

The Reynolds / Maryland Connection

(Compiled by Patricia Spaeth)

The best place to start is John Reynolds.

This is specifically John Reynolds Senior – *John(5)* -- born in 1714, died 1784. He is our 5-greats grandfather. (The numbers I attach to names are the number of greats.) John(5) is one of our first established antecedents to appear in public records in America. He would qualify us to join the DAR or SAR.

Notes on Antecedents: John(5) was one of eleven children of Francis Joseph Reynolds – FJR(6) – born 1652, died 1747. FJR(6) was married to Rebecca Crook (Crooks, Cook, Crock). FJR(6) was one of eleven children of William Tillman Reynolds – WilliamT(7) – born 1606, died 1668. WilliamT(7) was married to Margaret Exton. WilliamT(7) was one of eight children of... well, things are harder to prove the further back you go. One family tree traces us back a full 25 generations, including Richard Reynell (1150-1194), the High Sheriff of Devon in the time of Richard I, King John and Robin Hood!

Notes on Descendants: John(5) married Elizabeth McKee and had nine children, including Joseph – Joseph(4) -- born 1747, died 1808. Joseph(4) married Sarah Smith and had eleven kids, including Isaac – Isaac(3) – born 1778, died 1848. Isaac(3) went to Baltimore about 1800, married Mary Margaret Hoffman and had eight children, including Susan Reynolds – Susan(2) – born 1821, died 1853. Susan(2) married Reverend Charles Porterfield Krauth – CPK(2) – and had two surviving children including Harriett Reynolds Krauth – Harriett(1) – born 1845, died 1925. At age 35 Harriett(1) became the second wife of Reverend Adolph Spaeth – Adolph(1) – born 1839, died 1910. Among their children was our grandfather, Reynold Albrecht Spaeth., born 1886, died 1925.

Hokay, back to John(5). He was probably born in Pennsylvania, although some sources say Dublin, Ireland. His father, FJR(6), was probably born in Pennsylvania as well. When you look up FJR(6), about half the sources say he was born in Chester, PA and the other half say Chichester, Sussex, England. (Some versions say FJR(6) went from England to Ireland, had his kids, then went to America.) So where was *his* father WilliamT(7) born? Most sources agree that he was born in England; variously he came to America at age 3, as an adult, or not at all. WilliamT(7) died in England, but reportedly he was a trader on a business trip.

John(5) first appears in written records around 1744, when he married Elizabeth McKee. (No marriage certificate discovered yet.) Four of his children were born in Swatara, PA (east of Harrisburg; Lancaster County before 1785, Dauphin County after 1785). The children's names and dates are found in the Baptismal Records of Rev. John Casper Stoeber, a traveling preacher (whose notes were put online by a descendant). One, Bridgette, was born in 1742 (hmmmm...). The other three are Elizabeth Reynolds (1744), John Reynolds (Jr.) (1746) and Joseph(4) (1747).

(Some family histories list these children as being born in Washington County, Maryland. It appears some later Reynolds children were born there.)

Some time while these children were still small, John(5) moved the family to Maryland. In 1761 he bought a parcel of land from James Smith – JamesS(5) – and began building a farmstead. The house is on a little knoll, to catch the summer breezes and the winter sunshine. It is still standing – right in the middle of the Civil War battlefield at Antietam. It's referred to as the Roulette house. One story is that John(5), a trader like his father and grandfather, brought a beautiful tall case clock to the house, but the ceiling was too low. He had to cut an alcove in the parlor ceiling so the clock would fit.

John(5)'s daughter Elizabeth married Thomas Smith in 1763 and eventually had ten children. His son John Jr. married Margaret Smith in 1764, bought his own chunk of land from Joseph Smith (appears to be James(5)'s brother) in 1767, and eventually had seven children. Joseph(4) married Sarah Smith in 1774 and eventually had eleven children. And yes, all the Smiths were brother and sisters, three of six children of JamesS(5) and Mary Graham.

Comes the Revolution. John Jr. became a captain in the 7th Maryland, but resigned his commission in 1777. Thomas Smith became a Major in the 4th Maryland. Joseph(4) probably joined the army too, but I haven't found any records. In 1777 an order came out from the Committee of Observation for Elizabeth Town (the original name of Hagerstown):

“Ordered that George Moore, Richard Carter and John Reynolds Sr. appraise the several waggons, horses, Waggon Cloths and Blanket that can be produced for the use of Coll. Jos. Smith's Batt. and make return to this Committee.”

The family story is that John(5) responded to the call. But he quit after a week. Consider that he was 63 at the time.

In 1777, the Oath of Fidelity was instituted by the laws of Maryland. Every free male over 18 had to swear allegiance to the revolutionary government and renounce the King of England. If you didn't, you paid triple taxes, couldn't teach or hold office or vote or appear in court... and other penalties. Magistrates went around administering the Oath and making lists of names. James Smith and Thomas Smith appear on a 1778 list; John Reynolds Sr. (John(5)) and “Joseph Rennolds” (probably Joseph(4)) appear on a 1779 list.

Not in our direct line but interesting: In late 1778 John Jr. sold out his Maryland holdings. The next spring he packed up his wife and seven children and, together with other families, started down the river to settle in Kentucky. Their party of flatboats was ambushed by Indians in April 1779 and John Jr. was shot and killed. His wife Margaret and children were held hostage by Indians; it took Margaret eighteen months to get everyone back together. They returned to the Reynolds homestead in Maryland. In 1785 Margaret remarried. The whole story is told in *Frontier Mother* by O. Glenn Stahl, 1979.

Ditto: Elizabeth Reynolds Smith and Thomas Smith moved to Kentucky around 1794. Two of their ten children married brother ministers, Martin Hitt and Samuel Hitt. Some of the Hitts later moved to Urbana, Ohio. In 1815 Samuel Hitt performed the marriage of his niece Betsy Smith, one of Elizabeth's granddaughters, to Martin Reynolds, one of Joseph(4)'s sons.

The Maryland Tax Assessment rolls for 1783 list three Reynolds: John Reynolds (John(5)), Joseph Reynolds (Joseph(4)) and Margaret Reynolds. I presume this is the widow of John Reynolds. She may have inherited this property from her father James(5), who died in 1780.

John(5) made his will in March 1784 and died in April 1784. The will divides his homestead between his sons Joseph(4) and Francis. You can find the full text on the website for Reynolds Family Association. The goods included a slave named Ham. Joseph(4) continued to live in the farmhouse and made some improvements. In the 1790s Francis sold his portion to the Orndorffs, who in turn sold it to Jacob Mumma. The Mumma farm is also on the Antietam battlefield, though the house was burned to the ground.

In 1804 Joseph(4) sold the Reynolds farmhouse and land to a neighbor, Joseph Miller. Joseph(4) and Sarah moved to Urbana, Champaign County, Ohio, a town that was just being formed. His son John also moved there and was very active in the town's early history. Joseph(4) died in Urbana in 1808; Sarah died there in 1821.

You can learn about the Roulette farm (and William and Margaret Roulette) from any history of the battle of Antietam. One witness, a chaplain in the Connecticut army, says a Confederate shell tore through the parlor wall, continued upwards through the ceiling and came to rest in the attic. Wounded soldiers were laid out in the house, the barns and the surrounding grounds. Some Confederate soldiers took cover in the springhouse kitchen – and were captured when a quick-thinking Yankee slammed the door. Some beehives on the front lawn were knocked over – propelling some Philadelphia soldiers a bit quicker toward the Confederate lines at the Sunken Road.

References:

Antietam Farmsteads – 2010 – Western Maryland Interpretive Association

Drums along the Antietam 1972 – John W. Schildt

History of Champaign County – 1872 – Joshua Antrim

Rennolds-Reynolds Family Roster – 1959 – S. F. Tillman

Frontier Mother – 1979 – O. Glenn Stahl

(online) Baptismal Records of Rev. John Casper Stoeber

Reynolds Family Association – joe.reynolds@Reynoldsfamily.org

Ancestry.com – Revolutionary Records of Maryland

Yeahpot.com (Reynolds family trees)

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Wikipedia (Reynells, Oath of Fidelity)

Werelate.org (William Reynolds)

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