

# **Annals of the Ashpole Community**

## **1750-1814**

*Submitted by Gil Alford, AAFA #0019, Member AAFA Hall of Fame (Co-founder & Past President)*

*This series began in issue #78, Fall 2007 and continued in the previous issue. Alford's and South Carolina were mentioned in both of the previous segments as well as in this one. This segment has some noted by "AAFA" (Gil Alford) embedded. Look for the final segment in the next issue.*

The only plausible theory as to the origin of the name Ashpole I have ever heard traces it to the bridge made of Ashpoles when the road was built across the mill races at this place.

John Cade's public activities did not begin so far as we know, until in 1786, when the agitation for a new county began and culminated in 1787 in the creation and organization of Robeson, his connection with which, and with the convention of 1788 and 1789, as already mentioned. He accumulated (sic) considerable property before the beginning of the Revolution, principally in horses, cattle, sheep and hogs, which he drove to market at Charleston and disposed of. He bred fine horses for Marion and Harrington, officers in the Revolution and sold many to the famous Jockey Club at Charleston. He maintained a private race track which ran parallel with the Race Path Branch, a small tributary of Little Ashpole, running parallel with what was afterwards the Lumberton and Harleesville road, and kept in charge an expert trainer. After his service in the Convention of 1789, he held no public office, except that of Justice of the Peace, a short time.

He died in 1792 and was buried in the Ashpole Burial Grounds, almost within a stone's throw of modern Ashpole Church.

The history of this old burial ground is worth noting. Conditions in that day made family burial grounds a necessity. The families of John Cade, Jacob Alford, Britton Drake and Robert McTyer, all residing on Ashpole, save the last named, selected this spot as the

common burial ground of their dead, all being related by blood or marriage. [Jacob Alford, son of Lodwick, was born in New Kent Co., VA, about 1738. He and Mary Pace were parents of several children all of whom married folks with surnames mentioned herein - many of them the Scotch-Irish mentioned. That is likely to origin of the idea in many present day Alford families that they have such ancestry. \_AAFA]

It was near the home of Robert McTyer, the place now owned and occupied by Mrs. William McQueen, and was donated for the use of their families as far back as 140 years ago, by McTyer, and being the common burial ground of these old families, acquired (sic) the name of the Ashpole Burial Ground, years before the establishment of Ashpole Church.

John Cade left surviving him his widow, four sons and three daughters. Sons: Stephen Adair, James, Washington and Robert, and daughters: Mary, the wife of William Kennedy, Agnes, the wife of Andrew Fulmore, and Elizabeth, to become the wife of James McLeod.

On the eve of his departure for the Convention at Hillsboro, in 1788, he executed his will, which was witnessed by his son Stephen Adair, and daughter Agnes, appointing his son James and his widow executors, together with his "loving and trusty friend", Elias Barnes.

This will is recorded in Lumberton in Book of Wills, No.1, page 15, and for reasons unnecessary to state, is worth particular notice.

His faith in the Christian religion is amply set forth in the introduction and also in the first clause.

I have not been able to obtain an inventory of his personal and movable estate. In 1790 he was credited with seventeen slaves, a small number, but with the exception of Randall McPherson of upper Robeson, he owned more slaves than any other man in the County. What is more important, however, from the viewpoint of local history, he specifically mentioned his real estate.

The first mentioned was his home place, which embraced what is now known as the Graham and Fulmore places and the mill there.

The next was a tract of land on Wilkerson Swamp which embraced what was subsequently known as the Alfordsville Place. [It should be noted that Alfordsville is adjacent to the South Carolina State line and Marion and Dillon counties (Dillon was created from Marion in 1910. It was not a matter of migration for Alford to move from North Carolina to South Carolina. \_AAFA]

Next was plantations, as he called them, on Nichols Swamp and the Blackwell place adjoining it. I have not been able to identify these tracts and the stream, then known as Nichols' Swamp.

The next was a tract of land on Shoe Heel Creek, on both sides of the state line, probably the largest tract in one body owned by him.

The next was one hundred acres of land on Haley's Mill Swamp, including his mill site. This was in the immediate vicinity of what was later known as Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, and known in later years as McLeod's Mill.

The next was a tract at Ashpole Bridge, called the "muster ground." This was the place on the east bank of Big Ashpole.

The next was a tract in Polly's Neck and a place containing 350 acres adjoining.

The next was a tract on Jernigan's Branch, several miles

below his homestead, which it is thought, later became the home of the McGirt family.

The widow of Cade did not survive him many years, and his sons left the county about the beginning of the last century.

There are yet left a number of his descendants in that region and in the neighboring counties of Marion and Dillon, South Carolina.

The name of Britton Drake appears as another old settler of that period. He signed his name Albritton Drake, but was generally known as Britton Drake. His name has long ceased to exist in Robeson though there are many descendants. The late Abner Nash, of Lumberton, was a great grandson and there are a number of descendants in Red Springs.

The names have been transferred to Marlboro County, S.C., and they are among the leading citizens there.

Robert McTyer was of Scotch-Irish descent, as was also his wife, was an excellent citizen and exemplary Christian gentleman. His home was on the spot now occupied as a home by Mrs. William McQueen, a few hundred yards east of Ashpole Church. He moved over into Marlboro County several years before Ashpole Church was established, with his family there. His lineal descendants with the exception of the descendants of Sion and James Alford, now live for the most part in Alabama. [Sion Alford was the first son of Jacob Alford and Mary Pace. He married Clarky McTyer and their descendants, after a generation or two in Robeson Co. went to South Carolina and Alabama. James married Alice Katrain McTyer and went to Mississippi. \_AAFA]

The Thompson family, with one exception, all reside east of Ashpole Swamp. Charles Thompson, already referred to as the son-in-law of Jacob Alford, was a large land owner, his possessions extending from the east side of Aaron Swamp as far east as Old Field Swamp. There are numerous descendants in Robeson, and in the states south and southwest. [Charles Thompson married Charity Alford, daughter of Jacob Alford and Mary Pace. \_AAFA]

Other members of this numerous family occupied the region east of Ashpole between that stream and Aaron Swamp and from a "time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary" have been staunch

Methodists, and have furnished the world some of the most influential (sic) Methodist ministers.

Othneil Trawick's home was on the north side of the site of Ashpole Church, just across the road. His old dwelling house stood intact until about the beginning of the Civil war, and for a long period of years, perhaps yet, his old well furnished drinking water for the congregation at the Ashpole Church.

We come now to the large and respectable Scotch settlement, the large majority of which moved in, in the years immediately following the Revolution, and settled the country from Wilkerson Swamp to the Richmond County line, and from Back Swamp to Little Pee Dee River.

I frankly confess the uncertainty which hovers about the identity of a number of these men. I have selected the following: Joshua Ammons, James Baker, Neill Baker, Sion Baker, Angus Brown, Neill Crawford, Nathan Clark, John Curry, Donald Douglas, James Duncan, Peter Kelley, Archibald Little, Robert Little, Alexander Little, John Little, Neill Little, Archibald McCrimmon, Donald McCrimmon, John McKinnon, Duncan McKinnon, Daniel McPhaul, Neill McInnis, Donald McInnis, Duncan McInnis, Robert McGill, Archibald McGill, Donald McKay, Daniel McKeathen, John McLaughlin, Neill McLean, John McLean, Daniel McLean, Alexander McLeod, John McMillan, Hector McNeill, James McQueen, Donald McRae, Philip McRae, Daniel McRae, John Morrison, Robert Morrison, Collins Monroe, James Patterson, John Patterson, James Smith, James Watson, Duncan Wilkerson, Archibald Wilkerson, Daniel Wilkerson, Edward Wilkerson and Neill Wilkerson.

Joshua Ammons was a resident of South Carolina. His descendants lived between Clio and Little Rock sixty years ago, and Gregg in his "OLD CHERAWS" assigned him to South Carolina.

Seventy years ago and later, there was what was known as the Old Baker Home, about 8 miles north of Ashpole Church on the road to Fayetteville, Angus Baker then owning and occupying the larger part of the large part of land surrounding it. He was a courtly, Christian gentleman, and elder, and one of the founders and promoters of Lebanon Presbyterian Church. I have assumed that he was a son of the James Baker, whose name appears on the federal census roll of 1790. He had

several sons and daughters, was the brother-in-law of Archibald Sellers, the owner of a large tract of land, several miles above, on Drowning Creek. Among his sons were James M. Baker, who became a lawyer, moved to Jacksonville, Florida, and attained eminence at the bar, was judge of the circuit court, one of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, and during the Civil War represented with David Yulee, that state in the Confederate States Senate.

The next of this list is Angus Brown. Some of his descendants have differed as to his family antecedents. I have adopted the version of his Tennessee descendants, who say that he was a native of Robeson County, and the son of Neill Brown, Sr.

Just before the close of Revolution, during which struggle he was an active Whig, he moved down on Shoe Heel Creek and settled on the Creek about seven miles west of the site of Ashpole Church. As his family began to grow up and neighbors to settle around him, he erected a small building for use as a church and school house. For the convenience of those living on both sides of the creek, he built a bridge long known as Brown's Bridge, and his home became a religious and social center. Ministers held services there, or at least it was said that Colin Lindsay held services there. In September, 1796, we find the place in the Minutes of Orange Presbytery as Shoe Heel, where the last assignment was made for services there.

When the first steps were taken to establish Ashpole Church, his little congregation joined in the movement and merged themselves with the Ashpole Congregation and he became one of the original elders of the church and performed the functions of that office up to his death in 1820.

Among his children was Duncan, who was to become the first Presbyterian preacher given to the world from Ashpole Church, and a short sketch (sic) of him and some of his descendants is not out of place.

Duncan Brown was born October 21, 1780, in Bladen (Robeson) County. After completing the course of a common school education, he was prepared for a collegiate course by Prof. Jacob Nelson. He then entered Dr. Caldwell's celebrated school in Guilford County and graduated in 1801.

At the spring meeting of Orange Presbytery, held at

Barbecue Church in Cumberland in 1801, he was licensed to preach the gospel at the same time Malcolm McNair was licensed. Both had taken the course at the Caldwell School and were as Damon and Pythias in their pastoral relations to each other. The only active work as a minister for the two following years after his licensure is mentioned in the interview with Bishop Asbury in Lumberton in 1803. In 1804 he was ordained pastor of Hopewell Church in Darlington County, S.C., and of Aimwell Church, on Pee Dee.

January 16, 1805, he was married to Margaret Smith, a friend of his boyhood, and it was probably hastened by his acceptance of a commission as a missionary in the Natchez Country, which then embraced middle southern Tennessee and northern Alabama, to the Tennessee River.

He resigned his pastorate and in 1806, left for his new charge and settled in Sumner County, Tennessee, and later permanently settled in Giles County, Tennessee.

The country infested by wild savages, was rapidly settling and additional ministers began to come in and the area of his labors were, from time to time, contracted. A large and rapidly increasing family required his presence at home and about 1840, he retired from his active labors and died in 1848.

He left surviving him a large family of sons and daughters, who became conspicuous (sic) in the annals of Tennessee. His son, Neill Smith Brown, born in the County in 1810, began his career in the Seminole War in 1836. In 1842 he was member of the Legislature and was re-elected in 1844, and in the same year was a presidential elector; in 1847, was the Whig candidate for governor and was elected. In 1850 he was appointed Minister to Russia and served until 1855. He returned to the United States and was again elected as a member of the Legislature, and became Speaker of the House. He died in Nashville in 1886.

His younger brother, John Calvin Brown, born in 1827, studied law and located at Nashville and was among the foremost lawyers at the bar when the Civil War began. He was made Captain of a company in the Confederate Army, and by successive promotions he became a Major General, and served throughout the war. In 1870 he was elected a member of the State Constitutional Convention and was chosen president of that body. In the same year he was elected governor and in 1872, was

re-elected. In 1876 he was elected Vice President of the Texas and Pacific Railway Co. and spent much of his time in Texas, directing and managing that roads interest at a most critical period. He died In Tennessee (sic) in 1889.

Rebecca Brown, oldest daughter of Angus Brown, was married to Angus McCallum December 7, 1797.

The families of Angus Brown and Daniel McCallum became intimate and their joint family graveyard is now on the site of the old Brown homestead of Angus Brown near Shoe Heel Creek. Very probably it was abandoned as a burial place and in its stead, a plot of ground adjacent to the church site of Ashpole was selected, and the first burial there was in 1866, when John McCallum, the youngest son of Daniel, was buried there.

Owing to the uncertainty as to the date when Daniel McCallum moved into the community, this name was omitted from my original notes. To ignore the McCallum family in any write-up of the Community, would be as the play of Hamlet with the Prince of Denmark left out. He was the progenitor of the name in Robeson and a reliable authority estimates the number of his living descendants as about nine hundred. He was the son of Archibald McCallum and was born in Scotland in 1740, and with his friends and some relatives came to America in 1770. He had a wife and several children, but all died, leaving him as the only survivor. His little company arrived on the right bank of the Cape Fear River, where they resided until they could secure a body of land large enough to provide all with homes. In prospecting they found such a body of land on Brown Marsh, in Bladen County, and all moved out to it, and began to erect their homes.

He then married Isabel Sellers, a member of one of the families settling there. When the census taker visited him in 1790, and listed his name, he spelled it "McColom", and it so appears on the Bladen list of heads of families in 1790.

As all Scotch settlers, when circumstances permitted, (they) provided church and school facilities for their families. They established a school and church, and Brown Marsh Presbyterian Church became one of the oldest and best known churches in that part of the State.

In 1797, he purchased a large tract of land on the

southeast side of Wilkerson Swamp and moved up there. It was about two miles northwest of Ashpole Church, and parts of it are still owned by his descendants.

All records of the church during that early period, being destroyed, his activities as member are not known, but that he was an active member there is little doubt. His family are known to have been active members. His son, Angus, became an elder in 1804, at or about the time Malcolm McNair was ordained pastor of the church and served up to his death in 1849. His brother, Archibald, became an elder in 1805, and served as such up to his death in 1850.

Daniel McCallum died in 1807 and his wife in 1814. They left surviving them nine children and from them have sprung the large posterity mentioned. The families of Angus Brown and Daniel McCallum became intimate. Angus, the oldest son, was married to Rebecca Brown, and Effie McCallum, one of the daughters of Daniel McCallum, married John Brown. Archibald, brother of Angus, married Margaret Wilkerson, member of another old Scotch (sic) family in the immediate neighborhood, after which the stream took its name.

Angus was no perfunctory officer of the church (sic) and was an invaluable aid to Malcolm McNair during the whole of his ministry at Ashpole. There were among his effects after his death some valuable data touching upon his experience as a Christian, and other matters pertaining to Ashpole Church.

Among the data is a list of the officers and members of the church from 1817 to 1835 inclusive.

The elders mentioned on the list was Sion Alford, his father Jacob now being dead. Angus Brown who died in 1820, Archibald McLean, Warren Alford, Archibald McCallum, Angus McCallum, Isaac Alford, Daniel McQueen and Archibald McIntyre. John Brown was pastor in 1835. [Isaac Alford is more likely Elias Alford, brother of Warren and son of Jacob. Elias, who married Charity Hedgepeth, and later moved to South Carolina. Warren Alford married (1) Jennette Little and (2) Barbara Little (not sisters) and some of his children went to South Carolina. \_ AAFA]

Among the members whose names were on the federal census roll of 1790 were: Alexander Little, Daniel McKay, James Alford, Duncan McCormick, Gilbert

McCormick, Edward Wilkerson, William Blue, John McArthur, John Murphy, Neill McQueen, Neill Stafford, Hector McNeill, Gilbert McEachern and Duncan McGirt. [James Alford, son of Jacob, later moved to Mississippi where he was the progenitor of many Mississippi Alfords. \_ AAFA]

This raises the presumption that these were original members of the church in 1796.

He also gives the years of the organization of the Sunday School and Temperance Society, the date of the great storm of 1822, and other data invaluable to whoever undertakes to write a history of the church from 1815 down to date.

The activities of this family increased rather than decreased, with the passing years. In looking over the roll of church membership for 1858, the name McCallum appears twenty-eight times. When this is added names of descendants, other than McCallum, the number would have probably reached fifty. Angus spent his life on Wilkerson and was buried in the old Angus Brown and McCallum burial ground on Shoe Heel.

Archibald aquired (sic) the old homestead of John Cade, and moved over on Big Ashpole, and about the year 1830, sold it and established his home on a small tributary of Little Ashpole, about three miles north of the Ashpole Church and lived there up to his death in 1850.

Among the McInnis names in Robeson County, on the census roll of 1790, were Donald, Neill, John and Daniel.

This connection resided near the line of Richmond, Robeson, and Marion and Marlboro in South Carolina.

Duncan who is thought to have been a son of Donald, graduated at the State University in 1813, entered the ministry and went to Mississippi as a missionary about the year 1811. There also went about the same time his father Donald and Daniel. From them sprung considerable connections in Mississippi, including two Presbyterian ministers.

Rev. Richmond McInnis removed to Texas and died, leaving two sons, Hon. H.R. McInnis, for some years County Judge of Llano County, and L.L. McInnis, first member of the faculty of the A. & M. College of Texas,

which he resigned and engaged in banking in Bryan, Texas, and is now a leading banker in that city, and an officer of the Presbyterian Church there.

James McQueen, who came to that region in 1789 or 1790, has been fully written up in the "McQueens of Queensdale", a most valuable contribution to the local history of that section, as well as of Robeson.

A notable feature of his career, mentioned but not elaborated, in this book, is his career as a teacher and promoter of education in that section. It is not impossible or improbable that he maintained a school at his home from the time of his settlement there until his removal to Lumberton, with the probable exception of his absence as a member of the Legislature in 1794 and 1795.

It is mentioned that Hon. Lauchlin Bethune attended school there about 1800. A legitimate inference is that to him may be credited the introduction of Prof. Jacob Nelson, as a teacher, into that region about the year 1796. Nelson was a learned Swede, and prepared to give a higher course of instruction than was available in the common schools of that time. He prepared a number of young men for college, among them Duncan Brown, Malcolm McNair, and most probably, John Gilchrist, who was the first to graduate there, from Robeson. Archibald McQueen and Murdock McLean graduated in 1812 and Duncan McInnis, most probably received similar courses of instruction from him.

After an experience of ten or twelve years as a tutor and teacher there appeared in the Fayetteville Chronicle and North Carolina Gazette, the following advertisement:

"The Trustees of the Mount Clio Academy beg leave to inform the public that this seminary will be open for the reception of students on Monday, the 21st day of September next, under the superintendance of Mr. Jacob Nelson as principal teacher. The celebrity which Mr. Nelson has justly aquired (sic) through a long course of experience as a teacher, and his well known literary attainments, induce the trustees to hope this institution will meet with a sufficient share of public patronage. The situation is extremely Healthy".

"The rates of tuition will be five dollars per quarter for the Latin and Greek languages, together with the sciences; and four dollars per quarter for English Grammar. Boarding may be had in decent families in the neighborhood at a moderate rate of forty dollars per annum."

By order of the Board,  
James McQueen, Sec'y

Robeson County, August 28, 1807

Though there is nothing in the advertisement to show the location of this Academy, the presumption is that it was at the home of McQueen.

Nothing more is known of the school, but McQueen later moved to Lumberton. The next we hear of this classic name, it is in South Carolina, a short distance away, and from the change in location the school may have been moved to the spot now known as Clio, in Marlboro County, South Carolina.

A post office was established at McQueen's home in 1820, and called Queensdale, and through all the vicissitudes of war and political upheavals, it continued there until 1904.

The remaining group of Scotch settlers to become identified with the Ashpole Community lived on both sides of the state line.

Among these names were John Blue, William Blue, Hugh Campbell, Kenneth Campbell, Duncan Campbell, Daniel Campbell, Daniel Crawford, Malcolm Curry, Gilbert Curry, William Gilchrist, James Harrell, Mary Herring, Alexander Henderson, John Jackson, Ephraim Jones, James Kelley, Alex McArthur, John McArthur, James McArthur, John McCormick, Duncan McCormick, James McCormick, Gilbert McCormick, Malcolm McDuffie, John McDonald, Archibald McDuffie, John McEachern, John McGirt, John McIntyre, Peter McKellar, Daniel McKinley, John McLean, John McMillan, Neill McQueen, Archibald Murphy, John Murphy, Duncan Murphy, James Rogers, Peter Smith, Neill Stafford, John Stuart, Solomon Miller, Jonathan Taylor, Angus Taylor and John Williams.

To them may be added the Carmichaels, Braceys and Dougald McKellar, who came into the section between 1790 and 1806.

Seller's History of Marion County, S.C., contains sketches of much of those families as residents of South Carolina.

Dougald McKellar, in nowise related to Peter McKellar, arrived about 1798 and located on the place where ex-sheriff McNeill now lives, about two miles north of Rowland, and reared his family there.

His children were a daughter, who married Peter McFarland, and died leaving a husband and three sons surviving. All three sons lost their lives in the service of the Southern Confederacy, and their bodies were brought home and buried in the family graveyard.

The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad had their bodies exhumed as the graves were on its right-of-way, and re-interred a few feet away, where they lie in a neglected and almost forgotten spot.

Another of Dougald McKellar's children was James, who settled about eight miles east, near the site of the present village of McDonald. He was known as Squire McKellar, having long served as Justice of the Peace in that precinct. He was a quiet, unassuming man, and clear headed, just-minded officer. He was an exemplary Christian gentleman, was one of the teachers and supporters of Iona Presbyterian Church.

The names of these three groups complete the list of heads of families in the Ashpole Community so far as I have been able to identify, and constitute the population from which Ashpole Presbyterian Church was established in 1796.

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*(Continued from page 11, Getting to Know New Members)*

8	Thomas Z. Alford	Nov. 15, 1886	McLennan, Co., TX
9	Lillie Bickley	Aug. 26, 1895	Texas
16	Zachariah T. Alford	Aug. 25, 1850	Troup Co., GA
17	Elvira J. Thornton	May 16, 1858	Texas
32	James Andrew Alford	about 1814	Greene Co., GA
33	Martha E. Morgan	about 1821	Georgia
64	Lodwick Alford	Feb. 2, 1775	North Carolina
65	Judith Jackson	Feb. 2, 1778	Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC
128	Julius Alford	estimate 1750	North Carolina
129	Rebecca Jackson	about 1748	North Carolina
256	Lodwick Alford	about 1710	New Kent Co., VA
512	James Alford	about 1687	probably New Kent Co., VA
1024	John Alford	about 1645	probably Virginia

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