

The Burnside and Mayes Families

Burnside

In the Burnsides we again find a Scotch-Irish family name in the Hannah ancestral line. The origin of the name Burnside is interesting, and perhaps typical of the evolution of surnames. The Burnside families in Scotland were actually named Wallace. There were several heads of families having the same name - John Wallace - and residing in the same locality. In order to avoid confusion they were called after the names of their dwelling places - John of the Hill, John of the Mill, and John of the Burnside (beside the "burn" or stream). Over time the locale designator became the surname; John of the Burnside became John Burnside. Other variations of the surname came about through phonetic spellings and misspellings such as Byrnside and Burnsides.

Since the original family name was Wallace, we probably have the right to claim we are related to William Wallace, the Scottish chief and hero who gave his life fighting for Scottish independence in 1305. As a military leader he had defeated the English at Stirling Bridge in 1297, but was himself defeated at Falkirk in 1298. He was captured by the English in 1305, taken to London, hung, drawn and quartered, and his body parts were displayed on the city gates at various places in Scotland as a warning to other rebels. A large tower located near the town of Stirling is a memorial to William Wallace, and is well worth the visit and the long climb up a circular stairway to the top.

About three hundred years after the demise of William Wallace one Robert Burnside left from Scotland for Ireland, during the "plantation of Ulster". His family later settled in Corcreevy, County Tyrone and is probably the branch from which our Burnsides descend. The records of the Burnside family who emigrated to America are practically non-existent, so we have to rely on family tradition - stories passed on by family members to later generations. There has been a lot of effort by descendants to trace the many Burnside families in America back to their origins in the British Isles. While studying the various accounts we have found so many discrepancies in dates and names that it is impossible to come to any conclusion about the specific origin of our American Burnside family. A common thread in the several sources on Burnside ancestry is that a Robert Burnside went from Scotland to Raphoe, County Donegal, in North Ireland, in 1608. His son Robert married Janet Lindsay and moved to County Tyrone, North Ireland in 1642.¹⁸

We believe that Robert Burnside descends from that family. Robert supposedly came to America with other Burnsides, including at least two brothers, John and William, perhaps around 1730. He was the father of John Burnside who lived along the Greenbrier River in what is now West Virginia in the late 1700s. When we think of our John Burnside we find ourselves adopting the Scottish tradition - using the locale designator in place of the surname - referring to him as "John of the Greenbrier".

Our John Burnside was born around 1730, give or take a few years - about the time the Burnside brothers are thought to have first arrived from Ireland. He was the son of Robert Burnside and Esther Mayes. When John's father, Robert, was killed by

Indians in Augusta County in 1742, John was still a boy, and he went to live with his Uncle John Burnside, who lived in the vicinity of the Old Stone Church, just a few miles north of Staunton, Virginia. His younger brother and sister, James and Rachel, stayed with their mother, Esther (Mayes) Burnside. Esther later married Archibald Clendennin and lived up on the Cowpasture River in the eastern foothills of the Allegheny Mountains.

An Augusta County court record¹⁹ shows that John Burnside lived in Greenbrier County as early as 1779. The early Greenbrier tax records starting in 1782 support this, so it is likely he lived on the upper Greenbrier from at least that early. Since John, when young, lived with his Uncle John Burnside in Augusta County near Staunton, we think it is reasonable to believe he met and married Mary Walker in that vicinity. She is no doubt from the Walker family who lived near Mount Meridian, just northeast of Staunton, Virginia. No record of John's marriage to Mary Walker has been found, and what we know of Mary's lineage is given in chapter 11 on the Walker family.

The following information on the family of John Burnside and Mary Walker comes from a "family group sheet" submitted to the LDS Family History Library in about 1970 by Mrs. Emma Worthen. While we have not verified all of this information, the dates and names largely agree with other sources we have seen. The children were:

- Sarah - b. ca 1775 married John Beatty
- Alexander - b. ca 1777 married Elizabeth Gilliland
- John - b. ca 1779 married Susannah Gilliland
- Elizabeth - b. ca 1781 married Joseph Hannah
- Isabella - b. ca 1783 married Robert Smith
- Mary - b. ca 1785 married Alexander Reed
- Margaret - b. ca 1787 married David Hannah (see chapter 6)
- William - b. ca 1789 married Margaret Callison
- Robert - b. ca 1791 married Ruth ?
- Martha - b. ca 1793 married John Jordan

The Hannah connection to the Burnside family came nearly a century after the Burnside family came to America with the 1815 marriage of Margaret Burnside to David Hannah, Jr., who is the subject of Chapter 6. Margaret was born about 1790 in what is now Pocahontas County, Virginia, and died September 11, 1855 at Elk in northwestern Pocahontas County.

Interestingly, another branch of the Hannah family also traces to the same Burnside family through Elizabeth Burnside, sister to Margaret. Elizabeth married Joseph Hannah, brother of David Hannah, Jr., and both families lived along the Elk River in Pocahontas County, starting sometime before 1820. Elizabeth and Margaret were two of the ten children of John Burnside and Mary Walker.

John Burnside's death date is known to be 1809, as his probated estate is a matter of record in Bath County, Virginia. His will is typical of the time and place in that it provides for his wife, names his children, and also distributes his slaves to his various survivors. One exception is his daughter, Sarah, who is married to a Mr. Beatty, and who does not receive a slave child, but receives instead \$20 from each of the three boys because "... I think that suits her better than a negro child in her way of living." We wonder if perhaps she had some anti-slavery sentiment.

A Hannah Family of West Virginia

John shows a certain compassion for the slaves when he says in his will "...I do not allow any of these Negroes to be sold to any other man but kept in my own family.". But the will goes on to say that the offspring of two of the slaves are to be "... given out when they are two or three years old.". So, separating the Negro children from their parents was accepted, but selling the adult slaves outside the family was not. Our generation cannot possibly understand the slave-holding culture, nor the attitudes prevalent at that time. One interesting bit of trivia which surfaced during our research is that John of the Greenbrier's Uncle John Burnside, who lived near Staunton, Virginia had an indentured servant at the time of his death in 1793. The abstract of a court record by Chalkley²⁰ reads:

Patience Ritchey, aged 14 in April next, to be bound to John Poage, Jr., who agrees to pay her 6 Pounds as freedom dues. She was formerly bound to John Burnside, now deceased, and Frances Stuart, the only child of said Burnside, is willing to deliver her up.

John Burnside's Greenbrier plantation was left to his two sons, William and Robert, neither of whom was of age at the time of the will. The other boys were older and already provided for. Of course, his wife was taken care of for as long as she might live, if she did not re-marry. The female heirs typically received a horse, their bed, a spinning wheel, and a small amount of cash. Later the son, Robert, bought his brother William's part of the property, and his descendants lived on it until 1907 when the old homestead was sold.

John is listed in the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution index as a soldier from Virginia. According to Bertha Lewis Clark, a Burnside researcher of the 1930's, John was a Revolutionary War soldier. She gives the following references, which we have not verified:

He served in the Revolution from Augusta County, and his descendants are eligible for membership in the DAR and SAR, as a result of his service.

1. John Burnside, of Capt. James Allen's company, 1756, French & Indian Wars. (author's note - no reference given)
2. Burnside, John: 7th Virginia Reg.; (War Department Folder 147 page 4), continental Lines; H. J. Eckenrode's "List of Revolutionary Soldiers of Virginia" Vol. 2, p. 53; or 9th annual report Virginia Library Board, 1911/1912, Eckenrode, archivist.
3. Burnside, John, in Capt. Reuben Harrison's Co. of Augusta County, John H. Gwathmey's "Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution", p. 113, published in 1938.

Mayes

Our relationship to the Mayes family comes by way of Esther Mayes, the mother of John Burnside of the Greenbrier. She was a daughter of James Mayes, and was married to Robert Burnside - perhaps before they came to America.

All that we know of this family comes from other researchers.²¹ The name Mayes (other spellings - Mays, Maze, Mayse, Mais, etc.) is of English origin, being found in parish registers in London. The family may, of course, have come from North Ireland as did most of the Scotch-Irish families.

James Mayes bought land on the Cowpasture River in what is now Bath County in 1745-46. Also, he was appointed constable of the area in February 1745²² and took an active part in the community. He is believed to have lived on the Cowpasture River from that early time until he was killed by Indians in 1756.²²

His children were Esther, born about 1711 (our direct ancestor who married Robert Burnside); Joseph, born about 1713; William, born about 1715; Sarah, born about 1717; Richard, born about 1719.

The following is from the book *A History Of Highland County, Virginia*, by Oren F. Morton, (1911 - reprinted 1979), p. 74-85:

1755 - British General BRADDOCK led his army to a crushing defeat against the French and their Indian allies at Fort Duquesne (present Pittsburgh, PA), in 1755. The entire frontier was left defenseless and exposed to Indian depredation. The red warriors, flushed with triumph at their easy victory against the British proceeded to assault the frontier with fire and tomahawk. The area of Bath County, Virginia suffered severely. "Fort Dickinson and Fort Lewis were both assaulted. In September 1756, thirteen persons were killed around Fort Dinwiddie, including John BYRD, James MAYSE, James MONTGOMERY, George KINKEAD, and Nicholas CARPENTER. At least two others were wounded; and twenty-eight, mostly children, were carried away. Among those captured by the Indians were Mrs. BYRD and six children, Mrs. KINKEAD and three children, and five children of Joseph CARPENTER.