near Chester.

SUSIE GILLESPIE, who remained unnamed in her father's will, married ALEXANDER KELL, son of JOHN KELL and JANE MORTON, who are both buried PAUL'S Graveyard. Their four known children were — JAMES KELL born 1799, married JANE SPROUL and moved to Princeton, Gibson County, Indiana, then later to Walnut Hill, Marion County, Illinois, where both are buried in Old Covenanter Cemetery. They had a large family. SARAH KELL born 1802, married her first cousin, JOHN RODMAN, as mentioned previously. SAMUEL KELL, went to Indiana with his uncle, Rev. JOHN KELL, returned to South Carolina and married, then died 1831 on his way back to Indiana, at which time his son JOHN KELL was born posthumously. Dr. JOHN WILSON KELL married ANNA WRIGHT, went to Indiana and died young leaving a son, JOHN KELL. By Thelma Burns Campbell

THE GIRARDEAU FAMILY

Huguenots who fled from France to escape religious persecution after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes — (*The History of the Huguenot Emigration to America* by Charles W. Baird, D.D., Vol. II page 53 — and in Ramsey's *History of South Carolina*) included:

Jean (John) Girardeau, son of Pierre Girardeau and Catherine Lareine Girardeau of Talmont in Poitou, France, was born in 1665, came to America about 1681, and settled in Berkeley County, South Carolina.

One of his sons was Isaac Girardeau, who moved to Georgia, and was the father of John Girardeau (1756-1837), whose second wife was Eleanor Dashwood Williams (1763-1842), and who were the parents of John Bohun Girardeau (1798-1852), whose wife was Claudia Hearne Freer (1801-1833). They were the parents of John Lafayette Girardeau, D.D., L.L.D. (1825-1898), whose wife was Sarah Penelope Hamlin (1829-1921), the parents of Edward Freer Girardeau (1855-1916). Edward Freer Girardeau married Margaret Ferguson (1862-1951), daughter of John Ferguson (1826-1869) and Adelaide Lennerton Ferguson (1834-1893). John Ferguson, after moving from Dumfries, Scotland, to Halifax, Nova Scotia, changed his name from Fergusson to Ferguson. From this union came five children — John Ferguson Girardeau (1888-1945) of Charleston, South Carolina; Edward Hamlin Girardeau (1892-1971) of Barnwell, South Carolina; Mrs. Leslie Bryan Davenport (1899-1979) (nee Jennie Lennerton Girardeau) of Charleston; Mrs. Julian Mitchell (nee Margaret Lareine Girardeau) of Charleston; and Mrs. Lucius Hopkins Melton (nee Frances Adelaide Girardeau) of Chester, South Carolina.