

SAR Patriot Ancestors' Biographies

John Bradley (P119676)

1751-1824

Private Soldier in the American War for Independence

John Bradley was the first of three sons born to Ichem Bradley and his wife, McGee-Bradley. He was born 10 August 1751 in Cumberland County, Virginia.

In the fall of 1777, at the age of 26, John is believed to have volunteered to serve in the forces of the United States from Culpepper County, Virginia, joining a company in the regiment commanded by Colonel Pendleton. This unit was marched to various locations through Frederick, Maryland and into Pennsylvania, passing through Lancaster to join General Washington's forces, who were then moving to oppose General Howe's British troops occupying Philadelphia.

A short time later in February 1778, John volunteered to serve in another company, led by Captain John Roberts. This company became a part of the unit guarding the British prisoners of war composing what has been called the "Convention Army" or General Burgoyne's captured British Army from The Battle of Saratoga. These prisoners had been marched from Saratoga, New York, by way of Boston, Massachusetts to Albemarle County, Virginia where they were held in barracks near Charlottesville, Virginia. They were later moved further down the Shenandoah Valley to Winchester, during Cornwallis' invasion of Virginia shortly before General Washington's victory over Lord Cornwallis' British Army at The Battle of Yorktown.

Sometime around 1785 John Bradley married Miss Martha Mosbey of Cumberland County. Together they had a daughter named Nancy whose marriage to my 3rd great grandfather, Thomas Wilkerson spawned a Bradley-Wilkerson lineage providing me with two of my 4th great grandfathers—Turner Wilkerson (P320142) & John Bradley (P119676). John and Martha Bradley had eight other offspring in addition to their daughter Nancy; they were: Thomas, David, Ichem, Edward, Martha, Polly & Sally. Thomas and David both served in the Virginia Militia during the War of 1812.

Even though Virginia had been providing militia units and regiments to the Continental Line since the beginning of the Revolution in 1775, the war for American Independence did not physically come home to Virginia until early in 1781. Prior to his time in service and his subsequent marriage to Martha, John was most likely farming in Cumberland County as so many other families were doing. This area of Virginia in the 1770's and 80's was still pretty rural, as the great westward migration to Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio was only just beginning.

There is a moderate degree of confusion as to whether John's death occurred sometime in the 1820's in Cumberland County, Virginia or a decade later in Rutherford County, Tennessee—either way; his family knows him as a patriot, pioneer, part of the foundation of America and our grandfather.

Respectfully Submitted,



Turner Lee Wilkerson III

(SAR # 187468)