

**Mary [Polly] Murphey**  
[Alexander<sup>1</sup> Archibald<sup>2</sup> Mary<sup>3</sup>]

**Mary** who was known as **Polly Murphey** was the second child and eldest daughter of Colonel Archibald Murphey and Jane Debow Murphey. She was born on 13 March 1771 in Caswell County, North, Carolina and she died on 13 September 1847 in Brownsville, Tennessee, just four months after her husband died.

Polly was married on 04 October 1791 to **Herndon Haralson**, born 1757, and a native of Caswell County, North Carolina. Herndon moved his family first to Madison County, Tennessee in 1820, and later moved them to Brownsville, Haywood County, Tennessee where he died on 27 May 1847.

Polly and Herndon are buried in the old Haralson family cemetery in Brownville, Tennessee. The Haywood County DAR marked Herndon's grave with a small marker in 1922, which was subsequently replaced by a much larger marker, paid for jointly by the DAR and Haralson descendants. Polly is buried beside her husband, although her grave remains unmarked.



*The morning of 15 March 1781 was cold and clear. A light frost had disappeared under the first rays of the sun, but the ground underfoot was soft and spongy from long winter rains and snows. In the damp woods of what had been an isolated farming community in the Piedmont on a major east-west road through North Carolina, some 4,400 American troops, in various uniforms and country clothes, waited for battle.*

*This backwoods county seat of Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina, was the site of a pivotal battle in the Revolutionary War's decisive Southern Campaign. The engagement set the stage for the region's liberation from enemy occupation and impelled the British General Lord Charles Cornwallis to take the ill-fated road that led him to final defeat at Yorktown, Virginia, seven months later.*

Herndon was a deputy surveyor and deputy county clerk under Archibald Murphey in Caswell County between 1780 and 1791. Upon the approach of Cornwallis's army in January 1781, he obtained a Captain's commission and raised a volunteer company for service against the approaching British. He served the Continental cause with credit both to that cause and himself. He fought at Pyle's defeat, White's Mill, Alamance, Guilford Court House and at the battle of Eutaw Springs.

The Haralsons settled, soon after their marriage, in Person County [formed from Caswell] North Carolina on land formerly owned by Polly's Uncle Alexander. Herndon became deputy county clerk, holding this office between 1792 and 1793. He also served as representative in the House of Commons from 1793 to 1800. Later he served as County Clerk from 1800 to 1816. In 1816 he removed to Danville, Virginia where he and his wife made their home for two years. In 1818 he removed to the town of Haywood, in Chatham County where he resided for the next two years, moving at the end of that time, in 1820, to the site of Jackson, Tennessee where he made his home for the following five years. In 1825, he and his family moved finally to the vicinity of Brownsville, Tennessee.

Herndon Haralson and Mary [Polly] Murphey Haralson had eleven children. Among these there was one son named Archibald Haralson who was born in 1792 and died in 1840. He studied at the University of North Carolina between 1808 and 1811 and afterwards at Princeton. He became a lawyer and settled in Hillsboro, North Carolina where for a time he practiced law. He later moved to Chatham County and, thence in 1820, to St. Francisville, Louisiana where he achieved success at the bar. His legal studies were largely directed by Judge Archibald Debow Murphey, his uncle.<sup>15</sup> Herndon and Polly also had a daughter named Elizabeth [Betsy] Murphey Haralson. This daughter married Robert Hughes in 1822, a lawyer of Jackson, Tennessee. He was very successful at the bar and became an eminent judge.

Herndon Haralson was involved in business ventures with his brother-in-law, Archibald Debow Murphey, and assisted him in his Tennessee land speculations. Herndon, a surveyor of land, became employed, through his brother-in-law, Archibald Debow Murphey, by the University of North Carolina to survey lands in West Tennessee, leading to his settlement in Jackson where he was a founding father.

When W.H. Hoyt was preparing his volumes on ADM for publication, he prepared transcripts of documents, some of which were not used. Following is a transcript that was noted to be in the handwriting of ADM:

State of Tennessee ]

**Herndon Haralson** has bargained, Sold, assigned and set over to me all his right, title, Interest, Estate, Claim & Demand in and to the Lands and rights of Location to which **John Rice** had title or Claim either at Law or in Equity at the time of his death; and also transferred, assigned and set over to me all Contract, made and entered into by him with other Persons, and particularly with **Alexander Murphey, Solomon Debow** and **Stephen Debow**, touching and concerning the Said Lands and Rights of Location; and for this Sale and transfer I have agreed to pay him fifteen hundred dollars, as follows, to wit:

If W. Lenore & Noulx [*this is what was transcribed, but appears to have a portion missing*] a locative Part in a tract of Land adjoining the Lands of Herndon Haralson can be obtained by me, I am to obtain it for Herndon Haralson; also a Warrant of seventy five [75] acres or thereabouts, and also a Warrant of ten [10] acres or thereabouts; and the Prices which I have to pay for the Said warrants and said locative Interest is to be credited to me; and it is expected they will cost as follows, to wit:

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Locative Interest 67 Acres at \$8 | \$536        |
| Warrant of 75 Acres at \$2        | \$150        |
| Warrant of 10 Acres at \$3        | <u>\$ 30</u> |
|                                   | \$716        |

[dated October 10th 1822]

[settled June 15, 1829[?]] [Hoyt also noted that Haralson bought the land he lived on from ADM]

An autobiographical account by Capt. Herndon Haralson, written in his 85th year, and which has been published in several sources, gives us an invaluable account:

"My grandfather, Peter Haralson, emigrated from Holland to North America in the year 1715, and landed in Virginia. Shortly after he married a young lady by the name of Chambers, in the County of Hanover, by whom he had four sons and one daughter.

About the year 1750 these four sons, [after their father's death], removed and settled on Hyco, a small river of the Dan in Orange County, North Carolina. Paul, who was the third son, and who was my father, in the year 1754, married Nancy Lea, the daughter of James Lea, then of Orange County and of the ancient family of Lea now living in Caswell County in said State, by whom he had eight sons and five daughters. I, being the first son, was born on the 12th day of October 1757. My father, not being in affluent circumstances, gave me a limited English education, as was customary in those days.

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<sup>15</sup> The Papers of ADM, by William Henry Hoyt, Vol. I, pp 10-11, 27-28, 53.

When about 19 years of age, and at the opening of the land Office of North Carolina, I received the appointment of Deputy Surveyor for the County of Caswell and continued in that business until the year 1780, at which time Col. Archibald Murphey, the Clerk of the Court for said County, employed me as Deputy in his office, with whom I continued until Lord Cornwallis entered the State and passed through to the State of Virginia. On his march through Carolina he passed immediately [with his army] by the Office. Col. Murphey being then a Major in the Army, I collected the records [to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy], and deposited them safely.



I then applied for a command to raise a Volunteer Company. It was immediately granted me, and within a few days I raised a Company, well equipped, and I joined the army under General Green. At this juncture the Tories embodied the neighborhood of Hillsborough, under command of Col. Piles, a Dutch doctor. We marched immediately, surprised and cut them to pieces, killing 180, on the 21st of February. A few days afterward, to wit: on the 2nd day of March 1781, we fought the battle of White's Mill, on the Reedy Fork of the Haw River; thence a severe skirmish on the Alamance; afterwrds, to wit: on the 15th of March 1781, fought the battle of Guilford Court House; and from thence marched with the army of General Green and fought in the battle of Eutah Springs of South

Carolina. This was a bloody battle.

Here I received a Major's command of the three Companies of Mounted Infantry called the 'Marshall Corps.' After this Battle I returned to North Carolina with 500 prisoners in charge, to the town of Salisbury and was there discharged. I again took charge of the Clerk's Office in Caswell County until the year 1784. An offer was then made me by Robert Donald & Co., importing merchants of Petersburg, Virginia, as Clerk of that House. I accepted it, and continued in their employ for three years. I then returned to Caswell County and took charge of the Clerk's Office until 1791, at which time, and on the 4th of October in that year, I was married to Mary Murphey, the daughter of said Archibald Murphey, and settled in that County; by whom had 8 sons and 3 daughters, viz: Archibald, born 5th day of July 1792 and died -----; Jonathan, born the 12th day of February 1794; Herndon, born the 20th day of Jan 1796; Paul Anderson, born on Wednesday, 20th day of June 1798; Green Lea, born on Sunday, the 27th day of July 1800; Betsie Murphey, born on Sunday, the 15th day of August 1802; William Henry, born on Sunday, 2nd day of Sept 1805; James Madison, born Friday, born 3rd day of Apr 1807; Jane Ann, born 6th day of Nov 1809; Mary Herndon, born Wednesday, 7th day of July 1813; and John Haywood, born 24th day of June 1817.

In the year 1792, the County of Caswell being divided, I fell in the next county by the name of Person. I was then employed by Robt. Payne, in this business and in the year 1793, I was elected Representative in the House of Commons for the County, and continued as such by the annual elections till the year 1800; after which time I declined and was apointed by the Judge of the Superior Court as Clerk of that County and continued to act till the year 1816. I then resigned the office and removed to the town of Danville, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. From thence, in the year 1818, I removed to the town of Haywood, Chatham County, North Carolina. From thence, in the year 1820, I removed to the State of Tennessee and settled in the wilderness, on Forked Deer River. Two years afterwards, the Western District being organized making out counties and establishing courts, my residence fell in the County of Madison, near the town of Jackson. I was commissioned in the militia and continued till the year 1825. I then sold the land and moved to Haywood County, where I now live.

In the year 1826 I was appointed Agent for the Bank of the State, and continued till the funds were directed to be paid out to the school Commissioners. In the year 1832 Congress passed a law for the payment of Pensions to Revolutionary Officers and Soldiers who had served six months in the War, commencing on the 4th day of March 1831, and payable semi-annually during their natural life. Being one of this description, I made my Declaration for the Captain's pay, and was allowed at the War Office One Hundred and Eighty Dollars per annum.

The History contained in this Declaration [as to myself] is truly interesting. It is made out and prepared from the record of my services, written by my own hand, and passed without help. Having then, in a short and explicit manner, given part of a history of my past life, being on this day 84 years and 8 months of age, this July 12th, 1842. /s/H. Haralson."

Polly and Herndon had eleven children:

- i. **Archibald M. Haralson** [see page 168].
- ii. **Jonathan Haralson** [see page 170].
- iii. **Herndon Haralson Jr.** [see page 173].
- iv. **Paul Anderson Haralson** [see page 175].
- v. **Greene Lea Haralson** was born 27 July 1800. While a young man, Greene Lea moved to Kaskaskia, Illinois where he was successful in business and at one time was postmaster of Maysville, Illinois. A 1835 letter by Herndon Haralson to his son, Jonathan, reads:

"I have heard something from Greene Lea since I last wrote you. He says he lives in the neighborhood of Kaskaskia, Illinois, is getting rich, has turned religious and has some thought of expounding the scriptures to his Methodist brethren in that country. I had otherwise heard that he has some thought of taking on himself the rites of a Roman Catholic Priest. This I think would suit him better. In this, he could make money by forgiving their sins and might be able to pay me a few hundred dollars he owes."

It was believed that he never married. The 1840 Jasper County, Illinois census reflects that Green L.J. Haralson, aged 40-50 was living in that county with a woman, also aged 40-50, and several female children. It is guessed that Greene married a widow with children. No further record has been found but it was thought that Greene may be buried in an unmarried grave in the family cemetery in Brownville, which seems unlikely if he was in fact married in Illinois.

- vi. **Elizabeth Murphey Haralson** [see page 176].
- vii. **William Henry Haralson** [see page 177].
- viii. **James Madison Haralson** was born 03 April 1807 and he died in 1830. It is believed that he died without issue. He is buried in the Haralson family graveyard, Haywood County.
- ix. **Jane Ann Haralson** was born 06 November 1809. She first married Thornton W. Pinckard and lived in Texas during its early days as a republic. Thornton died on 02 October 1838, the result of a duel fought earlier in the year with James Slaughter Steele, his brother-in-law.

On 16 October 1838 [two weeks after her husband's death], Jane Ann married Oliver Gorman in Washington County, Texas. Jane must have made a visit home to see her parents, as her father noted in his diary on 03 January 1846, "Jane Ann left for Texas." Gorman died in September 1846, also noted in Herndon Haralson's diary.

There is some evidence that she married a third time to a Mr. Stamps. It would appear that Jane Ann Haralson had no children by any of her marriages.

- x. **Mary Herndon Haralson** [see page 179].
- xi. **John Haywood Haralson** was born 04 June 1817. He died 20 December 1891 near San Rafael, California where he practiced law. Cited in the Williams and Murphey Records is the story that "it was said that he amassed a large estate but lost it all. On one occasion he was going abroad, and before leaving, made a friend [so-called] power of attorney, only to find upon his return that his entire fortune was gone and he could never find the guilty party." It is believed that Haywood

never married. An entry in Herndon Haralson's diary on 13 September 1846 says: "Rec'd son Haywood's letter stating his decline to marry in Ohio."

Herndon Haralson, husband of Mary Murphey [daughter of Archibald Murphey], kept a daily diary from January 1<sup>st</sup> 1837 until his death in 1847. The original diary can be found at the Tennessee State Archives, but it is my understanding that it is in fragments and is incomplete. At some point in time, Herndon's son, William Henry Haralson, transcribed his father's diary into a hard bound book that remains in the possession of the Haralson family.

Just prior to final printing of the 2003 edition of this book, copies of both the transcript and the original diary came into my possession. In transcribing the original diary, William Henry Haralson copied his father's entries, but perhaps because the original was so difficult to read, many of the entries differ somewhat from the original entries – but keeping the general thought. However, some of the entries clearly are in error in the transcript.

The diary contains a wealth of history. Herndon noted his daily activities, including visitors and acquaintances, naming hundreds of residents of Haywood County, Tennessee. There are almost daily entries relating to his children and there is a scattering of entries relating to other members of the Murphey clan. The meaning of most entries is clear, but several leave us questioning the circumstance of the entry. One such entry was:

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 01 May 1843 | Rec'd Geo. Suthers letter on <b>Col. Murphey's pension</b> for my certificate. |
|-------------|--|

Mr. Robert Haralson, who is presently in possession of his ancestor's transcript, has generously shared the diary and has given his permission for its publication and circulation. It is my hope that ultimately this font of historical and family data will be published and available to everyone.

Herndon noted that both he and his wife, Mary Murphey Haralson had their pictures taken in 1843. However, those photographs, if they still exist, have not been located. A fire in the 1920's destroyed the family home and most personal possessions were lost.

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 11 Aug 1843 | Mrs. Forman dies - <b>Set to have my likeness taken by Bruce in town.</b> |
| 12 Aug 1843 | Set the 2nd time - Doct. Campbell of Ashport visits.                      |
| 14 Aug 1843 | <b>Set the 3rd time and finished the portrait by Geo. St. Bruice.</b>     |
| 16 Aug 1843 | <b>My wife's portrait also taken</b> - Barzella Lea to Perry Springs.     |

The Williams and Murphy Records cites Herndon's son, Archibald's date of death as 06 October 1839 at his home in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana. The copies in my possession of the original diary are missing the period of September through November 1839. The transcript copies contain those dates, but there is no entry reflecting Archibald's death, although no entries were found after October 1839 reflecting Archibald Haralson.

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 20 Apr 1838 | Rec'd letters from Sons Archibald and Will. Arch is very sick.              |
| 17 Jun 1838 | Went to town. Rec'd Son Arch's letter. Steele & Pinckard had fought a duel. |
| 18 Jun 1838 | Wrote son Archibald – Put letters in mail for Louisville.                   |
| 30 Jul 1838 | Francis goes on to Randolph to meet his father Arch Haralson.               |
| 02 Aug 1838 | Son Arch and his son Francis from Randolph - arrive in bad health.          |
| 20 Aug 1838 | Doct. Rose of Randolph attends Son Archibald.                               |
| 02 Feb 1839 | Excessive cold - Rec'd papers by western mail and letter from Zulaka H.     |

**ELIZABETH [BETSY] MURPHEY**  
[Alexander<sup>1</sup> Archibald<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth<sup>3</sup>]

**Elizabeth [Betsy] Murphey** was born about 1774 in Caswell County. The date of her death is not known.

She married **Dr. John H. McAden**, eldest son of Reverend Hugh McAden and Catherine Scott McAden, on 30 November 1797 in Caswell County.

John was born about 1763 in Duplin County, North Carolina. At about age five, he moved with his family to Caswell County, where he remained until his death. John attended a school in Guilford County under the Rev. Dr. David Caldwell who was a colleague of his father. Dr. Caldwell was also a physician and it is likely that John studied medicine under him as well as the classics. John became the family physician for the various members of the Murphey family who lived in Caswell.

John served in the House of Commons from 1801 to 1803 and was a Trustee of Hico Academy and Caswell Academy.

Betsy's brother, Archibald Debow Murphey, once wrote "You know that I have had to save all the Branches of my Family [except Dr. McAden's] from absolute ruin."



". . . Red House Church<sup>16</sup> is located in northeast Caswell County, three miles from the Virginia border. Originally known as Middle Hico Church in 1755, it is one of the oldest churches in North Carolina. The name was changed to Red House Church in 1806. A stagecoach stop and (red) house was nearby, this became known as the Red House Community. Records tell us that there have been four structures built since this Church's beginning. The first building, erected about 1756, was burned by the British Soldiers during the Revolutionary War.

The date of building of the second church is unknown and burned in 1806. The third church was erected in 1809 and was painted red. It was used for over 100 years. The pulpit was erected in the front of the

church so that no one could slip in unnoticed. This church building was sold after the present day church was built. This is a brick structure, the first three being built of wood. Much history surrounds this Presbyterian Church and its first minister.<sup>17</sup>"

In 2007 the Red House Presbyterian Church was placed on the National Register and has given permission for placement of a grave marker to honor Archibald Murphey.

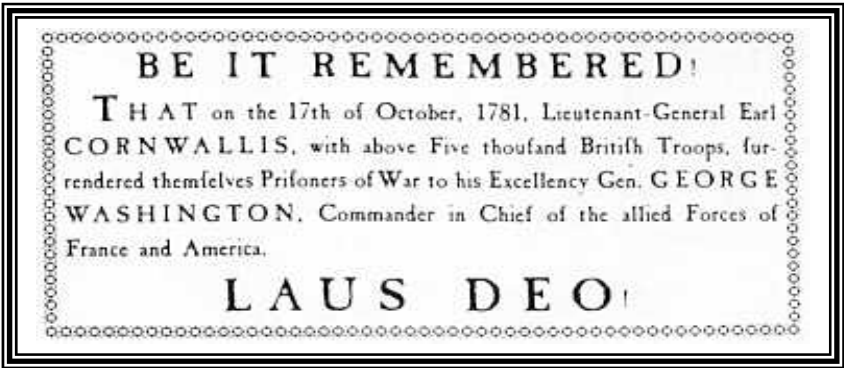
". . . Except for the Anglican chapels of the colonial period, the earliest congregation in Caswell County apparently was Presbyterian. Many of the earliest settlers were Scotch-Irish of Presbyterian heritage."

The Rev. Hugh McAden, a novice of Pennsylvania, and a graduate of the College of New Jersey, Nassau

<sup>16</sup> Photograph taken by Robert Murphey, Jr. in 2002.

<sup>17</sup> From Caswell County NC. Where the Present Meets the Past.

Hall (Princeton) came to the South on a missionary journey in 1755. On July 29 he crossed the Dan River into North Carolina and preached at the Brandon's in the morning, and in the afternoon, a dozen miles farther along, he arrived at the home of Solomon Debow on Hico Creek where he remained a few days. He preached there on Sunday, August 3, and afterwards moved into the Duplin County area. In 1757 he returned



to North Carolina and became the pastor of Presbyterian Churches in Duplin County where he remained until 1768. In that year he removed to the northern part of Orange and settled on Hico Creek, where he became pastor of Red House and other churches. He served these churches faithfully until his death on January 20, 1781. . . . The Rev. Mr. McAden died a short time before British troops under Lord Cornwallis marched through the Red House community. They searched and destroyed many of his books and papers and left damage to the church as well.

. . . The Rev Hugh McAden served the congregation here from 1768 until his death on 20 January 1781, and he is buried in the churchyard. . . . His grave is said by tradition to have been opened by Cornwallis' troops in search of gold and other valuables.<sup>18</sup>

Legend is that Cornwallis so hated Hugh McAden, that even though McAden died before the end of the Revolutionary War, Cornwallis had his men dig up the remains to confirm the death, and then dismember and scatter those remains. Hugh's wife, warned of their approach, had her husband's body moved to a secret location. In 1994, Mary McAden Satterfield and others published a comprehensive genealogical summary of the McAden family in Rev. Hugh McAden and His Descendants.

John McAden's mother, Catherine Scott McAden, was the daughter of John Scott who left Lunenburg County, Virginia and settled in Caswell County where he died in 1781. Catherine had three brothers and three sisters [one of whom married Sam Cunningham]. Surviving her husband by many years, Catherine raised her children to adulthood. On 25 December 1809, her son, John, Archibald Murphey and Alexander Murphey, gave bond in Caswell County as administrators of the "estate of Catherine McAden, deceased."

John and Betsy Murphey McAden had the following children:

- i. **Mary J. [Polly] McAden**, born circa 1798. She married David G. Brandon on 14 April 1821. David was the son of Thomas and Agnes Warren Brandon.

Following a visit to North Carolina, John Greene Murphey wrote to his brother-in-law, Herndon Haralson with news of family and other business matters:

" . . . While I was in NC I frequently was at the Doctor's. He appears to be going on in the Old Way. I cannot perceive any alteration in his affairs more than he has Brandon and Polly in the House with him, the former not doing anything for a Living. Henry is Situated and practicing Medicine in Milton. [The Letter from Betsy to Polly will give you a more full acct. of the family affairs.]"

Polly and David Brandon had three children:

- [a] **Elizabeth Henry Brandon** married Daniel B. Gunn.
- [b] **John McAden Brandon** married Peggy Foster.
- [c] **Henry Field Brandon** married Fannie P. Norfleet on 20 October 1856.

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<sup>18</sup> When the Past Refused to Die - A History of Caswell County, North Carolina 1777-1977, by: William S. Powell

- ii. **Henry McAden** [see page 181].
- iii. **Anne Greene McAden**, died young.
- iv. **Nancy G. McAden**, married James Dismukes in 1838. Their children were:
  - [a] **Henry Dismukes**, died in the Civil War serving the Confederacy.
  - [b] **Sally Dismukes**, nothing further known.
- v. **Sarah Grimes McAden** married Thomas Donoho Johnston on 23 February 1825. Their children were:
  - [a] **David Saunders Johnston**, born 26 August 1826; died 1890. He married Ann Gouldyloch Saffold, born 1830; died 1913. They had:
    - [1] **Sallie McAden Johnston** was born in Madison GA. She married James G. Penn. Later moved to Danville VA in 1894 where she organized the Dorothea Henry Chapter of the DAR. She is buried in Madison GA.
    - [b] **John McAden Johnston** married first Miss Cuyler; married second Miss Arnold.
    - [c] **Mary Frances Johnston** married W.N. Shelton.
    - [d] **Nancy McAden Johnston**, born 1835; died 15 August 1853. She married Weldon Edward Williamson.
    - [e] **Adelaide Johnston**. She married Walter S. Williamson. They had:
      - [1] **Nannie Williamson**, married James Alexander McRee.
      - [2] **Fannie Williamson**.
      - [3] **Sallie Williamson**.
      - [4] **Will Williamson**.
      - [5] **Jim Williamson**.<sup>19</sup>

John McAden died in 1845 at the age of 82 and is buried at Red House. His obituary read:

“Died at his residence in Caswell County, on the 7<sup>th</sup> inst., after a protracted illness, Doct. John McAden, aged about 82 years. Doct. McAden has long been known in this community as a citizen of much moral worth and a Christian of uniform piety and was a consistent member of the Presbyterian Church at Red House. The death of such a man is felt by the community in which he moved; he was, as a physician, held in high estimation; as a friend and a patron of education he had few equals. His death was triumphant, illustrating the power and excellence of that gospel by which he professed to be governed. But he is gone of the Resting place of man:

Life's duty done; as sinks the clay  
Light from its load the spirit flies;  
While Heaven and Earth combine to say  
How blest the righteous when he dies.”

The date of Elizabeth Murphey McAden's death is unknown, and she is buried at Red House Church, near her husband both in unmarked graves. 1850 census records for Caswell County show an Elizabeth McAden, born 1777 living in the county – establishing her death after her husband's.

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<sup>19</sup> Mrs. Satterfield's work is thorough and contains far more than the smattering of research I've accomplished on the McAden family.