

THE JOHN AND ANN (HAWKINS) MCGEE FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this book is the Reverend John Simpson McGee, his wife, Ann Reminta Hawkins, and their respective families. John McGee was born in Pennsylvania in 1818, the son of a tailor. His mother died when he was quite young, and he was raised by his father and step-mother in Butler Co., Ohio and Fayette County, Indiana. When he was old enough to strike out on his own, he traveled to central Kentucky where he met and married Ann Hawkins in 1839. The Hawkins family resided near the village of Salvisa in Mercer County, and it was in Salvisa, Kentucky, in 1842, that John McGee answered the call to become a preacher. As a Methodist circuit-rider, his assignments took him throughout the state of Kentucky and into western Virginia. Twice he made the long trek with his family from Kentucky to south-central Texas, where he organized and preached at several churches in Bexar, Guadalupe and Wilson Counties. It was while the family was in Bexar Co. in 1855, that his second oldest son, Jouette McGee, was killed by marauding Indians.

Another one of Rev. McGee's sons was my great grandfather, James Wilson McGee, called "Pa Gee" by his family. He was born in Texas but spent most of his 76 years in Hart County, Kentucky before he passed away in 1938, the year before I was born. His wife's name was Evalena, or "Ma Gee," as we called her, and she lived until she was 96 years old. In my youth I had plenty of chances to ask my great grandmother about the McGee side of the family, but I never did. I have often thought about those missed opportunities, especially after spending numerous hours in libraries, cemeteries and county courthouses. Even today, after extensive research conducted by this author and others, there remain many unanswered questions, some of which I feel confident she could have answered or at least shed light upon.

Ancestry of John S. McGee

There has been considerable debate among McGee researchers as to the ancestry of John Simpson McGee, but until recently no one has been able to identify the names of his parents with any degree of certainty. It is generally believed that he was of Irish descent, and census records consistently reported his birthplace as the state of Pennsylvania, but beyond these few details little was known about his early life. As it turns out, his father was also named John McGee, and his grandfather may have carried the same name, although it's also possible his grandfather's name was William McGee. That relationship is still unclear, and in order to avoid confusion, I have referred to his father in this report as John McGee, Jr. and the older McGee as John McGee, Sr., since that is the way their names appeared in the 1820 U.S. Census. Not much is known about the origins of either John McGee, Sr. or William McGee, but John McGee, Jr. was born in Pennsylvania about 1794 and was a tailor by trade. He left that state shortly after 1820 and established himself in Oxford, Butler County, Ohio for several years before finally moving to the state of Indiana.

On page 545 of Albert Redford's book, The History of Methodism in Kentucky, published in 1876, the author stated that John Simpson McGee was born in Beavertown, Pennsylvania on December 9, 1819. His official obituary, which appeared on page 38 of the "Minutes of the Louisville Annual Methodist Conference of 1890," stated that John S. McGee was born in Pittsburgh on December 9, 1818. For those readers unfamiliar with western Pennsylvania, it should be noted that Beavertown was the old name for the present-day community of Bridgeport, which is located in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, about 25 miles northwest of the city of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh is located in Allegheny County, which adjoins Beaver County on the southeast. Despite the fact that Redford was mistaken by one year on Reverend McGee's birth date (1818 is accepted as the correct year, and indeed his headstone is inscribed December 9, 1818), this author believes that Beavertown, not Pittsburgh, was the correct site for his birth. Redford's biographical sketch was written when John McGee was about 57 yrs. old, and presumably was based upon an interview with the man, himself, so it seems unlikely that Redford would have selected the site of "Beavertown" out of thin air. On the other hand, when Reverend McGee's obituary was written in 1890, it's easy to imagine the writer substituting Pittsburgh in place of Beavertown for his birthplace. After all, the two locations are only 25 miles apart, and everyone knew of Pittsburgh, but who had ever heard of a small hamlet called Beavertown?

The Redford article offers some additional clues to John S. McGee's early years as well as some misleading information:

"John S. McGee, a zealous and efficient young preacher, was appointed to the Barren Circuit. He was born in Beavertown, Pennsylvania, December 9, 1819, but was brought up chiefly in Fayette County, Kentucky, spending however, a short time in Butler County, Ohio. When nine years old, he was converted, in Oxford, Ohio. In 1842, he joined the Church in Salvisa, Kentucky, under the ministry of Richard Deering, and the same year was licensed to preach by James King. At the session of the Kentucky Conference of 1843 he was admitted on trial and appointed to the Barren Circuit, where he was useful and beloved."

As will soon become evident, John S. McGee was indeed born in Beavertown, Pennsylvania, but he spent most of his youth in Butler County, Ohio, and it was Fayette County, Indiana, not Kentucky, where he resided for a short time before leaving his family and traveling to Kentucky.

Beavertown, Beaver County, Pennsylvania

Based upon Redford's article, a written request was made to the Beaver County Historical Research Center in Beaver Falls, PA, asking for information about all individuals named "McGee" (using all of that name's variant spellings), who may have resided there in the early 1800's. Beaver County officially became a county in 1800, formed from parts of Washington and Allegheny Counties, so the hope was that a review of county personal property tax records might offer clues as to the names of John S. McGee's parents and/or other family members. Unfortunately, it was soon determined that, with one exception, Beaver County tax records from the early 1800's have not survived. Only personal property tax records for the year 1802 are available. In addition, county marriage records, including marriage bonds and minister's returns, are also missing from that period. Nonetheless, a few interesting facts were uncovered which can be summarized as follows:

1. In the 1800 U.S. Census for Beaver County, Pennsylvania, there were only two persons named

“McGee” listed as heads-of-household:

John McGee, one male 10 – 16 yrs., one male 26 – 45 yrs., one female under 10 yrs., and one female 26 – 45 yrs.

Wm. McGee, one male under 10 yrs., two males over 45 yrs., three females under 10 yrs., two females 10 – 16 yrs., and one female over 45 yrs.

2. The community presently known as Bridgeport officially became a town in 1802 and was called Beavertown. In 1804, Beavertown became part of Borough Township.

3. Page 96 of the "*History of Beaver County*" lists John McGee and William McGee as residents of Beaver County for the year 1802. No other persons with the surname McGee were listed in the county.

4. The personal property tax list for the year 1802, for First Moon Township, Beaver County lists the following individuals as tax payers:

John McGee – one mare, one horse, one cow, and one cabin.

William McGee – 500 acres of land, four horses, one cow.

5. On March 23, 1804, Beaver County property deeds show that John McGee purchased Lot 42 in Beavertown from John Reily. A copy of the land plat shows that Lot 42 originally contained eight acres and was located directly on Beaver Creek, itself, in a section of the town then referred to as "Addition." (Deed Book "A", p.59, Beaver Co. property deeds).

6. In the 1810 U.S. Census John McGee was the only individual named McGee in all of Beaver County, and although his name can clearly be identified as the head of household, the poor condition of the original record makes it difficult to interpret the age categories of his family members. Below is this author's best assessment:

Borough Twp. – John McGee, ? males 0-10, one male 10-16, one male 16-26, one male 26-45, two females 0-10, one female 16-26, and one female 26-45.

7. In the 1820 U.S. Census, there were three individuals with the surname of McGee listed as "heads of household" in all of Beaver County:

Borough Twp. - John McGee, Sr., one male over 45 yrs., one female 10 - 16 yrs., and one female over 45 yrs.

Borough Twp. - John McGee, Jr., one male under 10 yrs., one male 10 - 16 yrs., one male 16 - 26 yrs., and one female 16 - 26 yrs.

Hopewell Twp. - William McGee, one male 26 - 45 yrs., one male over 45 yrs., one female under 10 yrs., one female 16 - 26 yrs., and one female over 45 yrs.

8. In the Beaver County Court Order Book for April 1824, John McGee was listed as the

guardian of an orphan, Catherine Reily, who was listed as over the age of 14 at the time. (Note: It is not known if the young girl, Catherine Reily, was any relation to John Reily, the person from whom John McGee originally purchased his town lot in 1804.)

9. On July 23, 1829, John McGee and Elizabeth, his wife, sold Lot 42 in Beavertown to John Johnson, being the same tract purchased by said John McGee in 1804. The purchase price was \$1.00 plus the further consideration "...of providing the said John McGee and Elizabeth, his wife, with good and sufficient clothing and meat and drink and lodging for and during their natural lives." (Deed Book "I", p. 28, Beaver Co. property deeds).

It is unfortunate that Beaver County tax records from this early period have not survived because it should have been a straightforward process to use them for tracking the movement of individuals into and out of the county. Despite this lack of hard data, several conclusions can still be drawn from the above information. The 1800 U.S. Census listed only two men with the surname "McGee" residing in newly-formed Beaver County - John McGee and William McGee. The fact that their names are listed immediately one below the other on the original, hand-written census record, where the names of heads-of-household were not arranged alphabetically, indicates that the men were related, probably brothers, or possibly father and son, who resided near one another. The John McGee, named as a Beaver County resident in 1802, was almost certainly the same John McGee with a wife named Elizabeth, who purchased Lot 42 in Beavertown in 1804 and then sold it again in 1829. He appeared as John McGee in the 1810 census report for Borough Township and again as John McGee, Sr. in the 1820 census report, which listed him as greater than 45 yrs. of age. The young female, 10 - 16 yrs. old, living in his household in 1820 may have been the orphan, Catherine Reily, for whom he had been appointed the legal guardian.

The only other adult male head-of-household named McGee living in Borough Township in 1820 was John McGee, Jr., whose age was listed as between 16 and 26 yrs. old. According to the census record, the household of John McGee, Jr. contained a young male less than 10 years of age, and it is believed that this male child was John Simpson McGee, who would have been less than 2 yrs. old in 1820. The identity of the second young male in his household, 10 - 16 yrs. old, is not known, but could have either been a relative, a boarder or even an orphan, similar to Catherine Reily. The age of this second boy, when compared to the ages of John McGee, Jr. and his wife, appears to rule out the possibility that he was their child.

William McGee's name was missing entirely from Beaver and the surrounding counties in the 1810 census, but his name reappeared in 1820, although not in Beavertown (Borough Township) but in Hopewell Township instead. It is not known if this was the same individual who was a resident of Beaver County in 1802.

Although some of the conclusions drawn from the above information are circumstantial in nature, the evidence clearly supports the probability that John McGee (Jr.) was the father of John Simpson McGee. According to Redford, John Simpson McGee was born in Beavertown, PA, which was located in Borough Township, and a birth date of December 9, 1818 would have made him approximately 20 months old at the time of the 1820 U.S. Census. In 1820, there were only two heads-of-household named McGee who were residents of Borough Township -- John McGee, Sr. and John McGee, Jr., and only John McGee, Jr. had a son less than 10 yrs. of age.

The only other individual named McGee in all of Beaver County was William McGee, who lived in a different township, but more importantly, had no male children in his household who fit the proper age category for John Simpson McGee.

By 1830, no one named McGee was listed in the census for Beaver County, Pennsylvania. By that time John McGee (Jr.) had departed the state with his family and had resettled in Butler County, Ohio. After 1820 there was no further mention of John McGee (Sr.) or William McGee in the Beaver County census record.

It is tempting to speculate as to the identity of John McGee's (Jr.) father, i.e., the grandfather of John Simpson McGee, but, unfortunately, census records alone do not provide enough evidence to form a valid judgment. If the Beaver County census data were correct, then the age distribution of male family members shown in the 1800 census would seem to favor William McGee over John McGee as the father. However, census information was often erroneous, and the 1820 census did list both John McGee, Sr. and John McGee, Jr. as 'heads-of-households' residing in Borough Township. Were they father and son, or uncle and nephew? It should be noted that even though the term, "senior," is commonly used to distinguish a father with the same given name as his son, the designation has also been used to distinguish between uncles and nephews with the same given name. Another possible complication is the fact that whenever a child happened to be staying in another family's household at the time of census enumeration, that child was counted as part of the new family's household, not their own. At this point, there is simply not enough information to reach a valid conclusion, and only additional research into the archives of western Pennsylvania may provide the answers.

Oxford, Butler County, Ohio

According to Redford's book, John Simpson McGee spent time during his youth in Butler County, Ohio where he was converted to Christianity in the town of Oxford when he was 9 years old. That would place the McGee family in Oxford no later than 1827. The obituary of Ralph McGee, another son of John McGee (Jr.), stated that he was born in Butler County, Ohio on January 8, 1827, which probably means that the McGee family was there by 1826. This author now believes that they arrived in Ohio as early as 1825.

As in the case of Beaver County, PA, a written request was submitted to the Butler County Records Center located in Hamilton, Ohio requesting any information about residents named McGee who may have settled there in the early 1820's to early 1830's. Specifically, it was important to learn if any individuals named John McGee resided in or near the town of Oxford. Once again, it was disappointing to learn that personal property tax records as well as some other county records from that time period had been only randomly preserved. However, the following information was forthcoming:

- 1.** Oxford Township in Butler County, Ohio is located in the southwestern part of the state, and the Indiana state line actually forms its western boundary. The college town of Oxford comprises a large part of the township and is the site of Miami University, founded in 1809, and believed to be the second oldest public college west of the Allegheny Mountains.

2. The 1830 U.S. Census for Butler County, Ohio listed among their residents only three individuals with the surname, McGee, and only one of these was living in Oxford Township. Following are their names and family distributions:

*Oxford Township - **John McGee**; one male under 5 yrs., one male 10 - 15 yrs., one male 30 - 40 yrs., one female under 5 yrs. and one female 30 - 40 yrs.*

*Liberty Township - **Benjamin McGee**; one male under 5 yrs., two males 5 - 10 yrs., one male 10 - 15 yrs., one male 40 - 50 yrs., one female 10 - 15 yrs., one female 15 - 20 yrs., and one female 50 - 60 yrs.*

*Milford Township - **James McGhee**; one male 5 - 10 yrs., one male 30 - 40 yrs., one female under 5 yrs., two females 5 - 10 yrs., and one female 30 - 40 yrs.*

3. Surviving personal property tax records for Oxford Township, Butler County for the 1830's do not list anyone named John McGee, although there was an individual named Charles McGhee listed for two years, in 1835 and again in 1837. However, some school records for Oxford Township from the period of interest have survived, and John McGee was listed on the Abstract of the Taxable Inhabitants in School District No. 4, Oxford Township, Butler County for the year, 1834. In addition, school records show that John McGee was the parent of three children attending school in Oxford Township in 1834, four children in 1835 and four children in 1836. School records prior to 1834 and after 1836 are missing. An inquiry was made as to why John McGee's name would have been listed as a parent on the Oxford School Records and yet not appear on the Oxford Personal Property Tax records for the same time period. A records specialist at the Butler County Archives provided the following explanation: "If a person was living in the City of Oxford, most of that land was owned by Miami University, and there were many houses that were rented. If a person lived in the city and rented a house, that person would not have paid personal property tax because tax was only collected on those individuals who owned real estate or farm livestock (horses, cattle, etc.)."

When one considers the combined evidence from both Beaver County, Pennsylvania and Butler County, Ohio, together with the leads provided in Redford's book, the conclusion is indeed compelling and affords a reasonable basis for the inference that the individual named John McGee, Jr. found in the 1820 census for Borough Township, Beaver County, Pennsylvania was the father of John Simpson McGee and was also the same person as John McGee found in the 1830 census for Oxford Township, Butler County, Ohio. His age category as well as those of the other family members fit perfectly without any conflict from the 1820 Beaver Co. census report to the 1830 Butler Co. census report. According to Ralph McGee's obituary (see page 430), his father, John McGee, of Oxford Township was a tailor by trade, not a farmer, which would explain why he might not have owned livestock of any kind and hence would have paid no personal property tax. He apparently owned no real estate while either a resident of Beaver County, Pennsylvania or Butler County, Ohio, since there is no property deed bearing his name. More than likely he rented his home in the town of Oxford from the college, itself. John McGee (Jr.) was a resident of Oxford, Ohio at least for the period, 1825 - 1836, and may have been there prior to that time, but by 1837 the family had moved approximately 20 miles to the west, across the state line into neighboring Fayette County, Indiana.

Fayette/Clinton Counties, Indiana

The 1840 U.S. Census for Fayette County, Indiana lists John McGee as head of the household with the following family distribution:

*Jennings Township – **John McGee**; one male under 5 yrs., two males 5 – 10 yrs., one male 10 – 15 yrs., one male 40 – 50 yrs., two females 5 – 10 yrs., and one female 40 – 50 yrs.*

By 1840, John Simpson McGee was no longer residing in his father's household, having departed Fayette County, Indiana for Kentucky in 1838. It was there that he married Ann Reminta Hawkins on April 2, 1839, in Anderson County, Kentucky, and by the 1840 census, Ann had given birth to their first child, Medley Shelton McGee, born February 29th of that year.

By 1850, John McGee (Jr.) had moved west once again with his family to settle in Clinton County, Indiana, located some 50 miles northwest of Indianapolis.

*The 1850 U.S. Census for Michigan Township, Clinton County, Indiana lists **John Magee**, age 54, b. in PA; his wife, Jane, age 56, b. in PA, cannot read or write; a son, William, age 20, farmer, b. in OH; a son, James, age 17, farmer, b. in OH; a son, Theodore, age 12, b. in OH; a daughter, Elizabeth, age 18, b. in OH; and a daughter, Martha, age 20, b. in OH. The assessed value of the real estate owned was \$300.00.*

(Note: The 1850 U.S. Census marks the first time that names and ages were given for all individuals within the household. Prior to 1850, only the head of the family was listed by name in census records. The 1850 Clinton census not only identified John McGee's wife as Jane McGee, but also listed the names of five of his children.)

At about the same time that the 1850 census was enumerated, one of John McGee's daughters, Elizabeth McGee, married John Dodson, a carpenter and wagon maker from Ohio who had two sons from a previous marriage (his first wife having died the previous year in Tippecanoe County). The couple married in Clinton County, Indiana but settled in neighboring Tippecanoe County where the John Dodson's home and business was located. Elizabeth (McGee) Dodson actually appeared twice in the 1850 census, once with her McGee family in Clinton County (above) and a second time with her husband in Tippecanoe County. On January 9, 1851, Elizabeth's older sister, Martha McGee, married Jacob Dodson, a younger brother of John Dodson. They were married in Tippecanoe County, Indiana.

Jane McGee, the wife of John McGee (Jr.), died sometime between 1850 and 1860, probably in Clinton County, and in the 1860 census, John McGee (Jr.) was listed as a 68 year- old widower living with his daughter, Elizabeth Dodson and her family.

*The 1860 U.S. Census for Sheffield Township, Tippecanoe County, Indiana lists John Dodson, age 44, b. in OH, wagon maker; his wife, Elizabeth, age 27, b. in OH; a son, Henry, age 18, farmer, b. in IN; a son, Ira, age 4, b. in IN; and a daughter, Margaret, age 8, b. in IN. Also living in the home was **John McGee**, age 68, with occupation of "taylor," born in PA.*

Around 1865, the Dodson family departed Tippecanoe County, Indiana and moved to Champaign County, Illinois, where they would reside for the remainder of their lives. They were listed as residents of Urbana Township in the 1870 census, but John McGee (Jr.) was no longer a member of the household, and it is believed that he died between 1860 and 1870. It is not known if his death occurred while the family was in Tippecanoe County, Indiana or after they had moved to Illinois.

Ralph McGee of Decatur County, Indiana

In a personal letter from Rev. John Simpson McGee to his son, Richard, dated September 25, 1884, he wrote:

“....My brother was to see me in Louisville. He lives near Greensburg in Indiana. He owns 600 acres of fine land worth \$75.00+ an acre.”

The sudden realization by this author that Rev. McGee had a brother was a great surprise and a significant discovery, one that would lead to irrefutable proof that the tailor, John McGee (Jr.) was indeed the father of John Simpson McGee. Unfortunately, Rev. McGee’s penmanship often left much to be desired, and in his letter to Richard the word for “brother” was scrawled in such a manner that it was difficult to decipher. As a result, considerable time passed before the meaning of the sentence became apparent. (The entire letter may be seen in Figures 9 & 10 at the end of Part One, Chapter One.) However, once it became clear that Rev. McGee had a brother who lived near Greensburg, Indiana, the author immediately made plans to visit that community in order to learn his identity. The sibling in question turned out to be Ralph McGee, who was born on January 8, 1827 in Butler County, Ohio and who was actually a half-brother to Rev. John McGee. As will be explained below, Rev. John S. McGee’s biological mother died shortly after the McGee family arrived in Oxford, Butler County, Ohio, and about 1825, his father remarried to Jane Cassel, the daughter of Ralph Cassel of South Carolina. Ralph McGee was the first of six children born to John McGee (Jr.) and his second wife.

In the late 1840’s, when the tailor, John McGee (Jr.) left Fayette County and moved to Clinton County, Ralph McGee remained behind in southeastern Indiana. He married Sarah B. Jones in Franklin County, Indiana on February 24, 1850, and they made their home near Greensburg in neighboring Decatur County where they would raise nine children. (Note: Fayette, Franklin and Decatur are contiguous counties located immediately west of Oxford, Butler County, Ohio.) Over the next fifty years, until his death on June 20, 1909, Ralph McGee would become one of the most widely known and successful farmers in Decatur County. His obituary stated that he was born in Butler County, Ohio, the son of John McGee and Jane Cassell. It further stated that his father, John McGee, was a tailor by trade, fought in the War of 1812, and came to Butler County from Ireland. Although much of the information given in Ralph’s obituary was correct, the part about his father coming to Ohio from Ireland was incorrect. Ralph McGee’s death certificate, on file at the Decatur County Health Department in Greensburg, Indiana, states that his father was named John McGee and was born in the state of Pennsylvania. (The name and birthplace of his mother was not given.) Furthermore, both the 1880 and 1900 U.S. Census reports for Decatur County, which list Ralph McGee as head of the household, also state that Ralph’s father was born in Pennsylvania. Further research may reveal that it was the father of

John McGee (Jr.) who initially came from Ireland and settled in Beaver County, Pennsylvania.

Jane Cassel, the second wife of John McGee, Jr.

Ralph McGee's obituary, dated June 25, 1909, stated that he was the son of John McGee and Jane Cassel. The only census report where his mother was actually listed by name was the 1850 Clinton County, Indiana census where she was simply called, Jane Magee, the wife of John Magee. By the time the 1860 census was enumerated she had died and John McGee (Jr.) was living with one of his children. While there is absolutely no doubt that Jane Cassel was the mother of Ralph McGee and his five younger siblings, she was not the mother of John Simpson McGee, but his stepmother instead. The explanation for this conclusion is as follows:

It is reasonable to assume that John McGee (Jr.) married for the first time around 1817 in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, when he was approximately 21 years old. His first child, John Simpson McGee was born the following year, on December 9, 1818. In the 1820 Beaver County census, John McGee (Jr.) was listed as head of a household that included a wife, age 16 to 26, and a son under 10 years. Because Beaver County marriage records from that period have not survived, we do not know the identity of his wife. It is worthwhile to note, that there was no family by the name of Cassel residing anywhere in Beaver County in either the 1810 or the 1820 census reports. There was, however, a Cassel family in Butler County, Ohio in 1820.

The 1820 U.S. Census for Oxford Township, Butler County, Ohio, lists Ralph Cassel as head of the household with a family comprised as follows: one male 10-16 yrs., one male over 45 yrs., one female 10-16 yrs., and one female over 45 yrs.

The conclusion that John McGee (Jr.) was married twice also helps to explain the unusually long interval between the births of John Simpson McGee and that of the next oldest child. More than eight years passed between the birth of John Simpson McGee, in December 1818, and that of Ralph McGee, born in January 1827. Yet, Ralph and his five younger siblings, Martha, William, Elizabeth, James and Theodore, were all born in Butler County, Ohio within a nine year interval, between January 1827 and July 1836.

The 1880 Hart County, Kentucky census indicates that both parents of John Simpson McGee were born in Pennsylvania. However, the 1880 and 1900 census reports for Martha (McGee) Dodson, William McGee, Elizabeth (McGee) Dodson and Theodore McGee show their father's birthplace as Pennsylvania but their mother's as South Carolina.

It is this author's belief that John McGee (Jr.) departed Pennsylvania shortly after the 1820 census and moved to Oxford, Butler County, Ohio, and it was shortly after his arrival in Ohio that his first wife died leaving him a widower with a young son. The date of her death is unknown, and it is even possible that she died in Pennsylvania prior to John McGee's departure, but it seems unlikely that he would have made the trip to Ohio alone with a baby son to care for. About 1825, he married Jane Cassel in Butler County, Ohio, the daughter of Ralph Cassel, who had moved his family to Ohio from South Carolina. The Ralph Cassel family was already living in Oxford Township when John McGee settled there. The first child of John McGee and his second wife, Jane Cassel, was Ralph McGee, born January 8, 1827 and named after his grandfather.

(Note: Ralph Cassel was a Revolutionary War veteran who was actually born in Virginia but lived in South Carolina for about ten years before moving on to Ohio. He was a resident of South Carolina when he entered the military, serving under Capt. Joseph Hayes. He was wounded twice by the British, once in the fighting at Musgrove's Mill in 1780 and again in the engagement at Parker's Ferry in 1781. Ralph Cassel owned a farm in Oxford Township, Butler County, Ohio until the spring of 1839, when he moved to Decatur County, Indiana.)

Generation No. 1

1. JOHN¹ MCGEE was born abt. 1794 prob. in Allegheny County (now Beaver County), Pennsylvania, and died bet. 1860 - 1870 prob. in Tippecanoe County, Indiana. He married **(1) UNKNOWN** abt. 1817 prob. in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. She died in the early 1820's prob. in Butler County, Ohio. He married **(2) JANE CASSEL** abt. 1825 in Butler County, Ohio, daughter of RALPH CASSEL. She was born abt. 1794 in the state of South Carolina, and died bet. 1850 - 1860 in Clinton or Tippecanoe County, Indiana.

Notes for JOHN MCGEE:

According to census records, John McGee (Jr.) was born in the state of Pennsylvania, but there is some confusion as to the exact year of his birth. The 1850 census was the first time when the ages of individuals were officially recorded, and in that year John McGee was listed as age 54, which means he was born about 1796. In the 1860 census, he was listed as 68 years old, which would place his birth about 1792. This discrepancy has led the author to arbitrarily select the year 1794 as his approximate birth year. Allegheny County would have been his birthplace, since Beaver County was not officially formed until 1800, whereas his son, John Simpson McGee, was born in 1818 in Beaver County.

*The 1820 census for Borough Township, Beaver County, Pennsylvania lists **John McGee, Jr.** as head with the following family distribution: one male under 10 yrs., one male 10 - 16 yrs., one male 16 - 26 yrs., and one female 16 - 26 yrs.*

John McGee (Jr.) departed Beaver County, Pennsylvania with his family not long after the 1820 census and traveled to Oxford Township, Butler County, Ohio. His wife died relatively soon after their arrival because by about 1825, he married a second time to Jane Cassel, the daughter of Ralph Cassel. Unfortunately, early marriage records from Butler County have not survived and the exact marriage date is unknown. The Cassels were from South Carolina and were already residents of Butler County when John McGee (Jr.) arrived there from Pennsylvania.

The second child of John McGee (Jr.), and the first of six children he would have with Jane Cassel, was Ralph McGee, born in Butler County on January 8, 1827, and named for his grandfather, Ralph Cassel.

*The 1830 census for Oxford Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania lists **John McGee** as head with the following family distribution: one male under 5 yrs., one male 10 - 15 yrs., one male 30 - 40 yrs., one female under 5 yrs., and one female 30 - 40 yrs. (Note: the male 10 - 15 yrs. old was John Simpson McGee, the male under 5 yrs. was his half-brother, Ralph McGee and the female under 5 yrs. was his half-sister, Martha McGee).*

Land records for Butler County have survived, and there is no indication that John McGee (Jr.) ever owned real estate while a resident there. While the family lived in Oxford Township, they probably rented their home. County tax records for some years in the early 1830's have survived, but John McGee's name was not listed as a land owner. According to the Butler County Records Center, if a person was living in the city of Oxford, most of that land was owned by the Miami

University, and there were many houses that were rented. If a person lived in the city and rented a house, that person would not pay personal property taxes, since tax was only collected on those who owned horses or cattle. John McGee was a tailor by trade and would not necessarily have owned any livestock. (Butler County, Ohio Records Center and Archives, Hamilton, Ohio.)

A few Butler County school records for School District No. 4, Oxford Township have been preserved, and John McGee was listed as the parent of three children attending school in 1834, four children in 1835 and four children in 1836. Records prior to 1834 and after 1836 are missing. School District No. 4 was comprised of Sections 17, 18, 19, and 20 which are located in the extreme west of Oxford Township, indicating that the McGee family lived within two miles of the Indiana state line. (Butler County, Ohio Records Center and Archives, Hamilton, Ohio.)

John McGee (Jr.) departed Oxford, Ohio with his family in 1837 and moved some twenty miles west to Fayette County, Indiana. The time of his departure is well documented because his youngest child, Theodore McGee, was born in July 1836 in Butler County, and on November 16, 1836, John McGee's name is listed as the parent of four students attending School District No. 4, Oxford Township, Butler County. The family probably left Ohio at the end of the school year in the spring of 1837. Redford's book stated that John Simpson McGee was brought up in Fayette County, Kentucky after spending time in Butler County, Ohio. There is absolutely no evidence that John S. McGee ever lived in Fayette County, Kentucky, and this author believes that Redford got his states confused and should have said Fayette County, Indiana. About 1838, when John Simpson McGee, left for Mercer County, Kentucky, he would have departed from Fayette County, Indiana, not Kentucky.

*The 1840 census for Jennings Township, Fayette County, Indiana lists **John McGee** as head of the household with the following family distribution: one male under 5 yrs., two males 5 - 10 yrs., one male 10 - 15 yrs., one male 40 - 50 yrs., two females 5 - 10 yrs., and one female 40 - 50 yrs.*

Between 1840 and 1850, John McGee (Jr.) moved his family again some hundred miles northwest to Clinton County, Indiana, where census records indicate he was the owner of real estate valued at \$300.00. This is the first instance found in the public record where John McGee (Jr.) is shown as a land owner. When the McGees left Fayette County, the second oldest son, Ralph McGee, remained behind in southeast Indiana where he married a local girl from Franklin County.

*The 1850 census for Michigan Township, Clinton County, Indiana lists **John Magee**, age 54, head, a farmer, b. in Pa.; his wife, Jane, age 56, b. in Pa., cannot read or write; a son, William, age 20, a farmer, b. in Ohio; a son, James, age 17, a farmer, b. in Ohio; a son, Theodore, age 12, b. in Ohio; a daughter, Elizabeth, age 18, b. in Ohio; and a daughter, Martha, age 20, b. in Ohio. The value of the real estate owned was \$300.*

Jane (Cassel) McGee died sometime between 1850 and 1860, either in Clinton or neighboring Tippecanoe County, after which John McGee (Jr.) moved into the household of his daughter, Elizabeth Dodson, located in Tippecanoe County.

The 1860 census for Sheffield Township, Tippecanoe County, Indiana lists John Dodson, age 44,

*head, a wagon maker; his wife, Elizabeth, age 27, b. in Ohio; a son, Henry, age 18, a farmer, b. in Ind.; a son, Ira, age 4, b. in Ind.; and a daughter, Margaret, age 8, b. in Ind. Also living in the home was **John McGee**, age 68, occupation of "taylor," b. in Pa. (Note: Elizabeth McGee married John Dodson about 1850, and the two youngest children, Margaret and Ira, were their own. Henry Dodson, age 18, was from John Dodson's previous marriage.)*

It is believed that John McGee (Jr.) died between 1860 and 1870, primarily because he was no longer listed as part of the Dodson household in the 1870 census nor was he found to be living in the households of any of his other children. His daughter, Elizabeth, and son-in-law, John Dodson, departed Tippecanoe County in 1865 and resettled in Champaign County, Illinois, where they appeared in the 1870 U.S. Census for Urbana Township. Depending upon the date of his death, John McGee (Jr.) would have been buried in either Tippecanoe County, Indiana or Champaign County, Illinois.

Child of JOHN MCGEE (JR.) and UNKNOWN is:

2. i. **JOHN SIMPSON² MCGEE**, b. December 09, 1818, Beavertown, Beaver County, Pennsylvania; d. March 28, 1890, at his home near Uno, Hart County, Kentucky; m. ANN REMINTA HAWKINS, April 02, 1839, Anderson County, Kentucky; b. May 17, 1820, near Salvisa, Mercer County, Kentucky; d. January 30, 1901, at the home of her son, James McGee, Horse Cave, Hart County, Kentucky.

Children of JOHN MCGEE (JR.) and JANE CASSEL are:

3. ii. **RALPH² MCGEE**, b. January 08, 1827, Butler County, Ohio; d. June 20, 1909, Decatur County, Indiana; m. SARAH BRADFORD JONES, February 24, 1850, Franklin County, Indiana; b. April 12, 1832, Franklin County, Indiana; d. February 03, 1906, Decatur County, Indiana.
4. iii. **MARTHA J. MCGEE**, b. August 1830, Butler County, Ohio; d. Aft. 1900, prob. Phillips County, Kansas; m. JACOB DODSON; b. December 1827, state of Ohio; d. Aft. 1900, prob. Phillips County, Kansas.
5. iv. **WILLIAM S. MCGEE**, b. abt. 1832, Butler County, Ohio; m. MARY E. ?; b. abt. 1841, state of Illinois.
6. v. **ELIZABETH MCGEE**, b. December 1833, Butler County, Ohio; d. January 16, 1917, Champaign County, Illinois; m. JOHN DODSON, August 15, 1850, Clinton County, Indiana; b. February 29, 1816, Montgomery County, Ohio; d. 1908, Champaign County, Illinois.
- vi. **JAMES MCGEE**, b. abt. 1834, Butler County, Ohio.
7. vii. **THEODORE MCGEE**, b. July 1836, Butler County, Ohio; d. bef. 1920, prob. Humboldt County, Iowa; m. SARAH LUVENA WRIGHT, abt. 1865, state of Indiana; b. July 16, 1846, Decatur County, Indiana; d. December 17, 1928, prob. Humboldt County, Iowa.

Mitchell Hart	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0
James Jordan	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	1
John Jordan	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
John Gails	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Stephen Veazey	0	1	2	0	1	2	1	1	0	1
Lejoh Veazey	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
John White	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
Francis W. Leblond	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
James Johnston	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
John Hejze	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Wm. Hejze	1	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	0	1
Thomas Burns	0	1	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	1
Wm. Burns	2	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	0

1. Partial view of the 1800 U.S. Census record from Beaver Co., PA. The names of John and Wm. McGee are listed near the bottom. No other individuals named McGee were listed as heads of family in Beaver County.

Borough Township	Stephen Hall	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
	John McGee Sr.	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	William Gert	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	1
	John Hull	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
	Robert Davaag	4	0	1	3	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	2
	James Hamilton	3	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	John McGee Jr.	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	William Kane	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	James Wilson	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	John Wilson	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Eli Evans	2	0	1	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	James Donnell	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
John T. Miller	2	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	
John D. Garrison	2	1	0	3	1	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	

2. The 1820 U.S. Census for Borough Twp., Beaver Co., PA. John McGee, Sr. is listed second from the top and John McGee, Jr. is listed seventh from the top.