"Researching your family tree is a project that is never finished. There will always be one more person, one more branch of the family to discover."

--- Brian Lawson, The Isle of Man Family History Society

personally appeared defore the lendersigned one of the RICHARD WELLS, OUR ANCESTOR who being first de 2 (o Carv. dollan hw outh make cahin avoran to obtain the beneg Congreso hafsed June 7. 1832 the service of the united States una anus afecus and RICHARD Senerco as perion as born in the WELLS Hule of Ferneyle 1 Philadelphia in the 11 day of ORD SGT emond to Augusta in georgea with nele moura, a GA MILITIA Lurgen in the an after the Revo REY WAR whom by you a duck his ist. Col Hanis frust appears non or Harrison, he at a place · he was drafted Called Wasi as a millilla capt vaine in Farmary 1779 for ey moners he marches down the Savaner river and halsed through Ebenezer



# BUT, WHO WAS THE FATHER OF RICHARD WELLS?

# The Lost Ancestor

# THE WELLS FAMILY

OF
KENTUCKY'S
BIG SANDY VALLEY

"From Willesborough, England to Daniels Creek"



John Britton Wells III

and

The Historical Committee

Wells Family Association, Inc.

THOMAS (AT WELL) ATTE WELLE living in Willesborough, Kent, England in 1452 died 1487, Willesborough, Kent, England JOHN (ATTE WELLE) ATWELL born after 1465, Willesborough, Kent, England died 1536, Willesborough, Kent, England ROBERT (ATWELL) WELLS born before 1519, Willesborough, Kent, England died 1559, Willesborough, Kent, England JOHN WELLS born before 1541, Willesborough, Kent, England died 1573, Willesborough, Kent, England ROBERT WELLS christened 1570, Willesborough. Kent, England died 1636, Badlesmere, Kent, England RICHARD WELLS christened 1618, Boughton Aluph, Kent, England died before 1662, Westmoreland County, Virginia ZOROBABEL WELLS born about 1646, Northumberland County, Virginia died 1696, Talbot County, Maryland RICHARD WELLS born 1677, Talbot County, Maryland died 1754, Queen Anne's County, Maryland RICHARD WELLS born about 1708-15, Queen Anne's County, Maryland died 1767, Rent County, Delaware RICHARD WELLS **GEORGE WELLS** born about 1736, Queen Anne's County, Maryland born 1743, Queen Anne's County, MD died 1779, South Carolina died 1780, Augusta, Georgia RICHARD WELLS

born 1760, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Died 1838, Floyd County, Kentucky

SEARCH MILLIONS OF ORIGINAL First Name	AL SOURCE DOCUMENTS  Last Name	State ▼	fold3 <b>⊗</b> Search now		
Mystery of the Month - June 1997					

#### Who was the father of Richard Wells b: 11 Feb 1760?

Richard Wells, Jr. was called "Planter". By 1748, after the death of his wife, he listed himself as a "practitioner of physic" having become a medical doctor following in his great-grandfather's footsteps (Dr. Humphrey Davenport).

Richard moved to Dover. Kent Co., Delaware after his wife's death where he bought property on 13 Aug 1747 and married 2) 28 Jul 1748 in Dover Lydia Alford (d: 1785, dau of Thomas and Mary Alford). While

Richard Wells b: Cir 1708; d: 1767 (will proved 20 May 1767); m: 1) 12 Aug 1735 Mary Holliday (d: 1745-1748) at St. Luke's parish in Queen Anne Co., Maryland. In a land transfer from his father in 1743

he apparently lived in Dover he spent considerable time in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Daughter Rebecca married and settled there and sonsGeorge and Humphreyalso both lived there.

Richard's will left his entire estate to a Catherine Buckmaster and her four children who all had the surname Buckmaster but the middle name of Wells. The relationship, if any, between Dr. Richard Wells and Catherine Buckmaster is unknown.

No provision was made for any of Richard's legitimate children nor his wife Lydia.

#### Richard Wells and Mary Holliday had:

- 1. Sarah Wells b: 07 Jun 1736; d: 16 Sep 1738
- 2. Humphrey Wells b: Cir 1737 A Dr. Humphrey Wells appears on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia in 1759 and 1760. He disappears by 1767. {Whether Dr. Humphrey Wells had any children will be discussed shortly.}
- 3. Rebecca Wells b: Cir 1739; m: Charles Coxe
- 4. George Wells b: 3 Mar 1743/4 Maryland
- 5. Richard Wells (birth date unknown)

George Wells is a very curious study. About the time his father died Dr. George Wells appeared in the records of Chowan County, North Carolina where he married Marion Boyd (daughter of William Boyd).

George Wells wrote a will on 03 May 1767 naming his wife, his brother Richard Wells and his younger brother "by my father's side, Thomas Wells". If one stopped here they could conclude that George died about 1767

However, the will of his father-in-law written 18 Feb 1775 states "in case my daughter **Marion** should die before her husband **George Wells...**" and "...during the absence of her husband **Geo Wells...**". In a further codicil dated 04 Feb 1780 **William Boyd** mentions his daughter "wife of **George Wells**" several times and states of the property left to her "...shall not be subject to the interference, intermedling order or control of the said **George Wells**, her husband, in any manner..." Professional analysis of the handwriting in the will of **George Wells** of Chowan County in 1767 and records of Dr. **George Wells** of Augusta, Georgia have shown them to be the same man!

George Wells became a physician studying under his father. Dr. George Wells appeared in Augusta, Georgia by 1771 where he was granted 50 acres in St. George's Parish. By 1774 he had acquired over 1,000 acres. Why he left his wife behind in Chowan County is unknown. George led a colorful political life in Georgia finally being appointed Governor on 05 Feb 1780. A short lived career as he was killed in a duel with Major James Jackson [Note: some accounts incorrectly show a General Abram Jackson] on 15 Feb 1780 in Augusta, Georgia.

Some records indicate that Dr. George Wells married a miss \_\_\_\_\_ Jones in Georgia and land records indicate that the Jones family managed to get it's hands on most if not all of George's property after he died. George and \_\_\_\_\_ Jones are credited with supposedly having had one son who died young. More on George Wells later.

Dr. Richard Wells and Lydia Alford may have had two children:

Following is a statement of George Wells in reference to his father's estate in Augusta, Georgia, which was preserved by Rev. M. T. Burris (see No. 115 of this family):

East Point, Johnson County, Kentucky.

March 4, 1887.

"I was born March 22, 1800, in Scott County, Virginia. My father was Richard Wells who was born on Chestnut Street, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The uncle of Richard Wells (my father), whose name was George Wells, went to Augusta, Georgia, and settled there. He was a doctor. He (George Wells) was married. They had one child that died while an infant. George Wells, after whom I was named, went to Philadelphia, and wanted his brother (whose name I think was Humphrey Wells) for Richard Wells (my father) was always wanting his children to name some of their descendants Humphrey. Whether my father had any brothers or sisters I do not know, as George Wells, his uncle, and adopted father, stole him from his mother when he (Richard Wells) was from two to five years old or thereabouts, took him by ship from Philadelphia to Savannah, and up to Augusta, Georgia, where he, George Wells, adopted my father Richard Wells as his son, to heir his estate, money and other property. His mother having followed him on board another ship six or seven days and nights, turned back home. In after years my grandfather went to Georgia to see his son Richard Wells, who was my father, and brought him money and other presents. This fact I often heard my father relate, from my childhood until he died. He was married many years before he died. There are many living persons who heard him tell it over and over, that he had a large estate in Georgia, that was willed to him by his uncle and adopted father, George Wells. My father was often visited by James Fulling, who kept the post office near and just below Osborn's Ford, Scott County, Virginia, and it was believed James Fulling kept the letters."

## All the other accounts of "our" Richard Wells include his father's name as Richard Wells

Richard Wells Jr., when about eighteen years of age went with his uncle, George Wells, to Augusta, Georgia. In 1778 George enlisted in the Colonial troops, belonged to General Pulaski's Legion, Light Dragoons, and was killed at the siege of Savannah, Georgia. It was also claimed that Richard's uncle, George, was killed in a duel with General Abram Jackson, but efforts failed to find his war record other than the one above mentioned, in which he was killed in the siege of Savannah. It is said that George Wells made a will, making Richard, his nephew, his heirat-law, leaving a large estate to him—700 acres of land near Augusta, Georgia, and 50 acres where the city was laid out. Two of Richard's sons went to Augusta, and made a preliminary search for the records, and found the administrator's bond. It called for 50,000 pounds sterling. A Mr. Jones was the administrator.

nvine, where he in reason being College, although ors. While drivoril 21, 1914, his way, and in the Smith was killed. ommunity, where the regard and r. Smith was a asonic fraternity. survives him at Clinton County, e John M. Davis, To this union ar M.; Carrie L., merchant, banker ry, the widow of Edgar, who died rife of James L. salesman for the master mechanic

DOCTOF WELLS WAS A SUIL OF INICIALLY and Susuman (Hutchinson) Wells. Richard Wells was born in the City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 11, 1760, and was young when he accompanied other members of the family to Georgia, whence he went forth as a patriot soldier in the war of the Revolution. He served under three enlistments, took part in numerous engagements, including the battle of Stono and siege of Savanna, and under his third enlistment he was assigned to duty in investigating the activities of the Indians on the frontier, having enlisted as an Indian spy and served three months. It was in this service that he made his first visit to Kentucky, and after the close of the war he settled in Scott County, Virginia. In that state was solemnized his marriage to Miss Susannah Hutchinson, and about the year 1825 he came with his family to Kentucky and settled on Daniels Creek, in what is now Johnson County. Here he lived to venerable age, and here his death occurred in 1838. He married rather late in life and his eldest son was born in 1799. His father Richard Wells. Sr. was a settler in Pennsylvania. George Wells, a brother of Marcus L. K. Wells. In the ancestral and individual records of Mr. Wells are to be found many points of special historical interest, as touching both Kentucky and the nation, and he is now one of the venerable and honored citizens of his native county, — a man whose character and service make him particularly worthy of a tribute of honor in this history of Kentucky. Mr. Wells, who is now living virtually retired at Paintsville, judicial center of Johnson County, had the distinction of representing this county as probably the youngest soldier in the Union ranks in the Civil war, and he is pronounced today "the youngest-looking veteran of the Civil war to be found in the State of Kentucky." Mr. Wells, who is more familiarly known to his wide circle of friends by his third personal name.

King, was born on the old homestead farm of his father, near the mouth of Daniels Creek and near the present post office hamlet of Odds, Johnson County, on the 5th of December, 1848. He is a son of Dr. William Green Wells and Mary (Butcher) Wells. Doctor Wells was a son of Richard and Susannah (Hutchinson) Wells. Richard Wells was born in the City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 11, 1760, and was young when he accompanied other members of the family to Georgia, whence he went forth as a patriot soldier in the war of the Revolution. His father, Richard Wells, Sr. . . . became a pioneer settler in Pennsylvania. George Wells, a brother of Richard, Sr., was a physician and was killed in a duel with Gen. Abram Jackson in Georgia.

--- Charles Kerr, "History of Kentucky," Volume Four, The American Historical Society, Chicago, 1922, Page 438.

A letter from Rev. M.T. Burris, the husband of Agnes Aletha Spears, the granddaughter of Richard Wells "III," dated March 18, 1888. The letter was written to his daughter, Sarah Agnes Burris Black:

"The father of your mothers mother was the old pioneer Richard Wells who came to Kentucky from old Virginia after the Revolutionary War was concluded He was a soldier who fought against the indians and witnessed the surrender of Cornwallis He was a great farmer and hunter and is said to have killed the last of the bears on Greasy creek He was a kind and gentle man who raised a large family His children and grandchildren are some of the most prosperous farmers and business men on the Big Sandy Richard accepted Jesus Christ as his lord and savior late in life and adhered to the Baptist faith several of his sons and grand sons becoming preachers of the gospel old Richard was an orphan never knowing his father who also was Richard Wells ) am told that his mother was named Mildred Bookmasters (Buckmaster?) He spoke little of her Your grandmother never did name any children for her since she abandoned her father at a young age Richard had a brother Humfrey who settled in North Carolina and a brother named George. They were split up among relations as boys and never got together for the rest of his life Richard Wells died fifty years ago this day A story told by (his son) George relates that the day before Richard died he saw a glowing light across the bottom on the far hillside and was convinced that the death angel was showing him the place where he was to be buried The very next morning Richard went to be with the lord and they buried his earthly remains where the angel had showed him."

#### WELLS: WELLES

Randall: b 9-30-1747 RI d p 1790 NY m Lydia Crandall Capt RI Reuben: 6 8-28-1746 NH d 4-3-1804 NH m Molly PS NH

Richard (Jr:) b 2-11-1760 PA d 3-28-1838 KY m Susanna Hutcherson OrdlSgt Spy GA VA PNSR WPNS

Richard: b --- EN d 2-13-1801 PA m Rachel Hill PS PA

Richard Jr: b 1752 MD d 1812 KY m (1) Honor Holmes (2) Jane Brown Pvt PA

Richard: b c 1745 PA d p 1781 SC m Mary Haynesworth Drm SC Richard Sr: b 3-15-1722 MD d 9-12-1816 OH m (1) Nancy Brown (2)X Capt PS VA

Robert: b 9-7-1710 CT d 2-3-1786 CT m Abigail Burnham Pvt CT Robert: b 2-17-1740 CT d 7-3-1812 CT m Abigail Hurlburt Capt

CT

Robert: b c 1756 CT d p 8- -1832 OH m Anna Wheeler Pvt CT PNSR

Robert: b 2-6-1743 MA d 2-17-1820 ME m Abigail Jeffords 2Lt MA

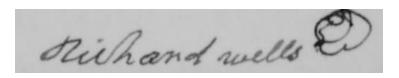
Roger: b 12-29-1753 CT d 5-27-1795 CT m Jemimah Kellogg Capt CT

Samuel Sr: b 1727 CT d 12-29-1800 CT m Lucy Kilbourn Capt CT Samuel: b 12-10-1753 CT d 2-10-1815 CT m Anna Griswold Pvt CT

Samuel: b 10-28-1729 MA d 5-25-1801 MA m Margaret McCrellis 2Lt MA ---- DATCD

SERVICE  SERVICE  CONTENTS		NUMBER 4 26 162-160-55 5 5 2 7 4 8 - 160 - 55
	The Revolutionary War pension application of "our" Richard Wells includes an account of his relationship with his uncle Dr. George Wells.	*

"This 20th day of February 1834 personally appeared ... Richard Wells a resident in the county of Floyd and State of Kentucky aged seventy four years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7th 1832. That he entered the service of the United States ... in January 1779 ... under the following named officers and served as herein stated. That he was born in the State of Pennsylvania in the City of Philadelphia on the 11th day of Feby 1760. he removed to Augusta in Georgia with Dr. Wells his uncle who was a Surgeon in the Army and was killed after the Revolution by Gen Jackson in a duel.... In the year of 1780 he moved to Washington County Virginia and there remained."



## "The Famous Colonel Wells:" Factionalism In Revolutionary Georgia

By Edward J. Cashin\*

HEN Joseph Clay wrote to Henry Laurens in October of 1777 he expressed exasperation at the conduct of the radical faction in the Georgia Assembly. Only with the greatest difficulty had he and his friends prevented that body from going to war with the Creek Indians. In Clay's opinion such a war would have been a disaster. He thought that the war was an excuse for "plunder and Offices" and the chief instigator was "the famous Col. Wells."

Although George Wells was famous enough to his contemporaries, his fame has not persisted through the years. Charles Edgeworth Jones, who sketched the lives of Georgia governors at the turn of the present century, had only this to say about Wells, "History informs us that, coincidentally with Governor Howley's departure for Philadelphia about the middle of February, 1780, our subject occupied the position of president of the executive council of the beleaguered commonwealth. . . . For only two or three days, however, was he permitted to enjoy the gubernatorial honor thus unexpectedly devolved, as his life was tragically concluded in a duel with General James Jackson on the 17th of the same month."

Georgia historians have said so little about Wells that references to his importance by his contemporaries come as a mild surprise. A closer investigation of Wells' career reveals that he was a major figure in that faction of revolutionary politics which had so much to do with the democratization of Georgia. He was associated with the major radical measures, the Constitution of 1777, the confiscatory legislation of March 1, 1778, and the act for the settlement of the up-country of January 23, 1780.

<sup>\*</sup>Professor of History, Augusta College, Augusta, Ga.

the supreme council to be unconstitutional. Richard Howley was elected governor, but he left after a few weeks to take his place as a member of the Continental Congress. George Wells, head of the executive council, succeeded him. A fiery and uncompromising member of the Walton clique, Wells was soon killed in a duel with another patriot, James Jackson. The council replaced him with Humphrey Wells, who resigned after two days. Stephen Heard then became acting governor, the head of a fragmentary government whose capital was a small retreat in the woods of Wilkes County known as Heard's Fort.

It was this same Stephen Heard who later found himself in an Augusta prison where the Tories had sentenced him to be hanged. Mammy Kate, a six-foot Negro giantress who was a house slave of the Governor's, was allowed to visit him twice a week to bring clean linen. The day before Heard was to be executed Mammy Kate walked into the prison, placed her small-of-stature master under some soiled clothing, and smuggled him out in a basket balanced on her head. Mammy Kate was offered her freedom after the war, but she refused to accept it, saying, "Marse Stephen, you may set me free, but I ain't gon' ter set you free!"

Vol.2.

# GEORGIA REVOLUTIONARY WAR SOLDIERS' GRAVES

compiled
by
H. Ross Arnold, Jr.
&
H. Clifton Burnham

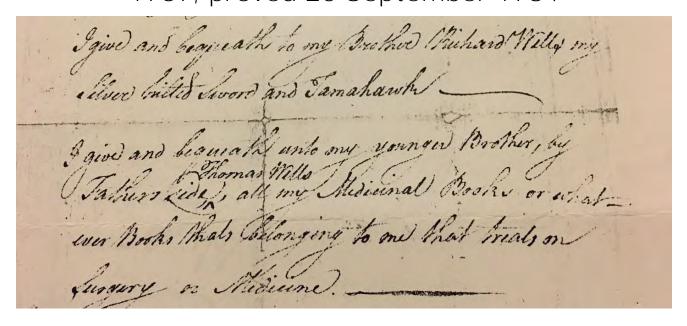
86. Dr. George Wells

A native of Queen Anne's County, Maryland. He settled in Burke County by 1770 and removed to Wilkes County (now Warren) prior to the Revolution. He was a surgeon in the Georgia Troops and signed the Georgia Declaration of Independence on August 5, 1777 in Wilkes County. He was commissioned on August 20, 1777 as the Colonel of the 4th Battalion of Wilkes County, Georgia Militia.

See: (1) Families of Burke County: 1755-1855, p. 92, 140.

(2) Georgia Citizens and Soldiers of the American Revolution, p. 27, 31, 99.

#### Will of GEORGE WELLS Chowan County, NC Will Book A, page 172, written 3 May 1767, proved 20 September 1784



**"I give and bequeath to my Brother** RICHARD WELLS my Silver hilted Sword and Tomahawk -----

I give and bequeath unto my younger brother, by **Father's side,** Thomas Wells (\*), all my Medicinal Books or whatever Books that's belonging to me that treats on Surgery or Medicine------"

(\*) Thomas Wells was born after 1749 in Dover, Delaware, and was just 11 years old or younger when "our" Richard was born.



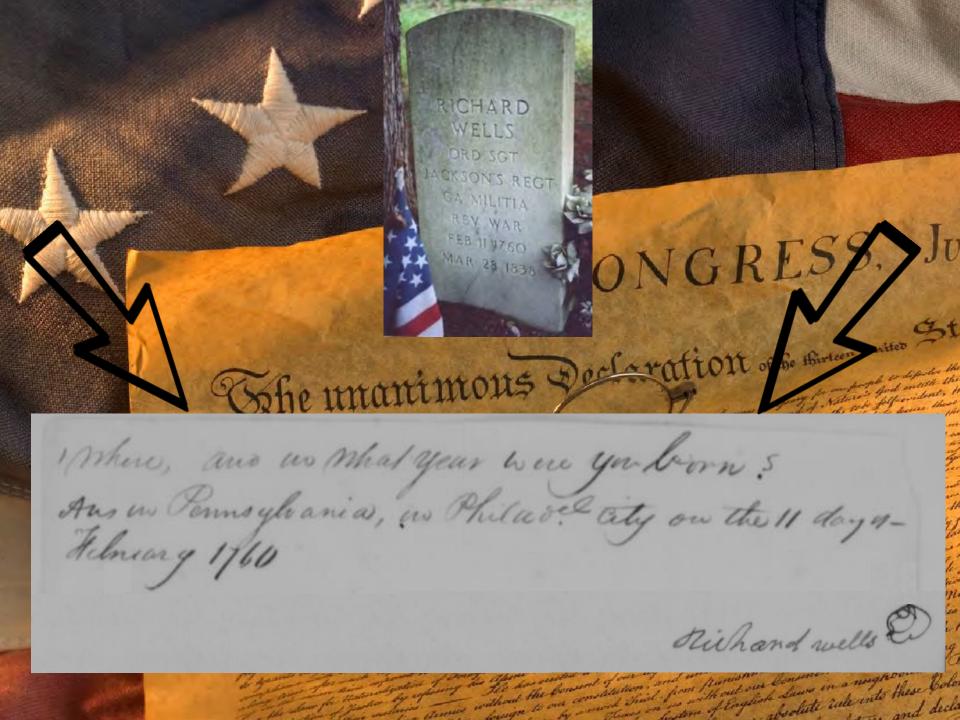
BUT, WHERE DID **"OUR" RICHARD'S** FATHER GO? WE KNOW THAT SOMEHOW **"OUR"** RICHARD WELLS ENDED UP IN GEORGIA WITH HIS UNCLE GEORGE WELLS, BUT WE **DON'T** KNOW WHY. THERE ARE AT LEAST SIX DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE STORY THAT HAVE BEEN PRESERVED BY **RICHARD'S** DESCENDANTS. WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO RICHARD WELLS, THE FATHER OF **"OUR"** RICHARD WELLS? CLEARLY, SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HIM. HE DID NOT JUST VANISH INTO THIN AIR!

#### **FACTS WE KNOW:**

- 1) "Our" RICHARD WELLS, son of RICHARD WELLS, was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on February 11, 1760.
- 2) Will of WILLIAM PAXTON, City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, written March 18, 1764, proved May 2, 1765. Left property to his sister JANE PAXTON and his brother James Paxton. Executer: CHARLES COXE (Richard's brother-in-law). Codicil written March 30, 1764, witnessed by RICHARD WELLS, the father of "our" Richard Wells, "Philadelphia Will Book N", page 281.
- 3) RICHARD WELLS, the father of "our" RICHARD WELLS, remained in Philadelphia where he was a witness to the will of JANE PAXTON in 1768, along with his half-brother THOMAS WELLS and brother-in-law CHARLES COXE: Will of JANE PAXTON, Philadelphia City, signed May 2, 1768. Left property to her mother Mary and her brother James Paxton. Executer: CHARLES COXE. Witnesses: RICHARD WELLS, the father of "our" Richard Wells, & his half-brother THOMAS WELLS. Proved November 30, 1772. "Will Books N, O, Abstracts of Philadelphia Wills, 1763-1784," Collections of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, Volume 4, Philadelphia, PA, 1893, page 1798.
- 4) The will was probated on November 30, 1772, at which time Thomas Cadwalander stated that "RICHARD WELLS and THOMAS WELLS the other two witnesses to the said will [are] now absent out of this province."



# KEEP CALM SURPRISE IS COMING



There were four men named **RICHARD WELLS** who lived in Philadelphia during the 1750s, 1760s and 1770s who could have been the father of our **RICHARD WELLS**:

**RICHARD WELLS**, a native of England and a Quaker, married Rachel Hill, and was a wealthy merchant in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, until his death in 1801. Richard and Rachel Wells had a son named Richard Wells who was born on 10 June 1760, but died ten days later on 20 June 1760.

**RICHARD WELLS**, a river pilot, lived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during the 1770s. He was a river pilot at least from September 1775 until his death in February 1777. He married a woman named Jane and had a son named Richard Wells who was born on 3 May 1761 in Philadelphia who became a mariner by 1781.

**RICHARD WELLS** married Martha Currey at Swedes' Church in Philadelphia on 15 August 1770 and christened a son Henry Wells at Christ Church on 21 February 1773. He was too young to have been the father of "our" Richard Wells.

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A. Goldans 161

#### THE UNITED STATES

#### BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY

PORTRAIT GALLERY

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IOWA VOLUME.

CHICAGO AND NEW YORK:

AMERICAN BIOGRAPHICAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.

1878.

#### OSKALOOSA.

WILLIAM MOBLEY WELLS was a native of Abingdon, Washington county, Virginia, and was born on the 8th of June, 1825, the son of Andrew Wells and Mary née Mobley. His great-grandfather was a sea captain. His grandfather, Richard Wells, was stolen when a child, by his micle, Dr. George Wells, and taken from Pennsylvania to Georgia. When sixteen years old he went with the revolutionary soldiers to Virginia, and there settled and engaged in farming. He died in Floyd county, Kentucky, aged about sixty-three years. He married Miss Eliza Huchinson. Dr. George Wells, living in those days of chivalry, fought five duels, in the last of which both he and his opponent fell.

The maternal grandparents of our subject were William and Mary (Braughton) Mobley. His grandfather was a Virginian farmer, and reared his family in Washington county. He died in Jefferson county, Iowa, in 1846, aged about ninety years.

His father, a gunsmith and whitesmith by occupation, died when William was two years old, leaving him to the care of his mother, with whom he remained until he was twelve years of age. Going then to Kentucky, he lived with his uncle, John

Wells, assisting him in his farm work, and attending school. After five years he returned to Virginia, and for a time attended a select school taught by Mr. John Lowery. His purpose was to prepare for college, but he afterward changed his plans, and in 1845 removed with his step-father, Henry Hite, to Fairfield, Jefferson county, Iowa. There he worked upon the farm about four years, and in 1849 began clerking in a dry-goods store at Fairfield. In December of that year he accepted a clerkship in the drygoods store of Wise and Mathews, at Oskaloosa, remaining until March, 1852, when he formed a partnership with Dr. S. E. Reinhart, and conducted a drug trade for one year, under the firm name of Wells and Reinhart. The partnership then being dissolved, he conducted the business alone until March, 1862, when he formed a partnership with Mr. T. T. Wright, which continued about seven years, the firm name being Wells and Wright. He purchased his partner's interest in 1869, and since that time has conducted the business in his own name.

Being a man of fine executive ability, enterprising and public-spirited, Mr. Wells has been called to many positions of honor and trust. He has been

### WELLS, KEEL, MARYHEW, HARDENBROOK, ANGELO, FINNEY, GRANGER, STEVENS, YORK, CUNNINGHAM, BENSON, BATES, LINDSRUM, ROUSH, MILLHOUSE, COULTER, BOUTNOTT, FULLER

#### Wells, John P.

One of the well-known and influential citizens of the locality of which this history treats is John P. Wells, a man who has met with encouraging success all along life's rugged road because he has worked for it along legitimate lines and has dealt honestly with his fellow men. He was born in Warren County, New Jersey, January 27, 1844, but the major part of his life has been spent in the Middle West. When four years of age, in 1848, his parents brought him to Bureau County, Illinois, where they remained until 1856, when they removed to Indian Creek Township, Story County, Iowa, where he has continued to reside. He is the son of Charles Wells, who was born in Hunterdon County, New Jersey, spent most of his life engaged in farming in Illinois and Iowa and died in Story County in 1880.

The paternal grandfather of the subject, George Wells, was born in New York City, and the great-grandfather of John P. Wells was a sea captain. The mother of the subject was known in her maidenhood as Sarah Park and was a native of Warren County, New Jersey. Her death occurred in Story County, Iowa, in 1890. The Wells family consisted of ten children, five of whom are still living. They were named as follows: Andrew J. is deceased; Mrs. Angeline H. Keel is deceased, as is also Harvey F.; Mrs. Mary Matilda Maryhew is living in Nebraska; Joseph G. is living in Maxwell, Iowa; John P., of this sketch; Mrs. Adeline Hardenbrook lives in Maxwell, Iowa; George S. is deceased; Mrs. Minerva Angelo lives in Oklahoma; a son died in infancy.

--- "Past and Present of Jasper County Iowa," B. F. Bowden & Company, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1912, page 1235.

#### JOHN WESLEY HILLMAN

My father was John Hillman who was born in Montgomery county Va. in 1799 the son of William Hillman and Peggy Cooksey. His grandfather was a soldier and patriot in the Maryland army in the War for American Independence. The family settled in what is today Scott county in the year 1800 on the same land in the Dungannon community where my father died in 1871. My father was an early adherent of the Methodist church. He united in Christian marriage to Betsy Wells in 1824 at the old Kilgore fort house. The ceremony was performed by the well known methodist minister Rev. Robert Kilgore. He raised all 14 of his children as methodists. My father sent five of his seven sons to fight for the confederacy during the late war even though he did not believe that one man should own another. The colored people of our section of Virginia found him to be an honest and fair man to all men. My father owned a large farm of about 700 acres on which he had a large apple orchard and operated a large brandy still. In addition to being a farmer my father was a first rate carpenter, wheelwright, and cabinet maker. It is said that he made over 700 spinning wheels of exceptional quality. People came from as far away as Richmond and Knoxville to purchase his wheels. My mother was a gentle and refined woman and was loved and honored by all who knew her. Her father was Richard Wells who was a soldier and patriot in the Virginia army in the war for American independence. Her grandfather was a sea captain who lost his life during the war. Her father and most of their family removed to Kentucky where their children still live. My mother saw her family only on rare occasions and often pined for them. My mother died in 1885 and is buried next to my father just below their old home place.

(An excerpt from the recollections of Rev. John Wesley Hillman, M.E. Church South, January 15, 1905 at Nickelsville, Va. in the possession of Belva Marshall Counts, Coeburn, Va.)



"... WAS A SEA CAPTAIN."

# "... A SEA CAPTAIN WHO LOST HIS LIFE DURING THE (REVOLUTIONARY) WAR."

#### NAVAL DOCUMENTS OF

#### The American Revolution

#### VOLUME 9

AMERICAN THEATRE: June 1, 1777-July 31, 1777

EUROPEAN THEATRE: June 1, 1777-Sept. 30, 1777

AMERICAN THEATRE: Aug. 1, 1777-Sept. 30, 1777

WILLIAM JAMES MORGAN, Editor

With a Foreword by

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

And an Introduction by

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN D. H. KANE, JR., USN (Ret.)

Director of Naval History

On Tuesday last Capt. Richard Wells, as Prize Master, brought into safe Port, the Scooner *Industry*, from Jamaica, taken on the 8th of May, by the Privateer Sloop St. Louis, of Georgia, commanded by Captain Samuel Spencer.

Capt. Wells put into the Havana on the 6th Instant, where he met with a most hospitable Reception, and was readily supplied with every Thing he wanted. Captain [Woolman] Sutton in a Letter of Marque Brig, belonging to Philadelphia, put into the same Port, on the 7th, and Captain Spencer on the 8th, who both met with the like reception and treatment.

The Day Capt. Wells came in, about 9 in the Morning, he saw two Ships and a Scooner, about 5 Leagues S.E. of this Bar, standing off, who did not offer to chace, but are likely to be the same that drove ashore and burnt the Mississippi Brig, mentioned in our last, near Stono. – The Brig was the *Union*, Capt. Bell, from Mississippi, laden with Barrel Staves, bound for Ireland, and had been taken on the 5th Instant, by the Letter of Marque Brig *Lively*, of Philadelphia, commanded by Capt. W. Sutton.

#### PROCEEDINGS OF JAMAICA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

#### House of Assembly Wednesday the 19 Day of November 1777

Mr Martin from the Committee appointed to Enquire and report to the house what Protection hath been given to the Commerce of this Island and how the Coast hath been Guarded by his Majestys Squadron on this Station reported as follows.

John Charlton late Commander of the Sloop Fairnborough being duly sworn maketh Oath and saith that On the thirtieth day of April last the said Sloop was taken off Orange Bay in the parish of Saint George in the Island of Jamaica by an American Privateer Sloop called the S Louis commanded by Samuel Spencer and mounting Eight Carriage Guns ten Swivels and having about thirty five men, and immediately on such Capture the American Captain manned this Deponents Sloop and Ordered them to Proceed to Georgia, leaving this Deponent and some of his Men on board the Privateer and this Deponent saith that at the time of such Capture there was on board the said Sloop three thousand Bricks twenty Six Barrells of Provisions, two half Barrells Ditto Six firkins of Butter and five Boxes marked wintended to be landed at Orange Bay aforesaid for Low Layton Estate the Property of William White Esquire: Four Hogsheads of Sugar One Tierce of Corn and One Cask of Rum marked MB belonging to Messieurs Watt and Allardyes One Hogshead of Corn marked AL belonging to Messieurs Dick and Milligan One hogshead of Corn marked IR belonging to James Robertson Seventeen Keggs of Pease and Beans and two Boxes marked RM consigned to Messieurs John and James Allen and two Boxes marked L belonging to Mr Edward Cairns at Lennox a negroe Boy named York belonging to George Munro Six Teirces of Corn belonging to John Littlejohn and Seven Tons of Fustic and Lignum Vita and some Kegs of Brandy belonging to this Deponent and this Deponent further saith that on the Day following the Capture of this Deponents Vessell a Brig from the Bay of Honduras Charles Anderson Master belonging to Liverpool was also taken by the said Privateer off Saint Anns Bay and the next morning a Long Boat was also taken by the said Privateer off Dry Harbour

Sworn before me this 31 October 1777 W<sup>m</sup> Elphinston["] John Charlton



### PROCEEDINGS OF JAMAICA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

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Collections of the Georgia Historical Society, Vol. XI, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, GA, 1955, Lilla Hawes, editor, page 14:

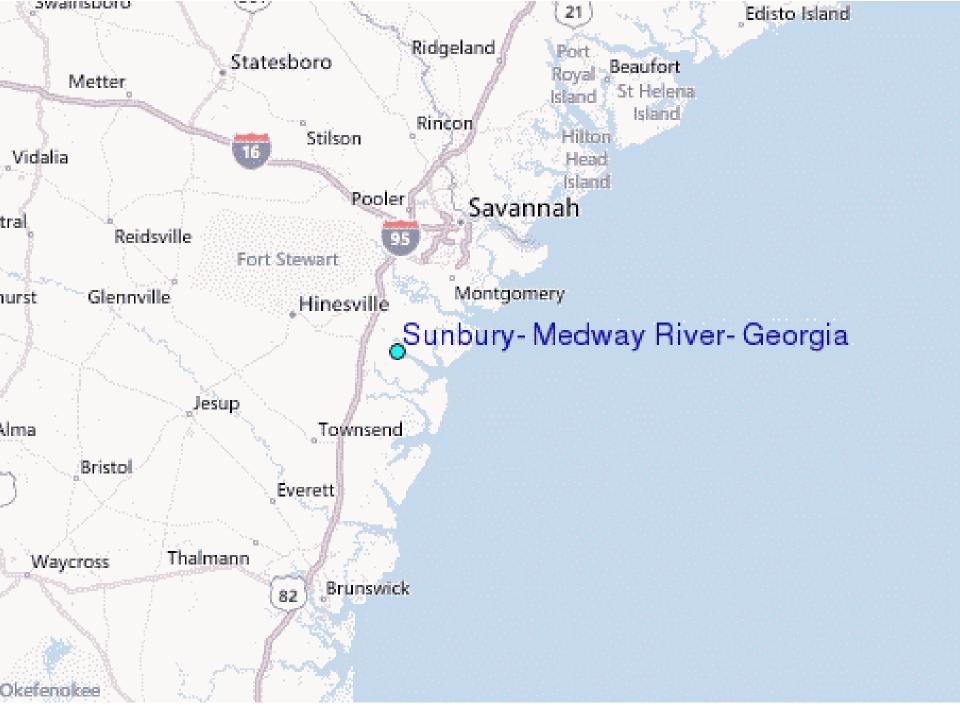
"Capt. Spencer [Samuel Spencer] out of Sunbury [Georgia] in a Privateer called the Bullahoe made a number of successful cruises & fought some smart actions."

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



"Samuel Spencer Died in Sunbury in Georgia July 5th A.D. 1786 in the 36 year of his age"

Spencer Family Bible, <u>The New Testament</u>, printer John Archdeacon, Cambridge, England, 1769, page one reverse, in the possession of Tracy St. Claire, email: tracy@stclaire.org







"Clocks & watches made and repaired in Sunbury at the shortest notice by Richard Wells. N.B. Orders from the country will be carefully attended to."

"Georgia Gazette," Savannah, Georgia, 23 August 1775, page 3, column 2, Microfilm Drawer 21, Box 75, Georgia Department of Archives and History, Morrow, GA.

### Declaration of Don Rafael José de la Luz<sup>1</sup>

Havana 14th of June 1777.

Don Rafael José de la Luz, Captain in the Royal Army and Military Adjutant of Havanna.

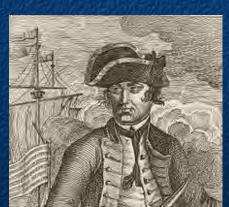
I Certify that on the 7th and 8th of this month four American privateers anchored in the harbor of this Port in need of Water, Firewood, Bread, and other supplies. The first was the brigantine Lively, Captain Woolman Sutton, the second the schooner Industry, Captain Richard Wells, the third the sloop La Fabrique, Captain Louis de Roux, and the fourth the sloop St. Louis, Captain Samuel Spencer, all of which set sail the following day for their destination, Philadelphia. The Governor and Captain General of this Island and the Commanding Officer of our Squadron have concurred in this action, taking the precautions ordered by the Intendent of the Army and Royal Treasury to ensure the Suppression of Smuggling. The Captains of the said four ships have expressed their deep gratitude to the Governor and Captain General for the prompt assistance that was provided.

Rafael de la Luz

### Asea captain, ship's captain, captain, or master ...

command and responsibility of a merchant or military vessel. The captain is responsible for the safe and efficient operation of the ship and its people and cargo, including its seaworthiness, safety and security, cargo operations, navigation, crew management, and legal compliance. The official military rank can be that of any officer from ensign to admiral, but as the senior officer of a vessel he is referred to as the "captain" of the ship.

--- Wikipedia



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Rafael de la Luz



Privateers were essentially pirates with official government protection in order to pursue less than legal goals in wealth, dominance and control of the seas. Being a privateer was only legal in relation to the countries for which one had papers. (RICHARD WELLS was a "legal" crivateer in the employ of the American Revolutionary government, but was viewed as an illegal pirate by the British Crown.)

---- Wikipedia





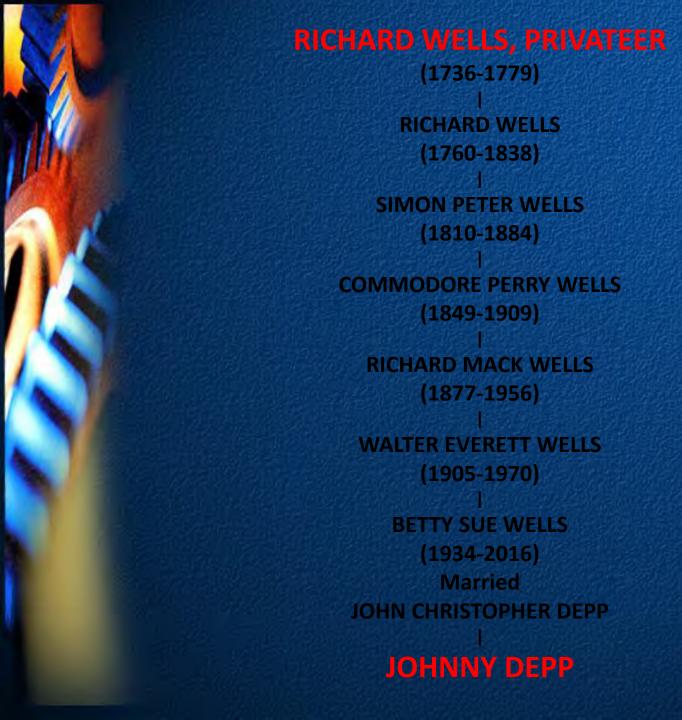














# Another Pirate



## Josh Wells

T

#72

Experience: 5 years

Height: 6-6

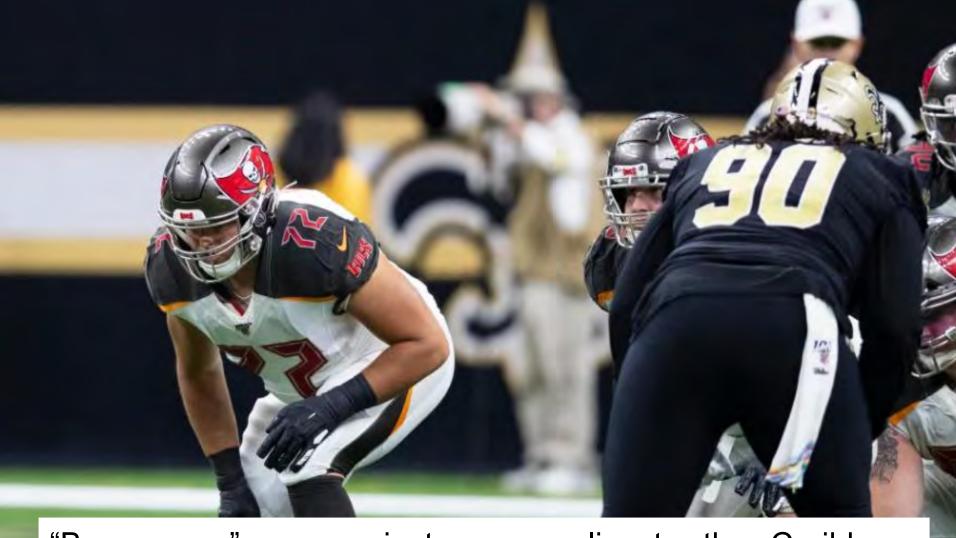
Age: 28

Weight: 306 lbs

College: James Madison



```
RICHARD WELLS, PRIVATEER
              (1736-1779)
            RICHARD WELLS
              (1760-1838)
         WILLIAM GREEN WELLS
              (1818-1887)
         WILLIAM ALLEN WELLS
              (1844-1913)
           JOHN LINZIE WELLS
              (1887-1969)
          CHESTER EARL WELLS
              (1915-1953)
        CHESTER EARL WELLS, JR.
              (1935-1998)
          JEFFREY EARL WELLS
JOSHUA RYAN WELLS, BUCCANEER
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"Buccaneers" were privateers peculiar to the Caribbean Sea during the 17th and 18th centuries.

--- Wikipedia



**JACK SPARROW** 

**BLACKBEARD** 











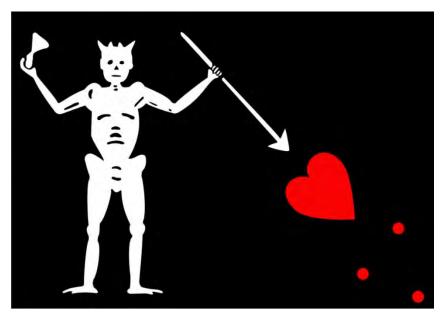
REAL AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY PRIVATEERS



**CALICO JACK'S PIRATE FLAG** 







**BLACKBEARD'S PIRATE FLAG** 

# American Revolutionary War Privateer and Naval Ensigns

 A privateer is a privatelyowned warship authorized by "letters of marque" from a recognized national government to attack foreign shipping. The 13 Colonies, having declared their Independence, had only 31 ships comprising the Continental Navy. To add to this, local state governments issued Letters of Marque to privately owned merchant ships which were then armed as warships to prey on British merchant ships.

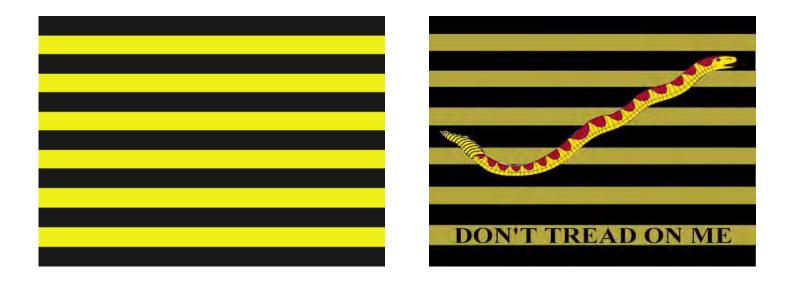


American Privateer Flag

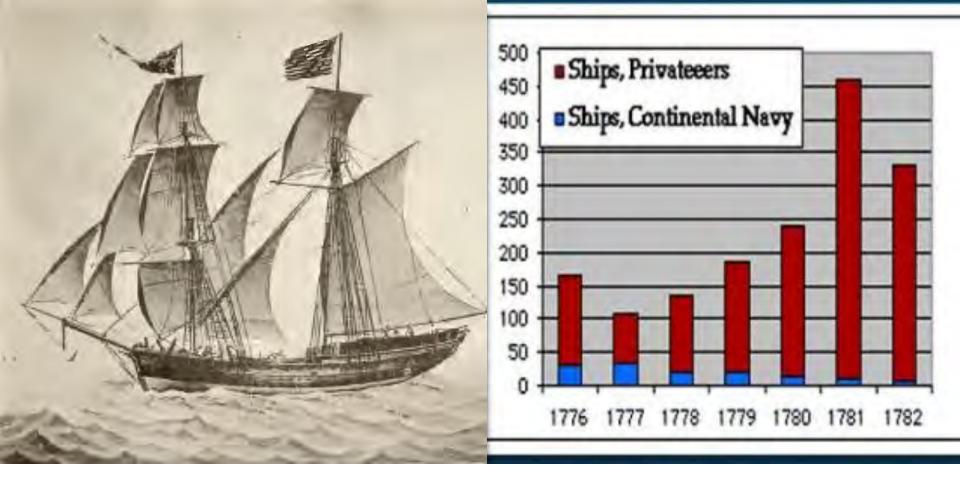
#### Comparative List of American Armed Vessels: Years 1776 - 1782

Class of Warship	1776	1777	1778	1779	1780	1781	1782
Continental & State Navy	31	34	21	20	13	9	7
Privateer	136	73	115	167	228	449	323

Edgar 5. Maclay, A History of American Privateers, D. Appleton & Co., New York & London, 1899, p. iv.



AMERICAN PRIVATEER FLAGS



American Privateers (Pirates) captured some 2,200 British vessels by **war's** end and made up the vast majority of American ships that fought in the Revolutionary War.

Gazette of the State of South-Carolina, Monday, June 23, 1777

Charles-Town, June 23.

By a Gentleman just arrived here, who was in Jamaica the 27th of last Month, we learn, that the Continental Sloop of War Hornet, was carried in there (not into Antigua) the 9th, by the Porcupine Sloop of War (lately Capt. Johnson's, purchased at Curacoa) mounting 20 Iron and 2 Brass Cannon, commanded by the Hon. Capt. Cadogan – that the Porcupine had 5 Men killed in the Engagement – and that Capt. Nicholson and his Crew were confined, in Irons, on board Admiral Gayton's Ship. – That every Vessel which the Men of War carried into Jamaica, even Bermudians in Ballast, and Frenchmen, were, under some Pretence or other, condemned and sold there. – And that a large and rich Fleet, was certainly to sail from thence for Great-Britain, by the 15th Instant, under Convoy of the King's armed Ship Kent of 36 Guns and 160 Men, Capt. Joseph Tathwell, and the Lively Man of War of 20 Guns, with a like Number of Men.

\* On Tuesday Vist Capt. Richard Wells, as Prize Master, prought into safe Port, the Scooker Industry, from Jamaica, taken on the 8th of May, by the Privateer Sloop St. Louis, of Georgia, commanded by Captain Samuel Spencer.

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The Day Capt. Wells came in, about 9 in the Morning, he saw two Ships and a Scooner, about 5 Leagues S.E. of this Bar, standing off, who did not offer to chace, but are likely to be the same that drove ashore and burnt the Mississippi Brig, mentioned in our last, near Stono. – The Brig was the *Union*, Capt. Bell, from Mississippi, laden with Barrel Staves, bound for Ireland, and had been taken on the 5th Instant, by the Letter of Marque Brig *Lively*, of Philadelphia, commanded by Capt. W. Sutton.

### (\* 17 June 1777)



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### (\* 17 June 1777)

### **JOURNAL**

OP THE

### Commissioners of the Navy

OF

### South Carolina

October 9, 1776-March 1, 1779

Edited by A. S. SALLEY, JR.

Secretary of the Historical Commission of South Carolina

THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA By The State Company, Columbia, S. C. 1912 Cha\* Town South Carolina Nov\*, 1st 1777.

Sir/

The Brigt. Comet, an Armed Vessell belonging to this State, being bound on a Cruize, if she should put into any port, within your Department, I request that you will furnish Capt<sup>n</sup>. Pyne, on the Credit of this State with whatever sum he may want, for the Out-fitt of his Vessell taking his Draughts, for the Amount on the Commissioners of the Navy here—

You may be Assured that due Honour will be paid to such Draughts, and that you shall be reemburs<sup>d</sup> as Speedily as Possible



### **BRIGANTINE OF WAR "COMET" 1777**





South Carolina Navy Flag



#### A British account of a raid by the S.S. Comet in 1777

in (James). Pyne and the 16-Charleston with r r compliment of 85 Richard Wells By early December, that the plui thei knif Neg of flour, cordage, plack



Isle of Pines

Jamaica

Cuba

Caribbean Sea

Central

America

**Honduras** 

Mexico

Nicaragua

Costa Rica

Panama

Panama Canal

400 km

400 mi

SOUTH AMERICA Colombia



Dominican Republic

Haiti) San Juan

and Nevis

St. Vincent and the

Venezuela

Grenadines Grenada

Trinidad

Antigua

Barbuda

Caracas

Dominica

Martinique St. Lucia

Barbados

and Tobago

Atlantic Ocean.

A British account of a raid by the S.S. Comet in 1777:

Just eight days after **Pyne's** raid on the British island, on 22 December 1777 the South Carolina Navy brig Comet encountered and fought the HM frigate Daphne of 20-guns under the command of Captain St. John Chinnery. The engagement took place near the Isle of Pines off the west end of Cuba. The Comet was captured and her officers and men were initially carried into Pensacola, FL from whence Captain Pyne and Lieut. Wells were sent to New York as priseners. The crew was distributed among several vessels in the Royal Navy.

## The London Gazette.

#### Published by Authority.

From Saturday November 21, to Tuefon, November 24, 1778.

AT the Court at St. Jumer's, the 18th Day of November, 1778,

RESENT.

The KING's Moll Excellent Majesty in Council.

HEREAS the Time limited by His Majetty's Order in Council of

this Kingdo

Saleperre, or

expire on th

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and 27th o

Admiralty-Office, November 24, 1778.

Lift of Veliels jeized, defiround or ritak n by the American Squadras be auton the 15th of October. 1777, and the 28 h of September, 1778, according to the Returns received by the V.c. Amiral the Pifcount Howe, exclusion of the high or destroyed by His Majesty's Shipt in I celeprak Bay. lector America

1777. Off. 29. By the DAPHNE. Schooner Venus, (Prize) Jethro Delano Master, John Atten Owner, from Dartmouth to Hif; aniola, taken off Hifpaniola, fent to Jamaica, laden with Lumber and Fifth

inoner Fenne. li en Owner. n off tillpa-Lumber and

a Resum was

and Defence Dec. 22. By Ditto. Snow Comet, (Prize) James Pyne Mafter, The Congress Owners, from south Carolina on a Cruize, taken off Grand Camanes, fent to New York - Armed for War.

Prize) [ames , from south and Camanes,

er La Louise. Paul Rolland

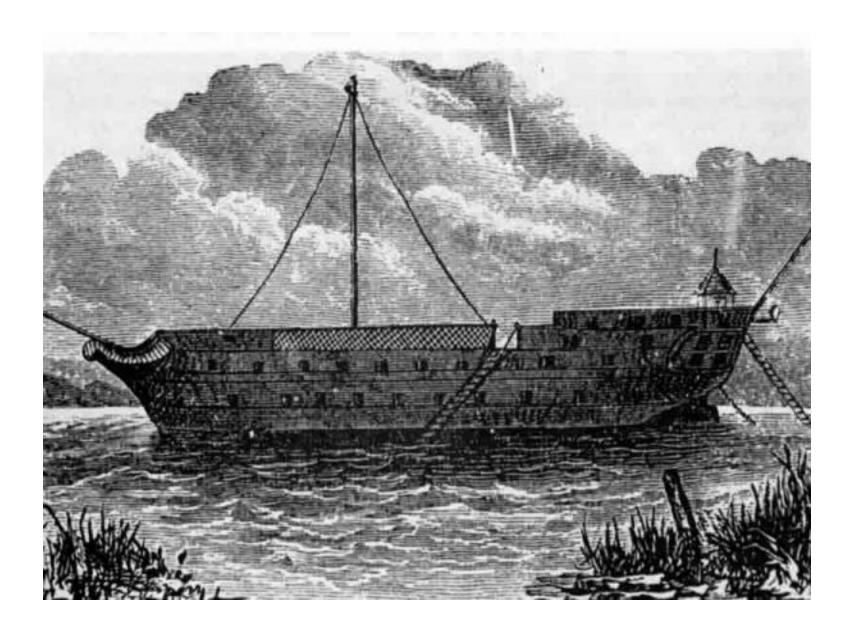
of- Novemb... February, and the 23d of August and 25th of | Owner, from South Carolina to Cape tramois, September, 1776, of the 16th of April, the 13th of August, and the 3d and 10th of October, 1777: with Rice and Tar.

taken off South Carolina, fent to New York-

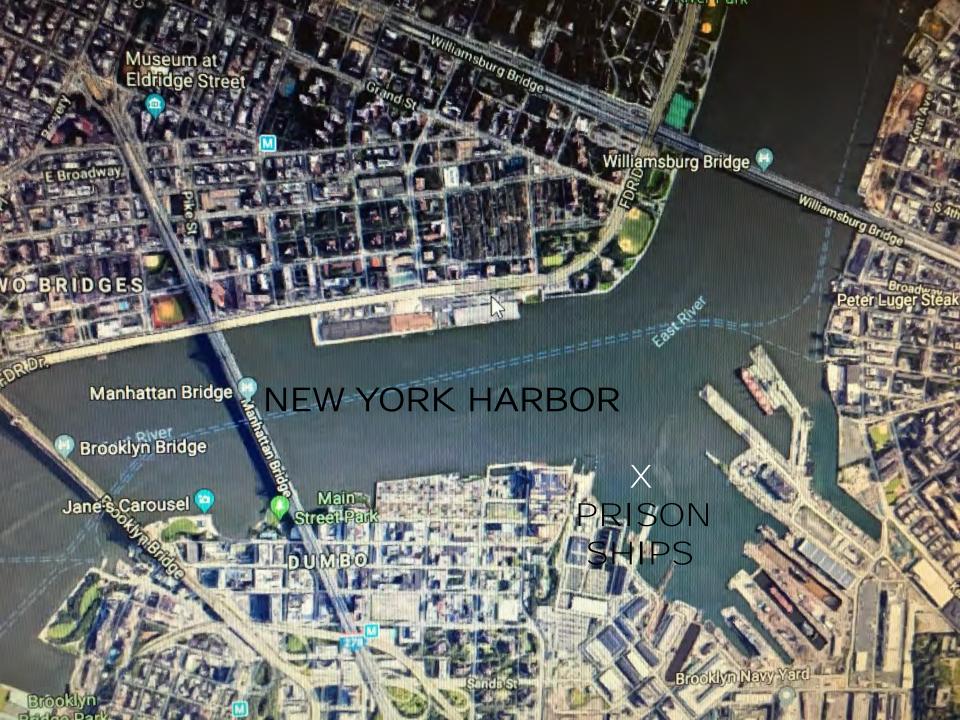
of the 19th of June, the 7th and 26th of - By Ditto Sloop Wren, (Prize) Jonathan

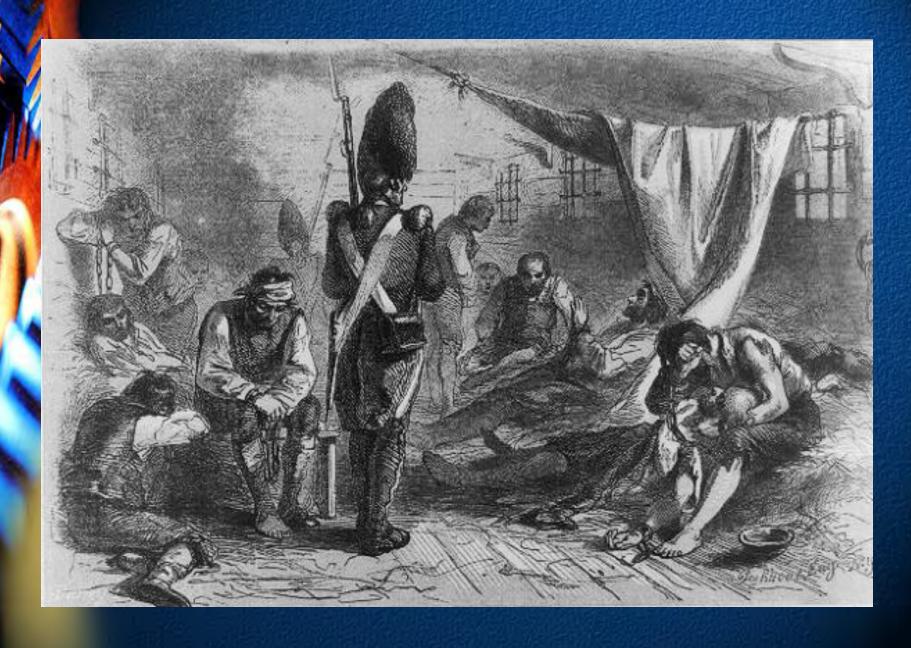


CAPTURE OF THE COMET BY THE HMS DAPHNE

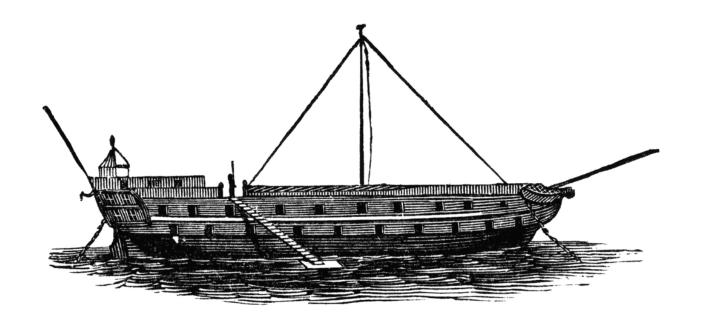


BRITISH PRISON SHIP NEW YORK HARBOR





INSIDE A BRITISH PRISON SHIP IN NEW YORK CITY



## "50 to 70 percent of all prison ship captives died in custody."

--- "Forgotten Patriots: The Untold Story of American Prisoners During the Revolutionary War" by Edward G. Burrows

Sir.

The Commissioners of the Navy think it their duty to inform your Excellency, That Mt. Farrow who went out Pilot of the Brigg Comet and escaped from New York, has informed them that Capt<sup>n</sup>. Pines and his Lieut<sup>s</sup> are still Confined there as prisoners, and they apprehend that the Lieut<sup>s</sup> of the Brigg Defence are also still Confined; The Commissioners mention this before the Cartel proceeds to St. Augustine imagining that Capt<sup>ns</sup>. Bachop & Osborn with their Lieut<sup>s</sup>, may (if sent to New York) be Exchanged for the above Mentioned Officers— And as a Speedy Release of the State officers would be an Encouragement to Enter into the Service they recommend the Consideration thereof to Your Excellency

By Order of the Board Edw<sup>d</sup> Blake first Commiss<sup>r</sup> Sir/

The Commissioners of the Navy Board Beg Leave to Information your Excellency, that some time past, Capt<sup>n</sup>— James Pyne and Lieut Wells Late of the Brigg Comet— returned to Charles Town from their Captivity, as did also Lieut Will<sup>m</sup> Sesk of the Notre Dame, (who had been Captured in a Prize) on their Arrival here the Commissioners Directed them to look after the nuishing and fiting of the New Brigg now Building at the State Ship Yard— said Brigg being now near Ready to be Launched— The Commission of the Navy Board beg leave to recommend to your Excellency Capt. James Pyne as a fitt and proper person to Command said Brigg, and Mr. Wells and Mr. Sesk as fitt and proper persons for Lieutenants less said Brigg

To His Excellency the President By Order of the Board Edward Blake, F[break] Instructions for Capta James Pyne

Capt<sup>n</sup> James Pyne

Navy Board February 28th 1779-

Sir/

e State Brigg Hornet of which you are Captain being now Compleatly fitted, well Manned, and having a full Quantity of Provisions and Stores, and now ready to proceed on a Cruiz[break] the Commissioners of the Navy Board Direct that you do Embrace the first faviourable Opertunity to proceed to Sea in Company with the State Schooner Rattle Snake Capth Frisbee, and the privateer Brigg of war Munmouth Captn Ingersall, and that you Continue to Cruize in Company Close a Long the Coast, as far to the Southward as Tybee, and as far to the Northward as Cape Fear, not Exceeting Ten days from the time you leave Charles Town Barr, during which time you are by every means in your power, Endeavour to Take, Sink Burn, or Destroy, any of the Vessels or goods belonging to the King of Great Britain or any of his Subjects, Sir/

Mr. Stephen Duvall— Edwd Blake first Commiss

The Clerk was Ordered to pay Lieut. Richd Wells Lieut. of the Hornet his wages to the 10th Inst.

Adjourned to next Monday Evening 6 oClock-



#### TRADITIONS AND REMINISCENCES

CHIEFLY OF THE

## AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN THE SOUTH:

INCLUDING

#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, INCIDENTS AND ANECDOTES.

FEW OF WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED,

PARTICULARLY OF RESIDENTS IN THE UPPER COUNTRY.

JOSEPH JOHNSON, M.D.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

CHARLESTON, S. C.: WALKER & JAMES, 1851.

The Hornet was commanded by Capt. Pyne, late of the Comet, and armed with fourteen guns. They continued to cruise singly, and in company, with much success, effectually protecting the coast from the annoyance of privateers and other depredators, and taking a number of prizes. The private armed vessels—the General Moultrie, Sullavan, the Sally, Stone, and the Family Trader, Allen-were occasionally sent out by the merchants on the same service. In March, 1779, in a cruise of ten days, they took the Sally, of New Providence, bound to Georgia with dry goods and West India produce; also, two vessels from St. Kitts, with cargoes of the same kind, one of which, the Prince of Wales, Askridge, of twelve guns, fought the Hornet until three of her guns were dismounted, and four of her men wounded; only one being wounded on board of the Hornet. The Notre Dame also recaptured the Sally, of Poston, which had been taken by the Vengeance, privateer, of New-York.

In the next month, they were not so successful. The Notre Dame and the Eagle returned in safety, but without prizes, and the Hornet was captured by the Daphne, of twenty gass, and carried into Savannah. The officers and men of the Hornet were well treated, and landed, on parole, on the Carolina side of the river, where they effected an exchange of fifty-three Americans for an equal number of English prisoners.



HMS PRINCE OF WALES verses USS HORNET March 1779

"In April 1779, Captain James Pyne was unlucky enough to run afoul of Captain Chinnery and the British frigate Daphne again off of Charleston, eluding capture himself by escaping to shore in the ship's longboat. The balance of **Hornet's** compliment of eighty officers [including Lieutenant Richard Wells] and men were well treated and carried into Savannah where they were paroled and landed on South Carolina soil."

--- Joe Ross, "James Pyne, Lieutenant, The History and People of the Continental Navy," 2 May 2015, www.continentalnavy.com/archives/2015/james-pyne-lieutenant/

#### DEATH NOTICES FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA AND AMERICAN GENERAL GAZETTE, AND ITS CONTINUATION THE ROYAL GAZETTE<sup>1</sup>

#### May 1766-June 1782

Deaths.] In the 78th year of his age, James Reid, Esq.—Mrs. Elizabeth Broughton, wife of Mr. Thomas Broughton, jun.—Mrs Elizabeth Martha Wells, wife of Mr. Edgar Wells. (Thursday, February 18, 1779.)

Deaths.] At Beaufort, Mr. Tunes Tebout; He was ever a steady friend to his country; and in private life bore the character of a man of integrity and hospitality.—Mr. George Russel, of James-Island, ship-carpenter.—Mr. Ripley, at the Ten Mile House.
—Mr. William Tucker—Mr. Michael Muckinfuss. (Friday, March 26, 1779.)

Death.] Of a short illness, Mr. — Wells, late first Lieutenant of the State brig *Hornet*. (Friday April 30, 1779.)



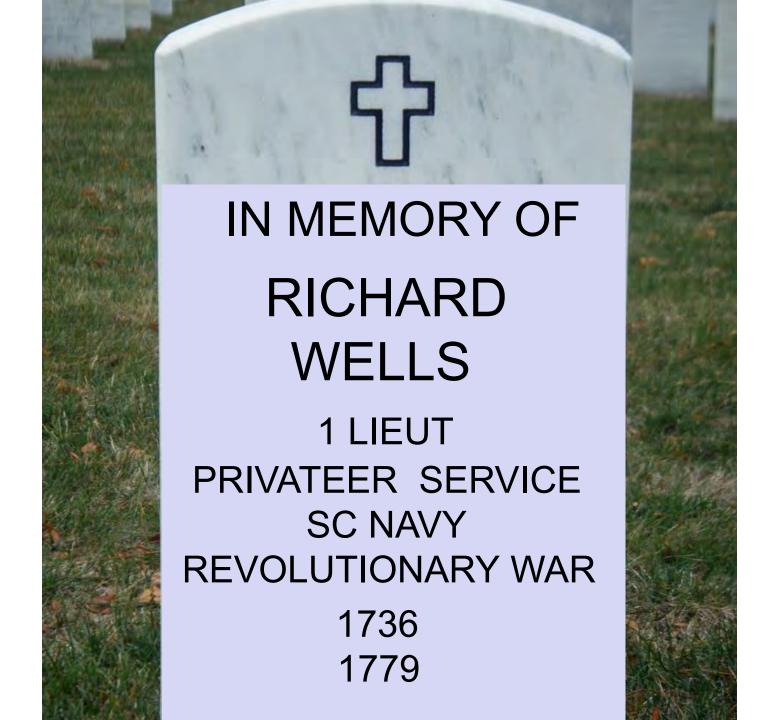
## A LOST AMERICAN HERO HAS BEEN FOUND!

#### **CAPTAIN RICHARD WELLS**















### www.wellsancestry.com

Download this Powerpoint: the narrative of Captain Richard Wells and errata from the Wells history book

# OUR NEW FAMILY MOTTO ...

