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By Jim Kennick



BROOKS

*I'd love to compare notes with you on this family!
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TO HONOR A PATRIOT William Brooks of Tazewell Co., Virginia

By Charles F. Brooks

**Note: This newspaper article probably appeared in 1977
Bluefield, West Virginia or Tazewell County, Virginia.**

The last clear note of "Taps" Kenny Crawford blew with his bugle echoed over the green hill in Thompson Valley Tuesday afternoon, May 10, and ended the dedication service on the Headstone placed at the grave of William Brooks, Revolutionary War Patriot. The entire service, extremely well organized, was conducted by the Fort Maiden Spring Chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Thirty or more descendants of William Brooks were present, together with a goodly gathering of friends. Attendance at such a dedication was a "first" for me and will be long remembered.

It seems appropriate that a resume be presented to our readers covering the life of William Brooks so that the beginning of this family in Tazewell County may be better known. So, let's start with the year 1927, that's fifty years ago, when on a summer day my Father and I visited with Mr. Oscar Corell. A Confederate veteran, straight as a ramrod, with a long white flowing beard, he had a most remarkable memory. It seems only yesterday when he said. "Rass (that was my father's nickname) tell the boy (that was me) to get the car ad I will show you where the first Brooks is buried."

We drove west in Thompson Valley to a point near a dairy barn on a farm now owned by Mr. Sam Ward Bishop. We slowly walked up the hillside where there were two graves with plain limestone headstones and footstones, all without inscriptions. Mr. Corell then said, "Here is buried William Brooks, a soldier of the Revolutionary War, and his wife, the first Brooks that came to Tazewell County." I expect he said a lot more but this part has long been forgotten. That experience started me off on a search that is still going on. Within a year I had completed enough of a record to be accepted on Aug. 9, 1928 into the Sons of the American Revolution No. 46049 and State No. 324. The local chapter, named for General Nathaniel Greene, has long been dormant.

In 50 years of searching one learns a lot of things -- the fascinating part is the things you learn that you really were not looking for, but as I learned about the family I learned about the people of Tazewell County and, believe, me, I haven't learned it all by any means.

But let's get on with the story of William Brooks. He stated in his Pension Application that he was born in Fauquier County, VA Feb. 3, 1752. However, since Fauquier was not formed until 1759 the place of his birth may have been in that part of Fauquier which was formerly Prince William County, formed in Mar 1731. His wife was Ann Locke, born in Fauquier, so the record goes, on Aug. 1, 1749. William died in Thompson Valley on Jan. 24, 1841 and Ann died in Thompson Valley on Oct. 2, 1843. They were married in Fauquier County Sept. 5, 1769 and were the parents of 12 children.

In researching the records we have determined his arrival in Thompson Valley to be in 1782. If we are correct in this date, and that their first child was born in 1770, then at least six or possibly seven children came with their parents on pack horses. Can you imagine such a journey through an Indian infested wilderness from the North Fork of the Roanoke River in Botetourt County." What we see on TV has actually happened to our ancestors right here where we live. What was it all like here in Virginia 225 years ago

when William Brooks was born? What type of a man was he that at the age of about 30 he would, with several small children, start on such a journey? Well, there was one thing for sure. He wanted a home of his own for his loved ones even if he had to carve it out of this wilderness with his bare hands, and he did exactly that.

Ann Locke Brooks must have been of sturdy stock. Family tradition has it that she was kinswoman of John Locke (1632-1704) the noted English philosopher (we have never tried to make a definite connection, but I've heard it said many times.) It is very likely that while living in Botetourt County, William Brooks, after intermittent service in the Revolutionary War, scouted this frontier in 1781, selected the lands for his surveys and took possession in 1782. We have copies of this survey, one of 399 acres and another of 430 acres. At his death his executor sold the land he then held, 441 acres, for \$950. We know his lands adjoined that of the Henry Family whose members were massacred by the Indians about 1774.

In the Declaration for a Pension filed by William Brooks, on file in the Tazewell Court records, he gave the following record of his services which produced his pension of \$26.66 and was granted on June 24, 1833. The record: While a resident of Culpeper County, VA he enlisted in Oct. 1777? and served as a private in Capt. Richard Waugh's Company, Col. James Barber's Virginia Regiment. Again, while a resident of Botetourt County, VA He enlisted in Feb. 1781 and served as a private under Lt. Henry Watterson in Capt. James Woods Company, Col. Hugh Crockett's Virginia Regiment and was in the battles of the Alamance and Whitsall's Mills in North Carolina. He enlisted on Nov. 1, 1781 and served as a private in Capt. Thomas Hamilton's Company, Charles Dabney's Virginia Regiment and was discharged on May 1, 1782 at Richmond. There may well have been other enlistments but since he was 80 years of age at the time of filing his application for a pension, such other service may well have been forgotten. I have among my papers a photostat copy of his application from the Pension Bureau: the date is March 25, 1830?

There are many records in the Tazewell Court House of the Participation of William Brooks in county affairs, and of his services to his friends and neighbors. He and three of his sons were signers of the application for the formation of Tazewell County in 1793, then a part of Wythe County. He served on the first Grand Jury impaneled in Tazewell County in November 1800.

A total of 12 children were born to William and Ann Locke Brooks. A son, Richard, taught the first school ever held in Wyoming Co., WV -- then it was in Virginia. Richard also served in the War of 1812 from Tazewell County. Sons Richard and Thomas (from whom I am descended) married two sisters, Margaret and Catherine Clancy, daughters of James and Phoebe Clancy, also pioneer settlers. Richard and Margaret moved to Wyoming County and Thomas and Catherine lived and died in Thompson Valley. These marriages are recorded in Washington County.

Five generations of the family of William Brooks lived and died in Thompson Valley. Alfred E. Brooks of Co. K 45th VA Infantry Regiment (my grandfather) of Tazewell County; my father was born in Thompson Valley, E.T. Brooks on May 11, 1858. He was apprenticed at an early age to Mr. Thomas Hawkins, the prominent and highly successful builder of many of Tazewell early days finest houses. My father left Tazewell almost 100 years ago to engage in contracting in the coal mining area of West Virginia, but he left his heart in Thompson Valley. The descendants of William and Ann Locke Brooks are many and are scattered over the entire United States. I was very surprised a few years ago to find the record of William Brooks and his family in the Genealogical Records of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) in Salt Lake City, Utah.

With the help of William J. Brooks of Tannersville, I was able to send additional information to Salt Lake City to complete as near as possible, the records of William Brooks family. This information was secured from the old William Brooks Bible which is owned by William J. Brooks. All the Brooks that I have come to know love the land, they love Tazewell County and are extremely proud of the heritage left us by William Brooks.

As I witnessed the dedication of the grave marker to William Brooks, my mind raced backward a few years when I stood under the great arch constructed at Valley Forge, PA honoring the men who had given so much, some even their lives, for the cause of freedom, and read these immortal words by Henry Armitt Brown.

"And here in this place of sacrifice, in this vale of humiliation, in the valley of the shadow of death, out of which the life of America rose regenerate and free, let us believe with an abiding faith that to them, union

will seem as dear and liberty as sweet, and progress as glorious as they were to our fathers and are to you and me, and the institutions which have made us happy, preserved by the virtue of our children, shall bless the remotest generations of the time to come."

As we bring recognition from time to time of the services of our forefathers of the Revolutionary War era, let's all remember their lofty principles that have helped to make us a great nation of people, and resolve among ourselves that their service to our country was not in vain.

WILLIAM BROOKS. Son of William M. BROOKS & Mary Ann. Born 3 Feb 1752 in Prince Wm. Co. (now Fauquier), Virginia. Died 24 Jan 1841 in Thompson Valley, Tazewell Co., Virginia. He married Nancy "Ann" LOCKE, daughter of John LOCKE & Esther FRENCH, 5 Sep 1769 in Fauquier Co., Virginia. Born 4 Dec 1749 in Prince Wm. Co. (now Fauquier), Virginia. Died 21 Oct 1846 in Thompson Valley, Tazewell Co., Virginia.

The Bible of William Brooks (1752-1841) was in the possession of Mr. William Brooks of Thompson Valley, Tazewell Co., Virginia. The Bible was printed in 1756. Written in ink were the following notes and birthdates of his children:

- *William Brooks, his book, September 20, 1782*
- *Left Fauquier in November, 1779*
- John Brooks, born June 11, 1770
- Richard Brooks, February 12, 1774
- Thomas Brooks, January 22, 1776
- Polly Brooks, January 22, 1778
- Nancy Brooks, December 20, 1780
- William Brooks, April 7, 1782
- Sarah Brooks, March 10, 1783
- Elizabeth Brooks, February 13, 1785
- Mary Brooks, July 19, 1789
- Levicey Brooks, September 2, 1791

There were two other children: Margaret Brooks (b. 7 Apr 1772) and James Brooks (b. 24 Mar 1788) from records of Ray Sheffield, Rt., 4, Box 253, Ashland, Kentucky. William Brooks was a Revolutionary War pensioner. His application is on file at the National Archives in Washington, DC (R1259, Va.; Microfilm Series M-804, Roll No. 355). The following information is abstracted from this pension:: He was born 3 Feb. 1752 in Fauquier County. Entered service in Oct. 1778 at which time he was a citizen of Culpeper Co. He was drafted a second time in Feb. 1781 - at which time he was a resident of Botetouri Co., Virginia. He applied for a pension on the 25th of Sept 1832 at which time he lived in Tazewell Co. He was 81 years of age. In Aug 1843 Nancy Brooks, widow of William, applied for a pension. She was 94 years old at that time. William had died 24 Jan 1841. Nancy and William were married 5 Sep 1769. John Kirk of Giles Co. deposes that he knows William and Nancy were married in Fauquier Co. in 1770. (Nancy was Nancy Ann Locke b. 4 Dec 1749, d. 21 Oct 1844).

From the "Annals of Tazewell Co., VA" pg. 246 (1841): "It appearing to the satisfaction of the Court, that William Brooks, deceased, was a Revolutionary pensioner, that he departed this life on the 24th day of Jan 1841, leaving his widow, Anna Brooks, and the following being all his heirs and legal representatives, to-wit, John Brooks, William Brooks, Margaret Kirk, Elizabeth Stephenson, Nancy Clyburn, Sally Todd, Polly Brooks and Louise Asberry, it is ordered that the same be certified." @86

TIMELINE:

1752 - born Prince William, Fauquier Co., Virginia @88

1769 - William and Nancy married in Fauquier Co., Virginia @88

Nov 1779 - left Fauquier for Culpeper Co.

1781 - was a resident of Botetouri Co., Virginia

1782 - arrived in Thompson Valley, Wythe Co. (Tazewell), VA @88

1793 - William Brooks signs application for the formation of Tazewell Co. @88

1800 - a William Brooks served on 1st Grand Jury of Tazewell Co., VA @86

1832 - living in Tazewell Co., Virginia

1841 - dies in Thompson Valley, Tazewell Co., Virginia @88

They had the following children:

- 2 i. John BROOKS
- 3 ii. Margaret BROOKS
- 4 iii. Richard Locke BROOKS
- 5 iv. Thomas BROOKS
- 6 v. Polly BROOKS
- 7 vi. Nancy BROOKS
- 8 vii. William BROOKS
- 9 viii. Sarah "Sallie" BROOKS
- 10 ix. Elizabeth BROOKS
- 11 x. James BROOKS
- 12 xi. Levicy BROOKS



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