

MOUNTAIN ECHO ONLINE

*McQuiston, McQuestion,
McQuesten, McQuestion,
McCuiston, McCuiston,
and other related names*



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St. Patrick's Day



and the Ides of March

There are two big days to celebrate in March - The Ides of March lands on the 15th and St. Patrick's Day lands on the 17th. This issue of the Mountain Echo Online explores the connection of these dates to our family.

Two significant events happened, in American history, on March 15th, referred to, since Roman times, as the *Ides of March*, and best known as the date that Julius Caesar was assassinated, in 44 BC.

The term has come to be used as a metaphor for impending doom. On March 15, 1767, Andrew Jackson was born, and he certainly spelled doom to American aristocracy, to Spanish influence in Florida, to the British in the Revolution and again in the War of 1812, and to warring Indians on the American frontier.

On March 15, 1781, the Battle of Guilford Courthouse was fought,

which spelled doom to Cornwallis' best crack troops, of which he lost one-quarter of them in this single battle. This was the last decisive battle before the surrender at Yorktown, and the Guilford Courthouse Battlefield was the first to be recognized by the U.S. Government as a National Military Park.

Lord Cornwallis, who had used the Thomas and Ann McCuiston homestead for his headquarters just a few days beforehand, wrote of the Guilford battle, "I never saw such fighting since God made me. The Americans fought like demons"

Only one biographer of Andrew Jackson, that I know of, has made the link between his birth date and the day of the fateful battle. This fact is mentioned in Professor Rik Booraem's *Young Hickory*, when he tells the story of how Jackson celebrated his 21st birthday on the battlefield grounds, while also celebrating the 7th anniversary of the battle, itself. A large party was thrown, March 15, 1788, and was paid for by Jackson. It included drinking and dancing, cockfighting, horseracing, and gambling.

A few months after the party, Jackson left for Tennessee. James McCuiston may have went along with him. It is known that John McNairy traveled with Jackson in the autumn of 1788.

Later Andrew Jackson and James McCuiston owned a grist mill together in an area that became part of Shelbyville, TN. Jackson's future brother-in-law owned a farm very near to the McCuiston homestead in Tennessee, now the location of the Eakin residence, across from the McCuiston Cemetery.

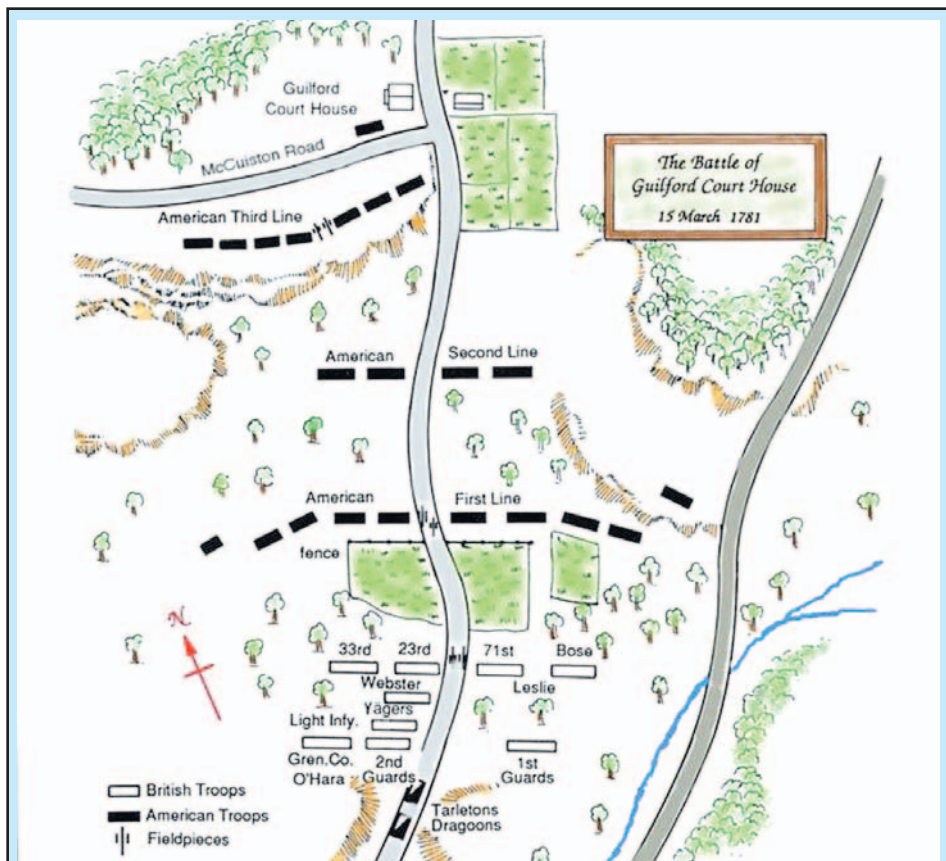
It would seem almost impossible that McCuist(i)on family members did not attend the Guilford County party back in North Carolina, since the McNairy's were their neighbors, sharing Old Gibson Cemetery with them. Also, at least 11 McCuiston or McCuiston homesteads surrounded the famous battlefield.

A map from that era shows 10 family homesteads, and leaves out Reedy Fork Tom's place. The Flack home (Jane McCuistion) was also nearby the battlefield. The Rankin home was close by, too.

The National Park Service says of the battle, "The largest, most hotly-contested battle of the Revolutionary War's Southern Campaign was fought at the small North Carolina backcountry hamlet of Guilford Courthouse."

On March 12th, Cornwallis took over the home of Thomas and Ann McCuistion as headquarters. One of General Greene's officers, Judge Johnson "went down by the McCuiston Ford (bridge) and made a way into the battleground the next morning, the 12th (of March, 1781). Several people had joined him and when he came to the battleground several of the *neighbors* came."

Even if the McCuist(i)ons weren't there to celebrate Andy's birthday, in 1788, they would almost assuredly have been there to celebrate the battle in which so many of them fought seven years earlier.



The website that this map came from says, "On March 12th, Greene moved his army to Guilford Courthouse, where he carefully chose his ground for a fight with the British." Cornwallis left the McCuistion home on the morning of the 13th and moved about 12 miles away from the eventual battlefield. On the 14th he learned of Greene assembling troops at the Courthouse, by way of McCuiston Bridge, including the McCuist(i)on "neighbors" who accompanied Judge Johnson.

Ides Trivia

In Music

- "Ides of March" is a song recorded by **Guns N' Roses**.
- **Iron Maiden** opened their second album with an instrumental entitled "The Ides of March."
- In 1970, the American band **The Ides of March** had a number 2 hit on the Billboard charts with the song "Vehicle."
- In 2005, the Canadian band **Silverstein** released a song called "Ides of March" on the album "Discovering the Waterfront".

In Film and Television

- In **Back to the Future II**, George McFly was killed on the Ides of March in 1973.
- In **The Simpsons** episode "Homer the Great", Lisa warns Homer, "beware the Ides of March", after Homer claims he now knows he is God. Homer replies, "No!"
- In **Xena: Warrior Princess** episode "Ides of March", Xena and Gabrielle are crucified on the Ides of March, and Caesar himself is murdered. It is Xena who utters the famous warning, however, she directs it to Brutus rather than Caesar.

Many books on Jackson say he was only 13 when he was orphaned, but this is untrue. He didn't return to the Waxhaws until after the Guilford Courthouse Battle, when he was imprisoned in the Waxhaws, in April 1781, according to his own writings. By then he was 14.

After his mother secured his release, she traveled to Charlestown to help other prisoners, and died there long after the Guilford battle.

Jackson traveled to Charlestown, twice, as a young lad, and I believe it was to find her grave and perhaps even to bring her body back to be buried next to his father's grave. He made one of those trips in the company of his Uncle Crawford who

had lost two sons in Charlestown. What more likely object of a trip for these two grieving souls than to recover the bodies of their loved ones?

History does Jackson injustice to insinuate he went to Charlestown just to blow his inheritance on gambling and drinking. He loved his mother very much and says so in his writings.

With all of his immediate family gone Jackson gravitated to his extended family in Guilford County. He writes that he worked at a store in Martinville, home to our family, and the forerunner to the town of Greensboro. His friend and fellow law student was John McNairy whose family farm was next door to our family and to the battlefield.

There can be no real doubt, whatsoever, that Andrew Jackson, future president of the United States, celebrated with our family on March 15, 1788 in the middle of a once bloody field.

If our records are correct, Jackson's McUisdean lineage would look like this-

1) Benjamin McCueston, d. 1766, brother to James, Thomas, Robert, and Alexander of the McCuistion treasure will, as well as two sisters, Ann Fleming and Margaret Hamilton. Also William McQuesten of New Hampshire and David McCuistion of Chester County, PA were other possible brothers.

2) Benjamin's daughter, Jean, married Thomas Moody.

3) Jean Moody was one of three daughters of Thomas and Jean, who received part of Alexander's money, another being Ann Moody, who married Thomas McCuistion. Ann signed an affidavit that she was the granddaughter of Benjamin. Jean Moody married a Hutchinson, probably named Robert. This couple

had several daughters, one of which married George McCamey in whose house Andrew Jackson may have been born. Another (Jean, Jane and/or Jennie) married James Crawford in whose house Jackson may have been born and was definitely raised.

4) Elizabeth Hutchinson was another daughter of Jean and Robert Hutchinson. She married Andrew Jackson senior and their son became President Andrew Jackson.

March 15, 1767 saw the birth of one of the greatest president this country has ever had, and he carried our Highland blood in his veins as he spelled doom to the enemies of America.

Andrew Jackson is the only president in history to leave office with no national debt. He took on the big powers and the big problems of the day, kept the Union together and is credited with allowing the common people to assume the identity of being an "American".

Andrew Jackson is the only president to have an era name for him - the *Jacksonian Era*. Under Jackson the white male right to vote was greatly expanded. His insistence on keeping the Union together inspired Abraham Lincoln, who used much of Jackson's writings to establish his own policy. While a slave holder, himself, Jackson did much to lead to the abolishment of slavery. He fought against his own vice-president, John C. Calhoun, when Calhoun tried to get the right to nullify any federal law, by any state, which would have led to the perpetuation of slavery.

Jackson also is criticized for the *Trail of Tears* episode with the Cherokee Indians. One reality Jackson knew well is that both Whites and Indians had suffered terrible torture and death in wars along America's frontier borders.

No president before him dared tackle the problem. Without some action, the deaths, torturing, and scalping would have continued. He knew there was no way to stop the westward and southern flow of frontier families and the horror would continue.

He wrote a very long paper on the problem and his proposed solution. In it he talks about how his own people were forced to leave their family homelands and gravesites behind to move on in a world always growing and modernizing. He offered land and compensation and several tribes accepted the offer - all but a group of Cherokee.

The *Trail of Tears* was tragic, but the lives and suffering prevented by his bold action, were immeasurable, and for this he seldom gets any credit.

During most of Jackson's youth and early adulthood he saw so much killing and tragedy. His brothers and mother both died because of the Revolution. His friends in Tennessee were massacred in their sleep by warring Creek. He fought the Spanish, British, pirates, Indians, and secessionists in his attempt to protect our country.

Andrew Jackson was almost certainly at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse or at least delivering messages for his commanding officer, Davies, the Commissary General at the Guilford Courthouse Battle. Ann McCuistion says Andy came to her house early on March 12 to warn her of Cornwallis' approach and to help hide McCuistion gold.

The *Ides of March* became a double whammy for the British three days later, as Andy celebrated his 14th birthday watching the British get soundly beaten by the "demon" Americans, including many of his own McCuist(i)on relatives.

St. Patrick's Day

March 17th

St. Patrick is most commonly associated with the Catholic Church and, in fact, this year the church has officially moved St. Patrick's Day to March 15th, to avoid conflict with Holy Week.

The Catholic Church, in turn, is most commonly associated with the Republic of Ireland, not with the six counties that make up Ulster, or Northern Ireland.

However, most historians place St. Patrick in Ulster counties for most of his last 60 years on earth.

He is said to be buried in County Down at Downpatrick. Just above Downpatrick is Castlereagh, a suburb of Belfast, and home to the McQuiston Church, the largest Presbyterian congregation in Irish history, once reaching 1610 children in Sunday School.

After escaping his slavery in Ireland, Patrick returned, with the intention of preaching in Antrim, the eventual home to the McUisdeans who came over from Scotland. He was sidetracked by a storm but finally made his way to the north and built at least six churches and one castle. We saw the remains of that castle when in Ireland.

Two towns that currently hold family members are Ballymoney and Ballymena. Only three miles distant from Ballymena is Broughshane, typically linked with St. Patrick's history and home to one of many St. Patrick's Churches. Three miles further is the hill of Slemish, where Patrick lived as a slave, and where he saw his visions and dreamed his dreams which God afterwards enabled him to put into action for the benefit and blessing of the Irish nation.

McQuistons currently live in Counties Antrim and Derry, and the 1735 McCuist(i)on brothers came from Dungiven to America. The Jacksons and Hutchinsons also lived on the Derry and Antrim Co. border, and the Calhouns lived in Tyrone.

One family member, named David, was a church elder in Fermanagh

Another church often linked with St. Patrick is Banagher Church, two miles out of Dungiven, where many of our family lived. Banagher is also close to Boveva where Isabel Creton attended church, and during her lifetime, the old Boveva church burned and her parish joined, for a time, with Banagher.

The church carries the date 474 on its wall, which was during the lifetime of St. Patrick. Sometimes the church is credited to another saint, who does not appear as an official saint by the church, but only

Ballycastle, X home to our family from 1565 to at least 1631

X Torr Point where the signal fire was lit to bring our family back to Ireland.

*DERRY X ANTRIM
Dungiven, home to early family members*

BELFAST X Castlereagh, home to McQuiston Church

Downpatrick, X burial site of St. Patrick

in Irish legend. Others say it was Patrick who founded Banagher.

Nearby is a bridge crossing a small river and there, it is said, a single serpent escaped Patrick's staff, when he banished all snakes from Ireland.

There is little doubt that St. Patrick ministered to the very Irish who migrated to Scotland as *scotti* and gave their name to that land.

Our family is directly from that line of *scotti* through Somerled and the McDonald clan and we returned to our homeland as Scotch-Irish.

