

DAVID HOLT

The Holt family was in Greene County by 1798. David Holt (1764-1837) signed his Will on December 16, 1836. Just exactly why David is not shown in the 1830's list of Pensioners is not understood. In his Will, David named wife, Isabella "my present wife". David's first wife was Betsey Paxton (1774-1820). The children named in the Will were daughters, Lucy - wife of Seyburn Jewel, Sally, Nancy - wife of Anthony Moore, Polly - then unmarried, and Elizabeth who was described as "uncapable", and who was in the care of her sister, Sally. Named sons were Joseph, John P. (Paxton) and David R. (Rice).

Mostly what we know of David's life and times is told by the Holt Graveyard on his 376-acre farm on Lick Creek. Today, this land has become part of the Greeneville Airport, bordered to the East by the Kingsport Highway 93. After David's death, the farm changed ownership several times.

In 2007, the Greeneville Airport required a runway expansion and 'line-of-site' improvements. As excavations began, an old, unidentified graveyard was discovered. All work stopped until the State Archeologist was brought in. After professional surveys and excavations, the site was not deemed to be a 'Historical Site', but none-the-less, the graves still required removal. These graves were that of Revolutionary War Soldier, David Holt, his first wife, and other family members.

Upon the removal and re-interment of the remains in 2010, thirty-one graves were identified, with one gravesite that had a tombstone, but without remains. When the graveyard was studied by the Genealogical Society, only fifteen of these thirty-one graves could be reasonably identified. We know, with certainty, two of David's daughter, Nancy Holt Moore is buried in Oakland Cemetery and daughter, "Polly" (Mary R. Holt Moore, wife of Jeremiah Moore) is buried at Mount Bethel Presbyterian Church Cemetery. In the early 20th century, the Holt Graveyard was then known as the Moore Graveyard. By the mid 20th century, the farm was owned by Valentine Hardin.

The three sons of David Holt named in his Will (John Paxton Holt, David Rice Holt and Joseph Milton Holt) all left Greeneville after their Father's death and before 1840. In his Will, David specified the farm was not to be sold as long as the family remained on the farm; but in the alternative event, the farm was to be sold at public auction or privately, and the proceeds were to be divided among the heirs. By 1850, a part of the farm was then owned by Jacob and Elizabeth Fortner, and they are buried in the Holt Graveyard. The neighboring farm was owned by Mary R. Holt Moore (1812-1880), the widow of Jeremiah Moore (1807-1845) who are buried in Mount Bethel Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

During the excavation of the Holt Graveyard, each grave was meticulously inventoried and mapped for location. The graves were then relocated to just outside of the Airport fence line.

So ends, the 'story' of Revolutionary War Soldier David Holt.



Relocated Holt Family Graveyard. The cyclone fencing to the Airport is visible.



David Holt (1764-1837)



Betsey Paxton Holt (1774-1820)

Original Headstones