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JOHN McCAW, JR., FIRST CLERK OF COURT OF YORK COUNTY, 1786

By MARGARET A. GIST

The McCaw family is one of York County's old standards. The colonist, the first John McCaw came to America with his family from County Antrim, Ireland about 1733. John McCaw came to Pennsylvania where he found work as a surveyor for the royal government.

His knowledge of the country, acquired as a surveyor, stood him in good stead as a soldier in Braddock's army.

After Braddock's defeat, by which Pennsylvania was exposed to the ravages of the French and Indians, he joined the trek of the Scotch-Irish to Virginia. There they were still faced by Indian hostilities, so with his family John McCaw sought the safety of South Carolina. He settled and made his home in what is now York County.

His son, John McCaw Jr., was born and reared in the new South Carolina home. He was educated by his father, becoming an accomplished scholar, well versed in Greek and Latin, then regarded as essential to a well educated man.

Like all Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, John McCaw took the side of the Whigs in the war of the Revolution. We know that he fought at the battle of Williamson's Plantation, July 12, 1870.

At the celebration of that battle, July 12, 1839, the following was one of the toasts offered: "The memory of John McCaw, John Dennis and William Manahan—the Whigs and Tories of the Revolution could both tell that they could fight and that they did fight for liberty and freedom".

There is in the files of the York County Courthouse an old minute book. On the outside front cover is inscribed: "Court Minute Book 'A' 1786 to 1792". On the fly leaf is the following inscription: "Minutes of the proceedings of the County Court of York from January 1786 until May Court 1792 inclusive. Signed: John McCaw, C. C."

On page three there is this entry: "Ordered by the Court that the proceedings of the Justice of the 12th day of July last be entered 'on the minutes of the Court', which is The Justices of the Court of York met the first time and unanimously chose John McCaw Clerk of said County, who was worn in according to law".

The bond of John McCaw as clerk of Court was 1,000 pounds, and this was signed by John McCaw and Justices Wm. Bratton, John Drennan and William Hill.

As to where the court was held the following minutes may shed some light: "The Court proceeded to consider a bargain made by Colonel William Hill and John McCaw for a house formerly occupied by William McCall, upon the determination of which the Court was equally divided.

"The Court again proceeded to consider the bargain made by Col. Wm

Hill and John McCaw of a house the property of David McCall and upon taking the minds of the court there were seven justices for affirming the bargain and two, viz: Atraham Smith and Samuel Watson, Esqs., against it whereupon the Court orders the trustees to pay for said house in the most convenient manner that might be without taxing the county".

Dr. Maurice Moore in his "Reminiscences of York" writes: "The third domicile (in town of York) was put up by David McCall—a large, two storied log building, and was opened by him as a house of entertainment".

John McCaw married Mary Johnston, daughter of Robert Johnston, Sr., and his wife Mary. One of John McCaw's children, Robert McCaw, was a legatee of Robert Johnston.

Can anyone tell the writer where First Clerk of Court John McCaw is buried?

Mrs. J. K. Alston, born Miss Belle McCaw, in her ancestral home "The Bricks" is the worthy representative of the McCaw family in York County. Other descendants with the McCaw name are Miss Agalice McCaw of New Orleans and Henry McCaw of Kansas City, children of the late W. B. McCaw, an eminent lawyer of York.

Authorities: Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas. Minute Book of York County. Dr. David A. Bigger's "The Neel Family of Th New Acquisition".

YORKVILLE

JANUARY 17, 1946

Papers of Dr. David A. Bigger
Kindness of Mrs. Bigger
July 16, 1954

McCaw Gift at Columbia Museum



The above portrait, painted about 1859 by Thomas Scarborough will go on special display today in the North gallery of the Columbia Museum of Art. It is the gift of Mrs. Henry LeSassier McCaw of York and was painted about 1859. Restoration was in charge of George S. DeMerell of Charleston, under auspices of the Columbia museum. (Photo of painting by Munn and Teal). *The State*

"... By the way, I advertised in the Yorkville Enquirer for information about burial ground of John McCaw 1753-1825 and his wife Mary Johnstone.

I got an answer immediately. They were buried in Beersheba Church yard -- to the northwest of York -- tombstone clear and dates correspond."

From a letter written by Mrs. W. H. McCaw, 1719 Green Street, Columbia, South Carolina; dated September 17, 1954.

see pictures on back of this card.

South Carolina Artist's 7/30/50 Painting Shown at Museum

A portrait by Thomas Scarborough, well-known South Carolina painter of the mid-nineteenth century, has been received as a gift by the Columbia Museum of Art from Mrs. Henry LeSassier McCaw of York and will go on special display at the museum today.

The portrait, restored by George S. DeMerell of Charleston, is a large oil, showing a small boy, John McCaw, Fourth, of Columbia, who died in 1856. The subject, Mr. McCaw's uncle, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gadsen McCaw, and was painted sometime before 1859, probably from a tintype. An old receipt shows Scarborough received payment for it in July of that year.

"The painting has not had any maintenance in 90 years of its existence," says Dr. John R. Craft, museum director, "and the museum entrusted work of restoration to

Mr. DeMerell who received his training in art technical work at the Fogg Museum of Harvard university.

"Though the painting's basic condition was good before restoration," says the director, "the job has brought out the freshness and interesting quality of the original."

Thomas Scarborough painted in Columbia between 1840 and 1870 and was a native of Tennessee. A biography by Mrs. Helen Kohn Hennig of Columbia, leading Scarborough authority, lists 354 Scarboroughs.

The picture shows the boy in a garden and holding a drumstick. Nearby, on the ground are his hat, drum and a small hammer. It will be on special display in the north gallery of the museum today, and throughout the week.



The inscription on this tombstone reads as follows:

SACRED
to
the memory of
Mary McCaw
who departed this life
the 7th of December
1829
in the 73rd year
of her age

Mary was Mary Johnstone, daughter of Robert
Johnstone of the Johnstones of Anandale,
Scotland.



The inscription on this tombstone reads as follows:

IN
Memory of

John McCaw, Sen.

Born Feb. 8th, 1755
Died Aug. 15th, 1823

Aged
78 years