

WILL OF  
GEORGE PEAY

IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN

I George Peay of the State of South Carolina in the County of Fairfield being wery sick and weak in body but of perfect mind and memory thanks be given to God, calling to mind the mortality of my Body and knowing it is appointed for all men once to die, do make and ordain this my last will and Testament, That is to say principally and First of all I Give and recommend my Soul into the hand of Almighty God, that gave it and my Body I recommend to the Earth to be buried in decent Christian Burial at the discretion of my Executors And as touching such worldly Estate/ <sup>wherewith</sup> as it hath pleased to blefs me with in this Life I Give devise and dispise of the same in the following manner and form. First I will that all my just debts be paid, and discharged out of my Estate; I Give and demise to Elizabeth Peay, my dearly beloved wife all my plantation or Tract of Land containing two Hundred acres Lying and being on the North Side of the Wateres River in Lancaster County to her and her Heirs forever, I also Give and bequeath to my said wife all my personal Estate, which I possefs or in whose hands or Custody or posefsion soever any part of the same is, or may be hereafter found and I do Constitute and appoint make and ordain my said wife sole Executrix of this my Last will and Testament IN WITNEFS whereof I have hereunto set my Hand and Seal the Twenty Second day of November in the year of our Lord one Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety one

George Peay      L.S.

Signed Sealed published pronounced }  
and declared by the said George Peay }  
as his last will and Testament in the }  
presence of us who in his presence and }  
in the presence of each other have }  
hereunto subscribed our names

Proven 14th, Feb. 1792  
D. Evans  
Recorded--Not Found  
Recorded in Will Book  
# 1 Page 142  
Apt. # 6 File # 179

John Yarbrough  
Nicholas Peay--  
Elizabeth Brigs.

George Peary

In the of God Amen

I George Peary of the State of South Carolina in the County of Fairfield being very sick and weak in body but of perfect mind and Memory thanks be given to God, calling to mind the Mortality of my Body and knowing it is appointed for all men one to die, Do make and ordain this my last Will and Testament; That is today principally and chief of all I Give and recommend my Soul into the hand of Almighty God, that gave it and my Body I recommend to the Earth to be buried in decent Christian Burial at the discretion of my Executors And as touching such worldly Estate as it hath pleased to bless me with in this life I Give Devise and dispose of the same in the following manner and form. First I will that all my just Debts be paid and Discharged out of my Estate; I Give and Devise to Elizabeth Peary, my dearly beloved wife all my plantation or tract of Land containing two hundred acres lying and being on the north side of the Water River in Lancaster County to her and her heirs forever, I Also Give and bequeath to my said wife all my personal Estate, which I possess or in whose hands or custody or possession now any part of the same is, or may be hereafter found and I do constitute and appoint make and ordain my said wife, sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament I Witness whereof I have hereunto set my Hand and seal the Twenty second Day of November in this year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy one

Signed Sealed published pronounced and  
 Declared by the said George Peary as his last  
 Will and Testament in the presence of the who  
 is his chosen and in the presence of each  
 other have hereunto subscribed our Names

At the City of Charleston  
 this Day by the Court & Jury  
 did. And being first sworn

John Scarborough  
 Nicholas Peary  
 Elizabeth Briggs.

James

George Peary

Probate	1. -
25.	1. 6
recd of do	1. 3
copy will & record	3. 0
to app <sup>ts</sup>	1. 0
Deputies	1. 0
Bond & record	3. -

A. O. 11. 9

South Carolina  
 Pursuant to warrant from John Williamson Esq. Comr. of Land in the District of Camden I have laid out George Gray's tract of land containing five hundred acres of land situated on Baylow Creek by Bank branch waters of the western Part of and both South Side of the River and Make Buttrick's and Remains as the above Plat Represents

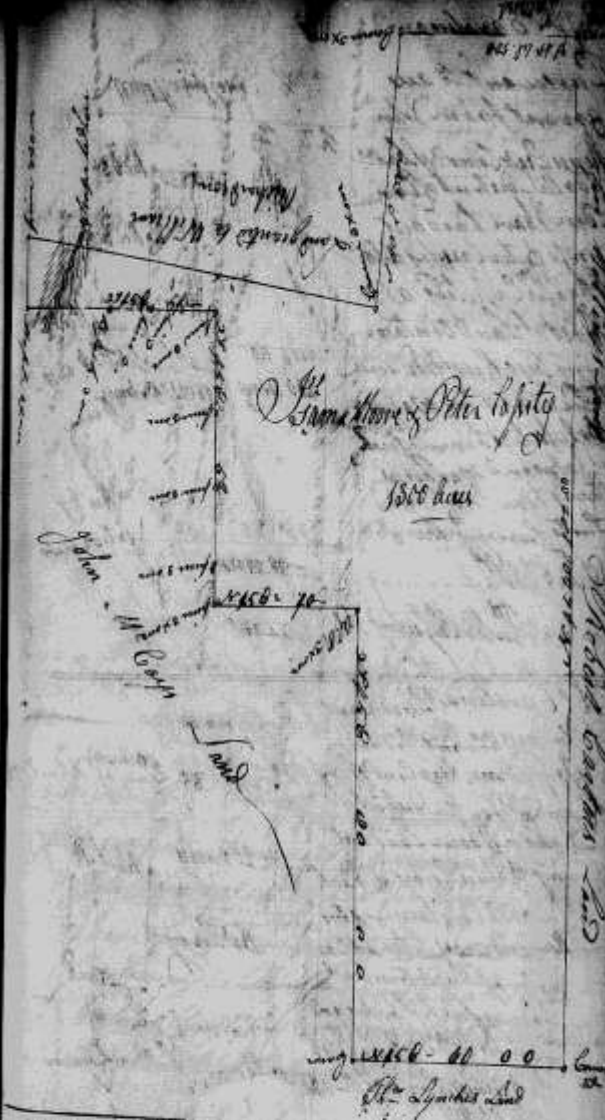


Witness my hand and Seal this 22 Day of April 1777



South Carolina  
 Pursuant to warrant from John Williamson Esq. Comr. of Land in the District of Camden I have laid out unto Charles Coker's tract of land containing five hundred acres situated on the west Branch of Swift Creek branch of the western Part of and both South Side of the River and Make Buttrick's and Remains as the above Plat Represents Surveyed 6 July 1777

John Williamson Esq. Comr. of Land



South Carolina  
 Pursuant to warrant from John Williamson Esq. Comr. of Land in the District of Camden I have laid out unto James Moore's tract of land containing five hundred acres situated on the west Branch of Swift Creek branch of the western Part of and both South Side of the River and Make Buttrick's and Remains as the above Plat Represents Surveyed 25 Dec 1777

John Williamson Esq. Comr. of Land

# Starkes and the Revolution

## Revolutionaries

By Mindy P. Hudson

It is believed George Peay (2) (born about 1757), was the son of George Peay (1) (born about 1733) and Mary Eubanks, both of Caroline County, Virginia. The father of this George Peay was possibly Elias Peay who was born about 1710. His wife may have been an Austin. George Peay (2) born in 1757 (Caroline County, Virginia) married Elizabeth Starke who was the daughter of James Starke and Elizabeth Turner. She was sister to John and Reuben Starke who, along with her husband George Peay, stirred up trouble for the British forces during the Revolutionary War. During the heat of the conflict, the families resided in the Camden District of South Carolina. According to letters written to Lyman C. Draper (an early historian) in 1873 by various family members and close acquaintances, the Starkes and Peays were "such noted patriots that [the] families were objects of special hatred to both the British and Tories".[2]

Elizabeth Starke Peay's brother, John Starke, was only 16 years old when he took up arms against the Tories (British sympathizers). He caused so much trouble that a price was put on his head. When Cornwallis made his march through South Carolina in an effort to round up the resistance fighters, Peay and Starke had to go into hiding to avoid capture. Unfortunately, a spy discovered where young Starke was hiding and a squad of men were sent to capture him. Starke was able to escape out a back door and fled to a nearby island with the British fast on his trail. He crossed the river on horseback with musket fire whistling all around him. When he safely reached the other side, his youthful exuberance enticed him to jeer at his pursuers. To his dismay, one of the British soldiers, an excellent marksman, was able to plant a musket ball in his thigh, shattering the bone. Starke crawled away and later managed to get back home where his mother repaired the damage as best she could. Fearing the soldiers would return to find her wounded son, she sought help from a neighbor (a Mrs. Jones, who'd been a close family friend, although her husband was a rank Tory). Mrs. Jones obliged to hide the boy since her husband was not at home, but her son discovered the scheme and reported it to the British in Camden. Unable to move, Starke was captured by the squad and taken in a cart on a jarringly painful trek toward Camden to be tried and hanged. Unable to finish the journey that evening, the British soldiers stopped at a house along the way, and brought Starke along with other prisoners they'd rounded up inside.

In the meantime, George Peay discovered the fate of his brother-in-law and determined to do what he could to rescue him. Elizabeth Peay secured a horse and cart, which she hid in the woods a short distance from the residence where the soldiers were housing the prisoners they were transporting to Camden. As night fell, George Peay carefully made his way to the house. He slipped past the sleeping guards and located John Starke by his pitiful moans. Quietly leaning over the boy, Peay whispered for him to throw his arms around his neck. He then carefully carried Starke out the door on his back, stepping over sleeping guards. Starke was transported to a small cabin hidden in the dense forest where he stayed until he recovered from his wounds.

The Peays and Starkes were staunch Whigs. Living among the Tories, they suffered much plundering and abuse. Homes were destroyed, food taken, and horses and valuables stolen. In fact, the Peays had already suffered much. George Peay and the Starke brothers were gone with the army, leaving Peay's son, 12-year-old Austin Peay, to care for his mother and siblings. With only a little corn left, Elizabeth sent her eldest son, Austin, to have the corn ground into meal. At some point, he ran into a group of Tories and was fired upon. They confiscated the horse and buggy, but he escaped with his life. His mother was in agony over the fate of her son until he arrived home, shaken, but in one piece. It was the mission of Peay, Starke, and others to hunt those who had taken their property and mete out whatever

justice they saw fit. At one point, George Peay, with the help of a young man named Lewis and a black servant, defeated a group of about two dozen Tories at Wateree Creek. The Tories were encamped at the creek on a cold and rainy night. Unaware of the danger, they were washing clothes and playing cards. Peay gave the order to "Fire", causing the confused soldiers to scatter into the icy water. Peay was able to recover the stolen horses.[3]

Shortly after, Peay went to North Carolina to meet General Gates on his march south. The situation in the Camden area was getting so volatile that Elizabeth Peay decided to flee to Virginia where her husband's family still resided. Accounts vary about whether she went alone with her small children or was accompanied by a Negro servant, but all versions agree she was late in a pregnancy and riding a horse. It was August 1780, Elizabeth met up with General Sumter's army and decided to travel a distance with the protection of the army. At Fishing Creek near the Catawba River, the army stopped to camp judging it to be a safe area. However, Colonel Tarleton, British commander, suddenly came charging into the camp cutting down every Whig within range. Elizabeth watched in horror as her companions were slaughtered all around her. Coming to her senses, she pulled her children down amongst the logs and covered them with her body. Miraculously, after the fight was over, she and her children survived the carnage; however, their horses were taken by the British forces. Being a woman of strong character and strength, Elizabeth searched among the destruction around her and located a mule that had been shot in the neck, but was still hardy enough to carry a load. With great determination, she continued her journey. At the same time, her husband, George Peay was engaged with General Gates in the bloody battle against Cornwallis' troops near Camden. Every inch of the way, she feared she'd find her husband and brothers lying dead or wounded.

Three days after the skirmish at Fishing Creek, Elizabeth gave birth--probably due to the stress of the journey. Exhausted and starving, her young children cried from hunger and fatigue. She stopped at a nearby farm to beg for a little food, but the owner, a Tory sympathizer, told her there were peaches in his orchard and that was good enough for rebel children. After this incident, she crossed the Yadkin River in North Carolina where she met up with another Tory who demanded she hand over her crippled mule. Undaunted, she continued her journey on foot until she reached the haven of her in-laws in Virginia.[4]

Both George Peay and John Starke lived through the War and went on to sire more children. George Peay died about 1793. George Peay is believed to be buried below Peay's Ferry on Wateree Creek, South Carolina in an unmarked grave. Elizabeth Starke Peay remarried shortly after his death to John Mickle. She had at least one son born of this union, John Mickle, Jr. Elizabeth lived to be in her 80s, and was buried at Longtown Baptist Church Cemetery, in Kershaw County, South Carolina.

### The Mysterious James N. Pee

James N. Peay/Pee, is the first ancestor of the Pee line that we are able to confirm. He may have been the son of George Peay; however, he is not mentioned in George Peay's will which was written in 1791 and proved 14 February 1792. It is possible that James, who was born about 1792, had not been born when the will was made, but it is also possible that James was not a Peay at all, but assumed the name. (Edwin "Doc" Pee claimed his family was "Scotch-Irish" and that his ancestor was a horse thief who'd changed his name to escape capture. I thought he was joking, but the elusiveness of finding proof of his parentage compels me to think there may have been a grain of truth in the story!--mh)

Sources: [2-4]Draper Manuscripts, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Transcribed by Sloan Mason, South Carolina, Sumpter Papers Series vv. Vol. 14--15VV, pp 336-339 (Hereafter cited as Draper Manuscripts).

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