

JOSHUA KIDWELL

The name of Joshua Kidwell, born July 15, 1757; died March 25, 1835, is found in the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) Patriot Index, page 385. The name of Joshua's wife is given as Mary Britton. Both are buried on their farm near Roaring Fork of Lick Creek, in the historic Kidwell Cemetery. A deed dated June 22, 1808 mentions this Roaring Fork location, "near John Gass' line and John McPherson's line.

In the 1830 Greene County census, Joshua and Mary are both listed as age 60-69. Although Revolutionary War Soldiers began to file for Pension about 1830, Joshua's name does not appear in the annual rosters of those who were drawing pensions in Greene County during the 1830s.

Interestingly, a man of this name is found in the 1810 census of Fairfax County, Virginia, age over 45.

What little we know of Joshua Kidwell's Revolutionary War experience comes from a Goodspeed interview of Joshua's namesake and grandson, Rufus Joshua Kidwell (1825-1889), who is buried in Bethesda Cemetery in Morristown:

Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1887, Greene County, page 1249:

"Rufus J. Kidwell, was born four miles north of Greeneville on the waters of Roaring Fork of Lick Creek, Greene County, on April 2, 1825, and is the son of Elijah and Polly (Hankins) Kidwell. The father was born in Greene County in 1802 and was the son of Joshua Kidwell, who was born in the valley of Virginia, and was the son of a native of Wales, England. Joshua, the grandfather, came to Tennessee in about 1787, and settled in Greene County, of which he was one of the pioneers; coming when there were but few white men here and the country was overrun with Indians. He and a brother were engaged in the Indian campaigns, and the latter was killed in the assault upon the Indians at Lookout Mountain.

Elijah, the father, was a farmer and carpenter and carried on the two vocations jointly, making a success of both. He was an industrious and energetic man; though well known and highly esteemed, he never entered public life nor ever held a county office, being of a retiring disposition and never asking for office. While at work, erecting the residence, in which H. D. Maloney now resides on Chucky River, he contracted a fever from which he died on August 28, 1842. The mother was born in New Jersey in 1798, and was the daughter of William Hankins, who was a native Scotland. He immigrated to Tennessee at the close of the Revolutionary war, and settled Greene County on Roaring Fork of Lick Creek. She was a pious Christian lady, and died in 1862. She was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A peculiarity of the grandparents of our subject was, that each lived and died on their original farms and the same are in the possession of their children.

Elijah Kidwell (1802-1842) and his wife, Mary Hankins Kidwell (1798-1863), are buried in Kidwell Cemetery.



Founded about 1800, the cemetery is located on a 1784 land grant made to Thomas Stanfield. On the grounds, a log meetinghouse was built which served as both church, school, and center for the neighborhood. The log structure was lost to fire in 1880. A new brick meetinghouse was constructed about 1/4 mile north, known as, Hardin's Chapel.

There are numerous unmarked graves and those with un-inscribed fieldstone markers. Buried in this cemetery are pioneer families of Greene County, slaves, and Revolutionary War Veterans:

Joshua Kidwell - Zopher Johnson - Matthew Cox

In the 1980s, the Hardin's Chapel Men's Bible Study Group undertook the restoration of the long abandoned Kidwell Cemetery. The Cemetery had long been unfenced, and cattle had been allowed to roam, causing much destruction to gravesites and tombstones.

After the restoration, several Military Headstones were obtained through the Veteran's Administration and placed for soldiers of the American Revolution and the Civil War.

According to the Memoires of Reverend Samuel Houston Harold (1849-1920), who attended the Kidwell Meetinghouse as a young boy, the Church services were nonsectarian, and travelling Ministers would give the Sermons.