

# Barnett Family History By Mary Jane Barnett (1889-1974)



The following is a transcription of the first thirty-seven pages of the manuscript, "Joseph and Alexander Barnett, Pioneers of Ohio County, Kentucky: Their Antecedents and Descendants", by (Miss) Mary Jane Barnett (1889-1974), of Owensboro, KY, written circa 1934. Transcribed from copy in the Special Collections Department, Kentucky Library, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY.



## JOSEPH BARNETT AND ALEXANDER BARNETT, PIONEERS OF OHIO COUNTY, KENTUCKY THEIR ANTECEDENTS AND DESCENDANTS

### THE FAMILY IN EUROPE

JOHN BARNETT, who lived near Londonderry, Ireland, in the Seventeenth Century is the earliest ancestor of whom we know, and the meager information we have in regard to him is but traditional. A well established tradition, however, is that he was of one of the Scottish Presbyterian families who settled in the North of Ireland at the beginning of the Seventeenth Century, and I here give something of the history of those Scotch-Irish (taken principally from Ogilvie's "The Presbyterian Churches"), as, necessarily, it had its bearing on the lives of our people.

Their settlement in the north of Ireland was brought about in this wise:

Certain Earls and their subjects occupying this territory engaged in a rebellion against the English crown. It resulted unsuccessfully, and those who engaged in it fled the country, thus leaving a large stretch of territory with but little population. This forfeited land was offered by the English king on favorable terms to British colonists, and the offer came at an opportune time for the Presbyterians of Scotland, for at the time they were being severely persecuted at the hands of the Episcopal Church, and seizing upon this as an opportunity to escape from persecution they emigrated to this vacated land in such large numbers that soon the whole of Ulster assumed a markedly Scottish complexion. This, I may add, is the reason that the territory in the north of Ireland known as Ulster is strongly Protestant, while the remainder of Ireland is strongly Catholic.

These Scottish settlers were not allowed to remain in peace for long, however, for their old antagonist, the Episcopal Church, pursued them into their adopted country, and in 1636, or prior

thereto, we find them suffering sorely at the hands of their persecutor. In its attempt to stamp out Presbyterianism the Episcopal party stopped at nothing, and eventually it appeared that its efforts had been entirely successful. However, in 1641 there occurred the Irish insurrection. Everywhere the native Irish Catholics had risen and massacred the Protestants with unspeakable tortures, the awful excesses of which sent a thrill of horror throughout Britain. Upon hearing this news Presbyterian Scotland forgot the wrongs she had herself received at the hands of the larger proportion of those now suffering, and with urgent haste dispatched to their relief a force of 10,000 men. To this was due the reintroduction of Presbyterianism, for with each regiment there was a Presbyterian chaplain. Other clergy there were none. The Bishops had fled and the Episcopal clergy were mostly massacred, so the growth of Presbyterianism was unhindered for some years. However, the Episcopal party would not for long allow Presbytery to remain in peace, and throughout the following century its history was one of persecution, now not only at the hands of the Episcopal party, but also by the Catholics, with only brief periods of respite.

In 1689 occurred the famous Siege of Derry (Londonderry), in which, according to tradition, this John Barnet participated. (\*)

[\* footnote: My Uncle Nes said Judge Baird told him that he, Judge Baird, had two ancestor's, a Baird and a Barnett, in the Siege of – he, Uncle Nes, couldn't recall what siege, and when I suggested the siege of Londonderry he said perhaps that was the one, but it seemed to him it was in Scotland. This was related to me by Uncle New when he was along in years and his memory was poor. As this siege of Londonderry is the only famous siege, and as the family were living there at the time, I feel I am not mistaken in concluding that tis is the siege to which Judge Baird referred.]

King James II, a Catholic, had abdicated the throne of England under pressure, and William of Orange, a Presbyterian, had succeeded him. Catholic Ireland was still held for James, however, "and through him the power of the English in Ireland had been very greatly reduced. He waited to see how events would turn out. William's overtures were regarded as signs of weakness, and Catholic Ireland was called to arms. Protestants were seized, their cattle driven off, and in three months all was gone to the value of a million sterling, which was a large sum in those days. Soldiers surrounded the bakehouses so that no Protestant might purchase a loaf, and Catholics declared that they would starve one half of the Protestants and hang the other half." (\*)

[\* footnote: This quotation is from "Striking Events in Irish History", by Dowsett, and I have used that work as my authority for this summary of the Siege of Londonderry.]

James, with a large armed force, landed in Ireland, and marched upon Derry, the Protestant stronghold. The English regiments deserted the city, and, betrayed by its commander and left in the hands of tradesmen and apprentices to be defended against a disciplined army of 25,000 men, Derry has handed down an example of true heroism. The siege was turned into a blockade, and lasted three months, when the forces of William succeeded in breaking through and bringing relief. The sufferings of the besieged, as related in the histories, were unspeakable. Froude says of the Presbyterians in this siege, that they "won immortal honor for themselves and flung over the wretched annals of their adopted country a solitary gleam of true glory."

We know nothing of John, who were his parents, or the name of his wife, but he had at least two children, John, born 1672, and William. These, together with their families, emigrated to America about the year 1729.

Here it is necessary to relate something more of the history of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in order to throw light on the history of the family.

As has already been shown, the Seventeenth Century had been one of struggle for these Presbyterians, with only brief periods of respite from persecution. Under William of Orange (1688-1702) they were free from any "legal" persecution, and that period was one of great expansion in the church. But upon William's death the Episcopal party was left once more to work its will, and in 1704 an act was passed which required everyone holding a state office to partake of communion in an Episcopal church, failure to do so being followed by deprivation of office. Large numbers of Presbyterians thereby lost their offices. This was followed by further persecutions, until "at last it was borne home to the minds of the people that Ireland was no home for Presbytery. Across the Atlantic America beckoned invitingly, and with hearts longing for freedom to worship God, the great Exodus of Ulster Presbyterians set in. Already many had been driven there by earlier persecutions and had helped to lay the foundation of American Presbyterianism, but from 1729 onwards a steady stream of immigrants began to flow, amounting to 12,000 annually, and continued with like fullness for many years. To America they were a priceless gain, to Ireland an irreparable loss" (\*)

[\* footnote: This quotation is from Ogilvie's "The Presbyterian Churches", and I have used that work freely in this brief outline of the history of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.]

#### THE FAMILY IN PENNSYLVANIA

In volume entitled "Pennsylvania Genealogies", by Eagle (\*)

[\* footnote: "Pennsylvania Genealogies", by Eagle, can be found in most of the large libraries of the country. It contains many pages of Barnett data, following the line of John born 1700. It gives the dates of birth of Robert as 1701, James 1703, and John 1705, but the dates as shown above have come to me from other sources, and as it appears from the will that Robert and James received a smaller share of their father's estate than did John. I concluded that the latter was the eldest and that the dates as they came to me from the other sources must be correct.]

we find the following record of our ancestor who came to America with these hosts of emigrants from Ulster:

JOHN BARNET, born 1678 in the neighborhood of Londonderry, Ireland, in company with his brother, William Barnet, emigrated with his family to Pennsylvania prior to 1730, (\*\*)

[\*\* footnote: The "Pennsylvania Genealogies" record shows that John born 1700 had a son Joseph born in Ireland in 1726 or 1728. As this record shows the family emigrated to America prior to 1730, and as the quotation from the Ogilvie work (p.4) says that "from 1729 onwards a steady stream of immigrants began to flow", I conclude that these families came in 1729.]

locating in Hanover Township, being one of the earliest settlers of that township. He died in September, 1734, his will being probated at Lancaster on the first day of October following. John Barnet left a wife, Jennett, and the following children, all born in County Derry, Ireland:

John	b 1700 d 1785	married in Ireland Margaret Roan.
Robert	b 1703	married and removed to Virginia.
James	b 1705	married and removed to Virginia with his brother.

Joseph	b 1708		
Mary	b 1710		
Jennett	b 1713	d 1787	unmarried
Jean	b 1715		married Moses Swan, b in North of Ireland, came to America with parents about 1730.

WILLIAM BARNET, born in Londonderry, came to America with his brother, John, died in February, 1762, leaving a wife, Margaret, and children Sarah and Joseph besides other daughters. (#)

[# footnote: In all my research work I have never located one known to be descended from this William.]

I will say here that I have no direct information that this is our family, but as this data is in accord with our traditions, with one exception. I believe it is. Our traditions referred to are that our family emigrated from County Derry, Ireland, that two brothers came over together, that the family first settled in Pennsylvania, that the line went into Virginia, and that the Virginia ancestor was Robert whose father's name was John who was the son of a John.

Tradition further says, however, that the place of residence of our ancestor in Pennsylvania was Wyoming. The foregoing family resided in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, which is about 90 miles from either the county or the town of Wyoming. This casts some doubt on whether or not this family is ours, but it seems it could not be merely coincident that this record corresponds with all of the other traditions shown above.

In further evidence that this was our family I have traced descendants of a James Barnet who resided in Amherst County, Va. the same time as our Robert resided there. This would again be a striking coincidence, if merely a coincidence, and I do not believe it was. Further, descendants of this James moved to Madison County, Ky., and there is record in the Ohio County, Ky., Clerk's office of a land transaction between one of our pioneer ancestors and Barnets of Madison County. This suggests that it is likely there was a relationship.

I know nothing of this Pennsylvania family other than the little which can be deduced from the will, a copy of which was obtained from the County Court Clerk at Lancaster, PA, and is as follows:

"In the name of God, Amene. I, John Barnet, being weake but of perfect memory blessed be God. I First commit my soul to the Lord and my boddy to the grave in ye hope of a blessed resurrection. "First I leave my well beloved wife the sum of twenty pounds to be paid out of the cattel and crop that is now on ye ground and the remainder of ye crop to maintain her and the family, and next I leave to my beloved sons, John and Joseph, my plantation equally to be divided between them and if it please God that if one of them dy's the other shall have it all and in case that both dy's I leave it to my well beloved sons Robert and Francis equally to be divided, but if it please God to spare John and Joseph to the years of maturity and John desire to have all the place it shall be vallued by two indifferent men, and John shall pay to Joseph the half of the said value and I leave to my son John one black year old coult and to John and Joseph I leave my working horses, namely, one horse and two mears to each and equal part to my beloved daughter, Rebecca, I leave one bay horse coult coming three years old and two cows to be given her, also the stock when it will suit best her conveniency and my wife's and to my beloved daughter Mary I leave one black mear six year old, and if she live on the place with her mother and ye boys till she comes

to age she shall then have two cows, and in case gos to her own hand she shall have but one cow when she is of age.

"And for and in consideration of ten pounds payd to me in hand by my son Robert I leave my son Robert one hundred and fifty-nine acres of land that is to say the warrant right and survey which he hath now in possession on the southeast end of the land.

"I leave and bequeath to my daughter Jean one red coulerd and white faced heffer coming two years old and one rug or bed quilt.

"This my last will and testament given under my hand this first day of July in ye year of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ 1734.

His mark – John Barnet

"Witnesses present: Allex'r. Davison, James Whithill.

"I order ye management of my affairs at my decease into the hands of my well beloved wife and my son Robert as administrators and guardians to the children under age.

"Entered for probate October 1, 1734."

It will be observed that John signed with his mark. This may have been due to infirmities of his illness, for it will be noted that the will was made July 1st, 1734, and was probated October 1st following. Indicating he died between those dates, and the language of the will indicates he knew he had not long to live, for he bequeaths money to his wife to be paid out of the crop "that is now on ye ground." In fact, Mrs. Cahill (\*) advises that in her researches she has found land grants made by this John to which he signed his name.

[\* footnote: Mrs. Hannah Virginia Cahill of San Antonio, Texas, granddaughter of Hannah Barnet, who was taken captive by Indians, worked with me on this genealogy hunt for many years and has been my inspiration throughout.]

It will be noted that two of the names appearing in the will do not conform to two in the list of children as shown on page 5. It may be that James' middle name was Francis, and Jennett's middle name was Rebecca, and that they were called by their middle names, while only the first name got into the record I know an instance in which this occurred.

It appears that the major portion of the estate was left to John and Joseph. For the "plantation" no doubt consisted of large acreage, while the consideration of ten pounds required of Robert for the 150 acres bequeathed to him was no doubt full value for that amount of land in those days. John was the eldest and the old English law prevailed at that time which provided that the eldest son receive the major portion of the father's estate, but it is not apparent why Joseph, the fourth son, inherited equally with John. There is a tradition in the family that our pioneer Kentucky ancestors left for Virginia because they felt they had fared very badly in the distribution of their father's estate, the eldest son having inherited practically all of it. As Joseph, one of the Kentucky pioneers, is said to have been the eldest son, I have been unable to account for that tradition, and it occurs to me that it may have had reference to this Pennsylvania family instead of the Virginia family, and that that was the reason for Robert and James leaving Pennsylvania.

It will be noted that Robert and his mother were made administrators of the estate and guardians of the children under age. If John was the eldest son it does not appear why he was not so named with his mother. Possibly the father regarded Robert as the better business man.

The Pennsylvania Genealogies data follows the line of the son John b. 1700, and contains a rather complete record of his descendants. That volume also contains a section in regard to the Swan family, descendants of Jean Barnet and Moses Swan. As to the son Joseph and the daughter Mary, I know of no record in regard to their descendants. James, as mentioned, resided in Amherst County, Va., or at least there was a James in that county the same time as our Robert, who was a

contemporary of the latter, and I feel that they were brothers. I have corresponded with a descendant of this James in Missouri, who gave list of James' children, so far as she knew them, as follows:

Robert	b	d 1787	married Mary Montgomery.
William	b	d 1816	married 1760 Mary Miller, and perhaps secondly Rebecca Miller.
Jane	b	d	married John (?) Shields.
Mary	b	d	married ___ Morrison.

William, Mary, and the widow of Robert, together with their families, removed from Amherst County, Va., to Madison County, Ky., and the line subsequently went into Missouri.

The Robert who died 1787 had a son James, born 1750, about whom there is quite an interesting paper in the archives of the Wisconsin State Historical Society (Draper Ms.), and a record of him will be found in Collins History of Kentucky, Vol. II, p. 524. He was a captain in the Revolutionary War, serving under Washington, and was with him in the crossing of the Delaware. He was also Colonel of one of three regiments in General George Rogers Clark's last expedition against the Indians, and was later a member of the Kentucky Legislature.

#### THE FAMILY IN VIRGINIA

Continuing with our line, which, runs through Robert, page 3:

ROBERT BARNET, born near Londonderry, Ireland, in 1703, emigrated to Pennsylvania with his father's family in about the year 1729, locating in Hanover Township, now Dauphin County. He, together with his brother James, removed to Virginia sometime following the year 1734, each having previously married. Robert settled on Hat Creek in what is now Nelson County, Va., and was living there in 1750. We do not know the name of his wife, and the only members of his family of whom we know are the following:

Joseph	born probably in Pennsylvania in about 1730, married Abigail Mills, died in November 1795 while a resident of Ohio County, Ky.
Robert	born probably in Pennsylvania in about 1732, was killed in the Braddock campaign in 1755.
Alexander	born probably in Virginia in 1745, died in Ohio County, Ky. in 1819, married 1769 Jane Montgomery, born probably in Virginia in 1748, died in Ohio County, Ky. in 1825.

Mrs. Cahill located an old Barnet home near Roselands and Massie's Mill, post office Bryant, on Hat Creek, Nelson County, Va., which it is thought was the home of this Robert Barnet. In fact, local tradition says the Robert Barnet who lived there had sons Joseph and Alexander. There is an old Montgomery cemetery on the place. This farm in 1925 was owned by one Cyrus Massie. Mrs. Cahill endeavored to obtain an abstract of the title, but without success. In fact, all of our efforts to learn something further of the Virginia family have been unavailing. During the time they resided there the county was variously Goochland (1727-1744), Albemarle (1744-1761), and Amherst (1761-1818), but the records of these counties which have been available to us contain nothing of either Robert or his brother James. There are many records in Amherst County in regard to the family of the Robert mentioned in the middle of page 5, who was the son of James, but nothing of our Robert or any of his family. This has been somewhat baffling, and I would be

inclined to the belief they lived elsewhere but for the fact that tombstone inscription of a son of Alexander shows that he, the son, was born in Amherst County, Va., and this is also borne out by a family record.

According to tradition Robert had a number of children, as many as ten or more, including at least two sons who were killed in the Revolution, but, as stated, all of our efforts to learn something of them have come to naught. Not that we couldn't find Barnets aplenty in Virginia, for the records are full of them, but there is no way to identify any of them as of our family. In this connection, the "Pennsylvania Genealogies" record states that from Robert and James who moved from Pennsylvania to Virginia, most of the name in the south sprang. The author of that data reckoned without an investigation into the records, for there were Barnets in the state a century before the advent of these brothers, and apparently there were several Barnet families in the state by the time our people arrived.

There is a paper in the archives of the Wisconsin State Historical Society (Draper Ms. 23CC98-102) in which is related the story of the capture by Indians of two Barnet girls from the frontier settlements of Virginia sometime after Braddock's defeat (1755). The younger of the girls was named Susannah, and she was taken captive at the age of six, and was kept by the Indians until she was eighteen. The older girl became reconciled to remain with the Indians and married one, but the younger never gave up trying to make her escape. In this she finally succeeded after she had been with them for 12 years, and afterward married one Thomas Cummin and resided near Ft. Pitt. After some years the older girl was returned to her family, but she was not satisfied to remain, and returned to the Indians. There is a very vague tradition in the family that conforms somewhat to this story, and I have been rather of the opinion that these girls were daughters of our Robert. Mrs. Cahill's mother mentioned a Barnet girl who had been taken captive by the Indians when she was so small that she forgot her language, and that her relatives gave a large number of horses for her return, possibly as many as 300. This tradition also came down through another branch of the family also. And I have a hazy recollection of hearing my mother tell of a girl who was captured by Indians, who was sometime afterwards recovered, but was not satisfied to remain with her people and returned to the Indians. As I recall, her knowledge of the incident was quite vague.

A clue to the possible identity of still another member of this family is a land transaction between our Ohio County pioneer ancestor, Joseph Barnet, and John and James Barnet of Madison County, Ky. (see also page 4). There was a James Barnet in Madison County who was descended from James of Amherst County, Va. (see page 6), but there was no John of that family. It may be that this John was a brother of our ancestors Joseph and Alexander.

That some religious persecution had followed the Presbyterians into Virginia is shown by a record in a history of Albemarle County in which it is stated that a Presbyterian minister of the name of Davies, who was one of the great preachers of the day, who began his work in that county in 1750, "had no little trouble with state authorities whose intervention was involved by some bigoted ministers of the establishment under the old repressive laws of nonconformity." Also, one of the histories of Virginia tells of the persecution of the Baptists in that state during this period by the Episcopal church, and apparently it was carried to as great an excess as was the persecution of the Presbyterians in Ireland, and I assume that the Presbyterians in Virginia came in for their full share of it.

I here quote from the Judge Baird paper -- that is, information given of Alexander Barnet and great-grandson of Joseph Barnet (p.6).

"In 1755 when General Braddock, commanding the Royal Army, went to take Fort DuQuesne, Washington was with him, accompanied by a hundred young Virginians, among whom were Robert and Joseph Barnet. The campaign resulted in the defeat of the army and the death of General Braddock. In that conflict Robert Barnet was killed. He was the next oldest of the family to Joseph.

"Three years later another expedition went out to accomplish what Braddock had failed to do. Joseph Barnet was in that expedition also, which resulted successfully, the fort being captured and the French Garrison taken.

"Joseph Barnet remained at the fort, the name of which was changed to Fort Pitt. He soon made the acquaintance of Abigail Mills and married her, settled there, thus becoming separated from his father's family who were living in Amherst County Virginia.

"When the Revolutionary War came on some 20 years later, Joseph, being widely separated from his father's family, entered the northern wing of the army, while his brother, Alexander, entered the southern wing. They had not seen each other for twenty years until they met at the Battle of Yorktown in October, 1781.

"Joseph had been to Kentucky the winter before and had such an exalted opinion of that country that after some discussion they agreed to meet in Kentucky the following year. They met at the fort where Elizabethtown now stands, made a crop there that season, and in the winter following journeyed to Ohio County and began a fort before Christmas, completed it and moved their families into it in February, 1783."

This is a rather brief summary of a very important period, but it constitutes all we have. As fragments of this data have come down through other lines I feel it is authentic in the main. We have, however, been able to verify but little of it by published records.

Joseph's services in the Braddock Campaign I have been entirely unable to verify. This was a British undertaking, and the records which were kept pertain almost altogether to the British army, with but little if anything in regard to the Colonial troops under Washington. The tradition that Joseph did serve in the Braddock Campaign has persisted in the family, and I accept it as fact, and when we consider the important part played by those Virginia troops in that engagement we should take no small amount of pride in the fact that our ancestor was one of those troops. Briefly, the story of the Braddock Campaign is as follows:

The British had planned a general attack upon the frontier forts which were held by the French and their Indian allies. In 1755 General Braddock was sent over from England with a large force to march against Fort DuQuesne. His army was well equipped and disciplined, but entirely untrained in Indian warfare. Washington with a small force, the number of which is given variously as anywhere from 50 to 400, joined him at Wills Creek, Penn., about 100 miles from the fort. To Braddock these backwoodsmen presented a poor appearance indeed, and he openly scoffed at them, not only because they looked to him like a band of stragglers, but also because they were entirely untrained in the military arts. However, they had a training which was of far greater importance in that venture than any of the regulation military training of which Braddock's troops boasted, for they were experienced Indian fighters, and every man of them was a dead shot and a trained scout.

To Washington's dismay he found that Braddock was pushing his army forward in full formation, with drums beating and flags flying. Washington endeavored by every means to persuade Braddock to proceed cautiously, but without avail. When they were within about eight miles of the fort, suddenly and apparently from nowhere they were met by a withering fire, and immediately a swarm of shrieking savages was upon them, wielding the tomahawk with deadly effects. Braddock's troops, paralyzed with fear, at first huddled together in stark terror, and then



took to mad flight. Braddock sustained a mortal wound, and Washington assumed command. He rode up and down among the troops in a desperate effort to bring order out of chaos, but there was no stopping that frenzied mob. But his Virginia troops rallied to him, and with them he covered the retreat, thereby saving the army from utter annihilation. In fact, it is said that at the first fusillade from the enemy these Virginians, following the usual practice in Indian warfare, sprang to cover and returned the fire.

As has been noted, Joseph survived this conflict, and was no doubt one of those who rallied to Washington in covering the retreat. His 23-year-old brother, Robert, was left upon the field.

The second campaign against the fort, of which Joseph was also a member, according to the Judge Baird paper, was by no means a frolic. There was no fault with the leadership on this occasion, but as the army neared the fort progress was made only at great sacrifice. They were constantly harassed by attacking parties of Indians, and the many victims who fell into their hands suffered the cruelest tortures. The French garrison, realizing they would be unable to hold out against such numbers, set fire to the fort and fled, and when the army arrived it was in flames. Another fort was hastily erected which was named Fort Pitt (\*).

[\* footnote: This brief outline of the Braddock Campaign and the subsequent expedition against the fort is taken from "Highlights in History", by Mansfield and "History of Braddock's Expedition," by Sargent. The Judge Baird data is inaccurate in that it states that in the second expedition the fort was captured and the French garrison taken.]

The traditions we have in regard to the service of Joseph and Alexander in the Revolution are, as shown in the Judge Baird paper, that Joseph entered the northern wing of the army, commanded by Washington, and Alexander the southern wing, commanded first by General Gates, and upon his removal by General Nathaniel Green, and that both Joseph and Alexander were in the Battle of Yorktown, or at least that they met there. As it was Washington's army which stormed Yorktown it may be that only Joseph was in the battle, and a concentration of troops later brought Alexander to Yorktown.

Another tradition is that Alexander was in the Battle of Kings Mountain, (N.C., October 1780), and the name of Alexander Barnet does appear in the records of that engagement. We have endeavored to verify by the published records the Revolutionary War services of Joseph and Alexander, but they contain so many Barnets of the same given names that it has been impossible to say which of them relate to our ancestors. That they did serve in the Revolution there is no doubt in my mind, not only because the Judge Baird paper says so, but also traditions to that effect have persisted.

With reference to Joseph, a deed in the Ohio County Clerk's office (Deed Book D, p.398, 399, dated \_\_) mentions that he was a soldier of the Revolution.

As for Alexander, the War Department advised, "the records show that one Alexander Barnet served in the Revolutionary War as a private in Capt. Henry Hampton's company, 6th South Carolina Regiment, commanded by Lt. Col. William Henderson. He enlisted April 1776, was transferred to the 8th Company, 1st South Carolina Regiment in February 1780, which roll bears notes 'First Regt. in garrisons at the siege of Charleston in the year 1780.' As General Gates and Nathaniel Green were in command of the southern wing of the army it is thought that this man may possibly be the one whose record is desired." I too am inclined to believe this is our Alexander. True it is that we have proved that he resided in Virginia before moving to Kentucky, but I believe that in some manner he got to the Carolinas, and it occurs to me he may have gone there with

Boone, for it is our tradition that he was in Kentucky with Boone, and at least one of Boone's expeditions into the state was made from one of the Carolinas.

In connection with the tradition that Alexander was with Boone in Kentucky, Collins History of Kentucky (Vol. II, p.664) gives an account of an expedition led by Col. Boone from Boonesboro, in August, 1778, against an Indian settlement on Paint Creek. His party of 19 men including an Alexander Barnet, and the very heroic and successful defense of that fort a few days later against a very large body of Indians officered by the British. This apparently bears out our tradition, and while I am inclined to believe this is our Alexander I cannot say with certainty for there were other Alexander Barnets in Virginia, two of who later settled in Kentucky.

A granddaughter of Judge Baird obtained membership in the D.A.R. on Alexander, her paper showing his service record as follows:

"Alexander Barnet served in the southern wing of the army, entering from Virginia. He served first with General Gates and later under Nathaniel Green, and after that in 1778 with Col. Boone in Kentucky". (\*)

[\* footnote: This is followed by a reference to the account of the Paint Creek Expedition mentioned above. It should be stated here that if Alexander did serve with Boone in 1778, that was before and not after any service he may have seen under General Gates, for the latter did not succeed to the command until December 1780.]

It has been said of those Scotch-Irish that they were ever found to be the "readiest among the ready on the battlefields of the Revolution. If they had faults, a lack of patriotism or of courage was not among the number". (\* footnote: History of Braddock's Expedition, by Sargent.) Washington, in one of the dark hours of the Revolution when his army seemed to be falling away from him, inquired about those Scotch-Irish Presbyterians in Virginia, if they were still in the ranks, stating that so long as they stood by him the cause was by no means lost. They had proven their mettle in the Braddock campaign, and other instances when they had fought under his leadership, and he had the utmost faith in them, and history shows they justified that faith. It has also been said of them that they were "a people whose characteristics have ever been truth, honesty, simplicity, singleness of purpose, and courage." (# footnote: Augusta County Virginia Records, by Chalkey.)

I may add here that it has been state by an eminent Baptist divine that the theology of those old Scotch Presbyters who settled in Virginia constitutes the iron in the blood of American protestantism.

As has been mentioned, tradition says Joseph and Alexander had other brothers in the Revolution, at least two of whom were killed.

#### THE FAMILY IN KENTUCKY

Repeating a paragraph from the Judge Baird record:

"Joseph had been to Kentucky the winter before (1780) and was quite favorably impressed with that country. After some discussion they (the brothers) agreed to meet in Kentucky the following year. They met at the fort where Elizabethtown now stands, made a crop there that season, and in the winter following journeyed to Ohio County, began a fort there before Christmas, completed it, and moved their families into it in February 1783."

Copy of an old deed (\* footnote: This deed is in file 32 of the Ohio Circuit Clerk's office.) shows entry of land in Ohio County in the name of Joseph Barnet, and that a beech tree standing

near a lick near one of the lines had carved on it, "J. Barnet his lick 1779". This indicates that Joseph had been in the state two years before the meeting at Yorktown.

As for the date of the establishment of Barnett's Station I am of the opinion that the Judge Baird record is correct, and that it, Ft. Hartford, and the fort at Vienna (Calhoun), all of which I believe were erected at about the same time, were the first forts to be established in the western part of the state. In the following I give all the information I have been able to collect in regard to the time of the establishment of these forts:

Harrison Taylor in his sketches concerning the early history of Ohio County (# footnote: Ohio County in the Olden Days, by Harrison Taylor) states it was not known which of the three forts was established first. The Durrett historical collection at the University of Chicago contains an old map of Ohio County, which shows Barnett's Station, but not Hartford. A Draper manuscript (13CC38-40) mentions that one Osborne had lived at Rogers Station about a year "summer of 1780, and then at Barnett's Station." This would seem to indicate that he lived at Barnett's Station in 1781, but I believe this is in error, and that the erection was not begun until the latter part of 1782, as stated in the Judge Baird record, for tombstone record of a son of Joseph shows he was born at Rogers Station, Nelson County, Ky., October 1, 1782. It seems likely the family was waiting there until Barnett's Station was ready for occupancy. This would also seem to indicate that Ft. Hartford was not ready for occupancy either, for if so it would seem that the family would have stopped there while Barnett's Station was being constructed, although of course it may be that it was necessary that the family stop at Rogers Station until the infant was born. I feel, however, that the three forts were established not many months apart, with possibly Ft. Hartford being completed first, then Barnett's Station, and then Vienna, and in part substantiation of this an elderly descendant of one of the pioneers states he was told that the forts at Hartford and Barnett's Station were erected at about the same time. However, the traditions and my conclusions seem to be refuted in the following:

In the life of Bill Smothers (Smithers) by Governor Thomas McCreary, of Owensboro, as related to him by Esquire Anthony Thompson of near Hartford, it is stated that Smothers had been in the Battle of Yorktown (October, 1780), returned to his home in Southwestern Virginia the same year, and married. It was his desire to immediately start for Kentucky, but on account of the weather he was persuaded by his bride to wait until the next spring. They accordingly set out the next year and reached Lexington in the spring of 1782. "On my arrival in Kentucky (Smothers relating the story) I found the region about Lexington more densely settled than the country I had left on the Holston. I had come to fight Indians and did not feel like taking wages as a hand on a farm. I met a party who were coming down to fortify in the Green River country and I joined them at once. We built a fort at Hartford on Rough Creeks When we were besieged we found that the Indians generally came from lower Kentucky, wading Green River at the falls. We established a fort there and called it Vienna. The Indians seldom came in great force afterwards and soon scattered." These were "the first settlements in the neighborhood of Owensboro, Ky. Each place was fortified in the rude manner of the day, as a protection against the attacks of the Indians, and the simple blockade was a surer defense against them than stone and iron walls would be against the scientific assaults of civilized warfare."

This, it will be observed, is silent as to Barnett's Station, and I have been somewhat puzzled over the omission. It may be true that Vienna was constructed before Barnett's Station, but in any event I believe that only a few months elapsed between the time of the construction of these forts.

At the time these forts were erected that part of Kentucky was Jefferson County, Virginia, and it was not until ten years later than Kentucky became a separate state. And it should be

remembered that the establishment of these forts took place but six or seven years after the first permanent settlement was made in the state (Ft. Harrod completed spring of 1776), and while, as shown by the Bill Smothers story, the eastern part of the state evidently had some population, the western part of the state was a vast wilderness.

In stating that the brothers moved their families into the fort in February 1783, the Judge Baird record is probably correct insofar as Joseph's family is concerned. For as shown on a preceding page, they were at Rogers Station, Nelson County, Ky., about 125 miles away, while the fort was being built. As for the time Alexander moved his family to the fort, tombstone inscription of his son Robert shows the latter was born in Amherst County, Va., in 1784, and record in the family Bible of a son of this Robert shows the latter came to Kentucky with his father's family in 1788. No doubt Joseph was not firmly established in Pennsylvania, having gone there as a soldier and remaining at the fort as a member of the garrison. Alexander, on the other hand, had always lived in Virginia and no doubt owned land and other possessions he could not quickly dispose of. Also, it is not unlikely that his wife was reluctant to sever all ties with her people, to break up her home and part with so much that she held dear, to push out into the unknown on a journey which would be fraught with danger, and the end of which no one could foretell, for the Indians made desperate efforts to stem the tide of that vast flood of population let loose by the Revolution, which swept from the Virginia Tidewater, through the Cumberland Gap, rolling down on the western side of the Blue Ridge Mountains, to the Blue Grass and Pennyroyal of Kentucky. Apparently, though, the journey of our people was made without important incident, for no story has come down to us regarding the trip.

It is generally understood that our people made the trip by way of the Wilderness Trail, though some of the settlers in that part of the state made it by river, journeying to the nearest point on the Ohio, there building a flatboat and floating down the river, into Green, and thence into Rough River. In connection with the Wilderness Road, I here quote from "Ohio County in the Olden Days":

"An elderly gentleman gives the following narrative. 'About the year 1830 I was running out some old surveys of land on Caney Creek in Ohio County. I frequently saw marks of the old trail leading from Elizabethtown to Barnett's and Hartford Stations. In running a line which crossed and recrossed it we came to a stream of beautiful clear running water. We stopped on the bank to quench our thirst and eat our dinners which we carried with us. While sitting there we discovered a large beech tree nearby, literally covered with names carved in the smooth bark. Among them were Barnett, Cleaver, Rhoads, Pigman, Jackson, Taylor, Handley, Love, Isaacs, Baird, May, and many others of whom I had never before heard. The inquiry arose, why were all these names here? But upon surveying the locality this was easily explained. The stream, now called Richland, curved in from a wide bottom lying in the south, to within a few yards of a bluff-point of a long sloping ridge running down from the north, leaving between the bluff and stream only room for a good camping ground. Right here had run the old trace or road along which had passed many early settlers of this and other sections of the Green River country. ' "

The fact that our ancestors were among the very earliest settlers in the western part of the state -- in an old lawsuit it is mentioned that Joseph was one of the "early adventurers" in the state -- and had a part in hewing a state out of a wilderness is a matter of which we have every reason to be proud.

## THE INDIAN RAID

Of the life at the fort we can only conjecture, but as the average person is more or less familiar with early pioneer life we will not go into that subject here. Needless to say, it was beset with hardships and fraught with danger, and while it seems these settlers were not harassed by Indians to so great an extent as the settlers in the eastern part of the state, yet the encounters they had with them were such as to keep them in constant dread and fear. In this connection I quote from "Ohio County in the Early Days":

"Indians made but feeble efforts to rid that portion of which Ohio County is composed of its white settlers. They seemed to have abandoned the idea of holding the territory as their own, and only visited it occasionally for the purpose of hunting or horse stealing, always killing or taking prisoner such white stragglers as came in their way. Local tradition relates but a single instance of an attack upon any fort or stations."

The following is the Stephen Stateler account of this attack:

"Barnett's Station was situated about two miles north of Hartford and the people of both places were continually harassed by slight depredations from the Indians. It had been rumored that the Indians meditated an attack upon the Station, and in April 1790 they did assail Barnett's Station and killed two children of John Anderson and wounded Mrs. Anderson severely. She came very near being killed. A large, powerful Indian had hold of her and was attempting to scalp her with a sword when John Miller came to her rescue and when within a few steps raised his rifle and snapped it at the Indian who dropped his sword and fled, but took with him the scalp of Mrs. Anderson. This lady recovered and lived ten or twelve years afterwards.

"Indians in this foray captured and carried off with them Hannah Barnett, a daughter of Col. Joseph Barnett, then a lovely young girl about ten years of age. They conveyed her across the Ohio River into Indian Territory. She was ransomed from the Indians by her brother-in-law, Mr. Robert Baird, who bargained with a trader to have her brought to a post opposite Louisville, and she was accordingly rescued in the month of October following."

Again quoting from "Ohio County in the Early Days":

"There are some facts in relation to the killing of the Anderson children that were omitted in the narrative published by Collins. The omissions are embraced in the following version: Several women and children had left Barnett's Station to attend preaching at Hartford. The Indians had no doubt seen their tracks and waylaid them on their return. The road crossed a deep ravine less than a fourth of a mile from the fort. The Indians had had concealed themselves in this ravine covered with cane, and rushed upon the party as they passed, killing Mrs. Anderson's two children by dashing their heads against the root of a tree and tomahawking and scalping Mrs. Anderson, who, however, survived and lived some years afterwards. They carried off Miss Barnett, quite a small but handsome girl. The appearance of John Miller – usually called Tick-eyed John – who happened to be near the places and armed as usual, no doubt saved the lives of the others of the party. Harrison Taylor, Jr., had just arrived at the fort and was sitting with his gun across his lap when the screams of the women and children were heard. Springing to his feet, he ran to the gate and saw an Indian running at his utmost speed through a small field that adjoined the fort. He gave chase and was gaining on the Indian, but as they were approaching the fence on the outside of which was thick undergrowth, he saw at a glance that his only chance was to fire before the Indian crossed the fence. He fired, but with a loud "Ugh!" the Indian disappeared. A few drops of blood was all that was found afterwards."

The story of this capture of Hannah Barnett by Indians was given me by Mrs. Hannah Virginia Cahill, granddaughter of Hannah, is as follows:

"When Hannah was a little girl, four or five years old (she was born in 1779), one day her father found an Indian boy in the woods with a broken leg. He took him home, set the leg, nursed him until he was able to travel, and either gave him a pony and sack of food, or loaned him the pony to go back to his tribe, by whom he had been given up for dead. I believe the pony was given the boy. His tribe was passing through the country and the boy was out hunting, climbed a tree, fell, and broke his leg. He was made a pallet of skins before the fire, so it must have been cold weather, and Hannah usually took him his water to drink, etc.

"In April of 1790, when Hannah was about ten years of age, a camp meeting was in progress at Hartford and some relative of the family was either conducting it or assisting. One day the women and children from the Station, about forty in number, gathered for morning services. There had been peace with the Indians and the settlers were off their guard. As these worshipers were returning to the Station, at a point not far from the gate they were set upon by the Indians. Some were killed and some scalped. Hannah ran into a clump of bushes to hide. Two Indians discovered her, and as they raised their tomahawks to kill her, a young chief sprang between her and them. He claimed her as his trophy. The other Indians were very angry and wanted to kill her anyway since they were on the warpath and didn't want to be burdened with prisoners. But being a chieftain he had the right to take his captive. This was the most influential chief of his tribe, son of their medicine woman, and the boy whose leg Hannah's father had set. He had recognized her. He took her on his pony and carried her back to their camp and gave her into his mother's care. He left pieces of her dress in the bushes, and removed her shoe and made some sign in it to let her people know she was alive.

"She said the medicine woman kept her with her all the time, they slept side by side at night, and when the Indians were drunk she hid her in hollow trees or in bunches of moss, and also hid her when white traders came about. Finally, the next fall, one came whom Hannah was permitted to see by stealth, the other Indians being always on the watch. The trader carried the glad news to her family that she was alive, and when he went back for his next lot of skins her brothers and a large number of men, about 300, went with him. They were to wait at a certain point down the river. The trader thought he would be able to get Hannah away at a certain time, and tried to get all the Indians drunk so that he could get her away while they were asleep. But they were suspicious and watched Hannah and the young chief and their medicine woman, so the trader was considerably longer in getting away from the Indian camp than he expected, and the men, becoming uneasy, moved much nearer the Indian camp.

"The trader finally succeeded in getting his load in the canoe – Hannah was rolled inside a lot of skins, and this roll either the chief or the trader carried on his shoulder and tossed it into the canoe and started down the river. He hadn't been gone long when the Indians found that Hannah was missing, rushed to their canoes, and gave chase down the river, the chief making as much to do as any of them. The trader reached the opposite bank where the rescuers were, just as the Indians were about to catch him.

"The chief called a parley, and they went ashore, and the pipe of peace was smoked between that family of white men and that tribe of Indians - the white man has saved the chief's life, and the chief had saved the white man's child. They gave them some symbol by which this was to be known, and father said that they were not troubled any more.

"Hannah said the medicine woman and her son did everything they could to make her comfortable."

The account of this incident as it came down in my line was evidently confused with some other encounter with the Indians. It is to the effect that Hannah and her cousin Rebecca, daughter of Alexander, went to a spring for water, they stopped under a mulberry tree to gather berries and were set upon by Indians; that Rebecca fainted and was scalped and left for dead (recovered, however, and lived to a ripe old age) and Hannah was taken captive.

Mulberries are not ripe in April, and the other accounts make no mention of the scalping of Rebecca. These details, however, have persisted in our family and there must be some truth in them. It will be noted that the Harrison Taylor account mentions that the Indians occasionally visited the locality for the purpose of hunting or horse stealing, and made victims of such white persons as they came upon. It may be that the scalping of Rebecca occurred in some such encounter. Or it may be that our traditions have become confused with the incident which occurred in Virginia related on page 7.

At any rate, the mulberry tree, which though dead, was still standing in 1904, has been pointed out to members of the family. It stood, as near as I can recall, at about where the ravine was located, less than a quarter of a mile toward Hartford from the Barnett's Station marker. That ravine, by the way, has long since been filled.

It has also been related in my family that Hannah was kept in a cave the first night, the location of which has been known to members of the family.

How long the families remained at the fort we do not know. According to Stephen Stateler, when he came to Hartford in 1790 there were twenty-seven families residing there and it (Hartford) was no longer a fort, but Barnett's Station was still a fort. This latter statement is further borne out by the date of the Indian raid, which occurred in April 1790. An old lawsuit shows that Alexander was residing in Hartford in 1799, and that Robert, the son of Joseph, was residing on his own farm at the time of his death in the same year.

It will be observed that thus far I have mainly spelled the name with a single "t" – Barnet. This I have done in accordance with the records, for it was not until about the turn of the century that the name began to appear in the records spelled with a double "t", and from this point on I shall so spell it. Just why the spelling of the name was changed I am not advised, though changing the spelling of names seems to have been widely practiced in pioneer and Colonial times. It was apparently not the purpose to change the pronunciation, for until recent years the name has been pronounced with accent on the first syllable. Now, however, most of the name seem to prefer accent on the last syllable, and it is rather generally so pronounced. My personal preference would have been to have neither the spelling nor the pronunciation changed.

From this point in the history of the two families will be dealt with separately, and in order to avoid unwieldiness the line will be carried no further than the great-grandchildren of the two pioneer brothers.

As Joseph was the older of the brothers, the history pertaining to him and his family will be dealt with first.

#### COL. JOSEPH BARNETT 1730?-1795

Col. Joseph Barnett, born about 1730, probably in Pennsylvania, removed with his father's family to Virginia prior to 1750. To briefly summarize the history pertaining to him related on previous pages, Joseph and his younger brother, Robert, were in the Braddock Campaign against Ft. DuQuesne in 1755, Robert being killed. Joseph was also with the expedition which marched against the fort some two years later and which resulted successfully. He remained at the fort, then

called Ft. Pitt, as a member of the garrison, thus becoming separated from his father's family He married there Abigail Mills, and when the Revolutionary War came on some twenty years later he entered the northern wing of the army. He was in the Battle of Yorktown (October, 1781) and there met up with his brother Alexander. After some discussion they made arrangements to come to Kentucky. The following year "they met at the fort where Elizabethtown now stands, made a crop there that seasons and in the winter following journeyed to Ohio County and began a fort there before Christmas, completed it," and Joseph moved his family into it in February, 1783. Apparently Joseph's family had accompanied him as far as Rogers Station, Nelson County, Ky., for one of his sons was born at that Station October 1, 1782.

The Judge Baird record mentions that Joseph had been to Kentucky prior to the meeting at Yorktown. That this is true is evidenced by an old deed which indicates that he marked a tree in Ohio County in 1779 (p.11). In an early suit it is mentioned that Col. Joseph was one of the "early adventurers" to the state.

Joseph was a Justice of the Peace in the state in an early day. The earliest record I have found showing him to have held that office is paper dated August 26, 1786, in the Nelson Circuit Clerks office (\*).

[\* footnote: Ohio County, organized in 1798, was a part of – Hardin County, Ky. 1792-1798 (Kentucky became a separate state in 1792), Nelson County, Va. 1784-1792, Jefferson County, Va., 1780-1784, Kentucky County, Va. 1776-1780.

The archives of Nelson County contain but meager records prior to 1792 and I was unable to learn if Joseph was a Justice of the Peace at the time of the organization of the County in 1784. Practically all of the records of Jefferson County were destroyed by fire some years ago and it has been impossible to ascertain if he was a Justice of the Peace during the period that county embraced Ohio County, but I am inclined to believe he was. His appointment, of course, came from Richmond, Va., and I have hopes of being able to locate record of his appointment in the Virginia State archives.

The office of a Justice of the Peace was of more importance in that day than it now is. The nearest higher tribunal was at Bardstown, about four days journey away, and it is no doubt true that the major portion of the litigation arising in the extensive though rather sparsely populated territory over which he held jurisdiction was handled in his court.

At the first term of the "Quarter Sessions Court" of Hardin County, held in February, 1793, Joseph was sworn in as one of three Justices or Judges of that court – this according to Haycraft's History of Elizabethtown, which also states that all of these judges were Calvinistic Baptist preachers. This latter statement we feel sure is not true as to Joseph, for we have no tradition that he was a Baptist preacher, all of our traditions being to the effect that the family were Presbyterian. There was a Baptist preacher of the name of Joseph Barnett, contemporary to our Joseph, who worked throughout the north central section of the state, a brief history of whom is given in Spencer's "History of Kentucky Baptists." According to that history, Rev. Joseph Barnett resided in what is now Nelson County. It is our opinion that Haycraft, knowing of Rev. Joseph Barnett and simply took it for granted that he and Judge Joseph Barnett were one and the same, but we feel pretty sure that was not the case. As has been previously mentioned, there were many persons of the name of Barnett in the state, and they ran largely to the same given names.

To quote from Haycraft's History "Honorable Judge Joseph Barnett . . . lived near Hartford, and traveled upwards of seventy-five miles to sit in court. He possessed a large landed estate . . . " He did indeed possess a large landed estate – 27,934 acres at the time of his death. He was a dealer



in lands on a large scale, Jefferson County (then Virginia) entries alone totaling 155,370 acres, and the early records of Nelson and Hardin Counties are full of land transactions to which he was a party.

I again quote from Taylor's "Ohio County in the Olden Days":

"Among the early settlers of Ohio County were two celebrated land speculators and holders, Joseph Barnett and Ignatius Pigman. Joseph Barnett was the first of these two settlers, and being a deputy surveyor made early entries and surveys of the best portions of the lands lying in the neighborhood of Hartford."

I have been able to collect from the court records but little in regard to Joseph, for he died in 1795, prior to the date of the organization of Ohio County, and the earliest records of Nelson and Hardin Counties are but poorly preserved, though I believe something more can be obtained from the latter county.

That Joseph was a man who was held in high regard is evidenced by the fact that he was called "Colonel" a complimentary title, in that day bestowed only upon men of large landed estates and who were held in high esteem (so referred to in Collins History of Kentucky and in county records), In recent years Kentucky governors have taken it upon themselves to bestow the title, and upon all and sundry, so that it no longer has any significance.

What is now the Joseph Shultz place near Narrows, Ohio County, Ky., is said to have been the home place of Col. Joseph Barnett. If so, he moved there sometime between 1790 and 1795, and I have wondered if it was not the home place of his son Joseph instead, and if Col. Joseph was not still residing at the Station at the time of his death in 1795. His daughter in-law, Rachel, lies buried on that place, and it is said there was at one time a considerable graveyard there, but only the one marked grave remains.

To quote from the final paragraph of the Judge Baird record:

"Of the two brothers, Joseph died and lies buried near Elizabethtown, where he had gone to attend court, took sick and died suddenly."

He apparently had some affliction which he was aware would soon take him away, for in an old lawsuit it is mentioned that his son Robert had promised him that he would look after the interests and education of the younger sons, Jacob and Alexander. An old lawsuit shows Col. Joseph died in November, 1795. If he was born in 1730, then he was 65 years of age at the time of his death. An old account book of the commissioners who handled his estate, on file in the Ohio Circuit Clerk's office, contains an entry covering expenses at Elizabethtown attending to the payment of funeral expenses. I have attempted to locate the place of his burial, but without success. It is likely that he was buried in what is now the Elizabethtown Cemetery, which had its origin as the churchyard of the Severn's Valley Baptist Church. There are many very old graves in that cemetery. I made out some inscriptions showing date of death in the 1820s, but there were a number of stones apparently much older with inscriptions indistinguishable, and other stones almost completely disintegrated.

Col. Joseph left no will. Some of his children were minors, and at that early day there was no law providing for the handling of an estate under such circumstances. Consequently it was necessary that an act be passed by the Kentucky Legislature vesting his estate in commissioners. The opening paragraphs of that act, which was passed December 14, 1796, are as follows:

"Whereas, it is represented to the General Assembly that Joseph Barnett of Hardin County died intestate, leaving a considerable estate in lands but very little personal

property, and that he sold lands in his lifetime to a large amount, and was otherwise indebted; and,

"Whereas, no person has administered on his estate, and those of his children who are of age refuse to concern themselves either with the real or personal estate, whereby some of his claims of lands are in danger of being lost and his grantors are suffering for remedy whereof;" & c.

As for Abigail Mills Barnett, Joseph's wife, we know nothing. The full name of one of their sons was Jacob Mills Barnett, and it therefore seems likely that her father's name was Jacob Mills. The Judge Baird record says Joseph and Abigail were married at Ft. Pitt – probably called Pittsburg at the time of their marriage, which was apparently in the late 1760s. I am suspicious that Abigail did not for long remain a widow. I draw this conclusion from a deposition in an old lawsuit in the Ohio Circuit Court records. In this suit the sons Jacob and Alexander were plaintiffs, and being minors at the time were represented by their guardian, one Samuel McGrady. Abigail McGrady, wife of the latter, gives her deposition, in which she mentions that her marriage to Mr. McGrady had taken place after the death of the father of the plaintiffs. She showed an intimate knowledge of the family affairs, and it was brought out that Jacob was residing with her. She stated she was 45 years old. The deposition was given in 1801, and she was therefore born in 1756. But for the age she gives this sounds very much as though she were Joseph's widow, and of course it could be that she did not confine herself to the exact truth about her age. If as young as 18 at the time of her marriage then Nancy Ann was born 1767, at which time Abigail McGrady was but eleven years old, if, as stated in the deposition, she was 45 in 1801.

That Joseph's wife did survive him is brought out in the Act appointing Commissioners. The children of Col. Joseph Barnett and Abigail Mills Barnett were as follows:

Robert	b	_	d 1799	m 1796	Rachel Barnett	b 1774	d 1803
Nancy Ann	b	_	d 1835	m 1785	Robert Baird	b	_ d _
Joseph	b	1777	d 1823	m 1799	Jane Barnett	b 1772	d 1828
Hannah	b	1779	d 1802	m 1802	Elijah Myers	b 1783	d _
Jacob Mills	b	_	d 1812	m	Martha Lewellen	b	_ d _
Alexander	b	1782	d 1844	m	unmarried		

These names are given in the order in which they appear in a court record, excepting as to Robert who was not living at the time of the entry of the record.

There is confusion as to whether Nancy Ann or Robert was the older, and also as to even the approximate years of their birth, for apparently they were much older than the other children. In an old suit it is mentioned that Nancy Ann was the only one of Joseph's children of age at the time of his death in 1795. But as that suit was filed after Robert's death it may have meant that of the children then living Nancy Ann was the only one of age at the time of the father's death. The act appointing commissioners to handle Col. Joseph's estate, passed Dec. 14, 1796 contains the phrase "those children who are of age", which would seem to indicate that more than one of the children were of age at the time of the father's death. Robert was one of the organizers of Ohio County in 1798 and was appointed Justice of the Peace of that County in July 1799. If he was not of age at the time of his father's death then he was rather young for such responsibility. This is one of the riddles I hope to clear up by further research, but until then I shall show Robert as the eldest of the family.

I may say here that in an old letter it is stated that Col. Joseph's family record was taken to Schuyler County, Ill., at about the close of the Civil War. We have endeavored to trace this record, but without success. I have no idea which member of the family could have taken it there.

COL. ALEXANDER BARNETT  
1745-1819

To briefly summarize the events of his life as related on preceding pages:

Col. Alexander Barnett was born in 1745, probably on Hat Creek, in now Nelson County, Va. He married, also probably in Virginia, Jane Montgomery [note: later information indicating apparently her maiden name was Barnett], on January 26, 1769.

According to the Judge Baird paper, he served in the Revolutionary War, in the Southern Wing of the army. Tradition says he was in the Battle of King's Mountain, and was with Boone in Kentucky.

According to the Judge Baird paper, Alexander and his brother Joseph met at the Battle of Yorktown (October, 1781) and there laid plans to move to Kentucky, "they met at the fort where Elizabethtown now stands, made a crop there that season, and in the winter following journeyed to Ohio County and began a fort before Christmas, completed it and moved their families into it in February, 1783." This is incorrect as to the time Alexander brought his family to Kentucky, which was not until 1788 (see p.12).

How long Alexander and his family resided at the fort we do not know, and the earliest record we have of his place of residence is contained in an old lawsuit which indicates he was residing in Hartford in 1799. By deed dated May 16, 1798, he purchased a 2000-acre tract of land lying north of Hartford, to which he moved probably in 1800. His home on this land was located at a point about 2 ½ or 3 miles from Hartford, just off the Owensboro Road. The first I remember of the place, it was owned by Reuben Anderson. The field back of this house was said to be the first field to be cleared for cultivation between Rough River and the Ohio. The 6-acre plot of which Alexander Cemetery is located was taken out of this 2000-acre tract, and the description in the deed to that plot shows it is located at the west boundary line of the original tract.

Col. Alexander also owned other lands in Ohio County, and many lots in Hartford.

On the 2000-acre tract lived the descendants of Col. Alexander Barnett for several generations. In fact, some of them still own small portions of this land. The 300-acre farm owned by my maternal grandfather was from this tract, inherited by him from his father, Robert Barnett, who was a son of Col. Alexander. Robert lived with this son, my maternal grandfather (or I believe the reverse may have been true) and my mother remembered him quite well. When I reflect upon the fact that my mother remembered so well her grandfather who was a son of Col. Alexander, the pioneer period does not seem so remote. In fact, during my early recollection that the country was still well wooded and roads were entirely unimproved, except for some grading, and I believe that something of the spirit of the pioneer times may have carried over into that period.

There is an incident in which Col. Alexander played an important part, the story of which is from the pen of none other than the immortal Washington Irving. William P. Duvall, Governor of Florida, at one time owned lands in Ohio County and frequently visited Hartford. In his later years he was a friend of Washington Irving, and many of his anecdotes of the Green River country were collected by Irving in his sketches, and, according to a footnote, entirely without embellishment. The adventure in which Col. Alexander figured, known as the "Wolf Trap Incident", is in Irving sketch, "The Early Experiences of Ralph Ringwood," and is as follows:

"Bob Tarlton was a rowdying, idle scamp, only fit to fight Indians and hunt coons and such like sports; still, Bob had a streak of love in his soul and was fond of the company of Miss Calloway. So Bob, late one evening, shouldered his axe, called his dog, and struck a bee line for old Chesley Calloway's, where he prolonged his visit until the small hours of the night. But the joys of courting must at least have a recess, if not an end, and Bob had again to shoulder his axe, whistle for his dog, and depart.

"Now Col. Alexander Barnett had constructed in his woods a very ingenious wolf trap by digging a deep square hole in the ground, and fixing a balancing door or lid that would tilt and let the game fall in. Bob had an excellent coon dog, but he had treed so often when Bob would not come to his relief, that he had undertaken to teach his master that excellent business qualification of being prompt, and if his master did not make his appearance very soon he stopped barking and went his way.

"So on this dark night, as Bob was wending his way and thinking of his charming love, his dog treed and Bob started in a brisk run in that direction and soon landed in Col. Barnett's wolf pit where he was greeted in the north corner by the champing and rattling of a hog's tusks, and in the opposite south corner by the growling of a wolf, so Bob was glad to take his stand as close as he could possibly squeeze into the western corner, still leaving the east corner unoccupied. But in a very short time it too had its occupant, for Bob's dog left his tree and came hastening after his master's trail and fell in the unoccupied corner. There he was compelled to stay, for every whine he gave or move he made towards his master brought forth a growl and clatter of tusks that drove him back to his own corner, and never were kings more jealous of their own territory and less disposed to encroach on the territory of their neighbors than were the four occupants of that pit.

"Next morning, after breakfast, the old man shouldered his gun and with his little grandson Jo, started to the pit. Jo, of course being most anxious to see what was in the pit, ran ahead, and, to his utter astonishment, saw Tarlton's chestnut bur reaching near the top and cried out, 'Grandpa! O, Grandpa! Here's Bob Tarlton in the pit!' 'Why surely you are mistaken, Jose,' the old man said. But Jose was right, and the old man had almost as difficult a puzzle as the ferryman with the fox and the goose and the corn, but finally resolved on shooting the wolf first in order that Bob might have a chance to lift out his dog, then with the old man's aid Bob got out, and then with the aid of a noose made of hickory switches, pulled out the hog."

This wolf trap was located on the 2000-acre tract, and the grandson, Jo, was the son of Col. Alexander's daughter, Rachel. He had been left an orphan at the age of five and Col. Alexander had taken him to raise. Assuming that he was about ten at the time of this incident, then it occurred in 1808. This story has always been well known in the family, and is one of the many excellent stories which my father used to tell when we as small children would gather about him in the evening.

Col. Alexander Barnett was a surveyor, and there are many records in the Circuit and County Clerks' offices of Ohio County of surveys made by him. His instruments were in possession of my mother's family until 1911 when they were destroyed at the time my grandmother's house was burned. As late as 1796, while the county was still a part of Hardin County, he was Justice of the Peace. As has been previously noted, that office was then of much more importance than now (\*).

[\* footnote: Records in the Hardin County Clerk's office show that one Christopher Jackson had Col. Alexander haled before court for charging "high blooded fees for official services" as Justice of the Peace. There are many records of litigation between Jackson and the Barnetts, and apparently Jackson was a contentious sort of person. I do not believe the

charge against Col. Alexander was justified, for it is not like the Barnetts to take unfair advantage of others. In fact, the reverse is usually true.]

Col. Alexander's name heads list of ten men who petitioned the Kentucky Legislature to grant a charter for the establishment of an "academy" at Hartford, and by act approved December 22, 1798, these ten men were commissioned by the Legislature to organize the academy. As has been mentioned elsewhere, Joseph and Alexander were rather well educated for the day, and this is a matter in which we have reason to take pride, for, according to the Harrison Taylor writings many of those old pioneers were entirely illiterate, including some of the most substantial of them. Hartford Academy was later known as Hartford University, and still later as Hartford College. It still carries the latter name, though now it is but a grade and high school. Until about the turn of the Twentieth Century it was an important educational institution, and the only one higher than the common school within a radius of many miles.

In depositions in an old lawsuit it is mentioned that Col. Alexander was a man whose honesty was above question, and further evidence that he was held in high esteem is the fact that he was called Colonel, a complimentary title, bestowed in that day, as has been mentioned, only upon those highly regarded. There are several instances in the Ohio County records where he is called Colonel, and it will be noted that he is so referred to in the story of the wolf trap incident.

A desk which belonged to Col. Alexander, now in possession of a descendant, has inlaid in lead, "A B 1802". This desk he is said to have made, and it is an excellent piece of work, showing him to have been a craftsman of rather superior ability. Another member of the family has the sword he is said to have carried in the Revolution.

In the old desk is a secret drawer, ingeniously concealed, the existence of which was unknown until many years after Col. Alexander's death, and in which was found his will – this long after his estate had been distributed.

As for Alexander's wife, who was Jane Montgomery, born in 1748, I know nothing. The only clue I have as to her possible identity is that residing in Amherst County, Va. (Nelson County, Va. was cut off of Amherst) at the same time as Jane Montgomery, were a sister and brother, Mary (p.6) and John Montgomery, apparently contemporary to Jane, whose parents, it was thought, were James and Nancy Robinson Montgomery. Jane may have been a member of this family, but I do not know, and doubt if I ever shall. The D. A. R. paper on Col. Alexander states Jane was a granddaughter of Stephen Hopkins, Governor of Rhode Island and signer of the Declaration of Independence. The Filson Club collection of data pertaining to the signers and their descendants does not bear this out, and I do not believe it is a fact. I can say of Jane that she must have been a good housekeeper and homemaker, for the daughters of her daughters were that.

Col. Alexander died February 16, 1819, and his wife in 1825. They lie buried in the cemetery plot which he set aside by deed dated October 14, 1809. Seven of their nine children lie buried there, also three of the children of Col. Joseph Barnett, and that cemetery contains the remains of members of the Barnett family to the seventh generation.

The children of Col. Alexander Barnett and Jane Montgomery Barnett were:

Mary	b 1770 d 1814	unmarried	
Jane or Jean	b 1772 d 1828	m 1799 Joseph Barnett *	b 1777 d 1823
Rachel	b 1774 d 1803	m Robert Barnett *	b _ d 1799
Rebecca	b 1777 d 1858	m 1803 James Baird	b 1781 d 1868
Elizabeth	b 1779 d 1798	unmarried	
Robert	b 1784 d 1865	m 1816 Elizabeth Conditt	b 1794 d1830

Lucretia      b 1786 d 1854      m M. S. Bennett      b 1786 d 1837  
Joseph      b 1790 d 1795

(\* These men were brothers, and were sons of Col. Joseph Barnett, hence first cousins of their wives.)



### **Mary Jane Barnett**



Mary Jane Barnett, author of the preceding history of the Barnett family, was born 4 November 1889 in Ohio County, KY. She was the daughter of John L. Barnett (1850-1913) & Pauline Barnett (1852-1907). Her paternal grandparents were David Lowey Barnett (1821-1883) & Sarah Ann Baird (1817-1879). Her maternal grandparents were Robert Emmett Barnett (1825-1874) & Amanda Melvina Phipps (1830-1909). She was a great-great-granddaughter of the brothers, Joseph & Alexander Barnett. Miss Barnett and her history played integral roles in the

1934 erection and dedication of a memorial to Barnett's Station. She died 23 September 1974 in Owensboro, KY, where she was buried in Elmwood Cemetery.

Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, Tuesday, 24 September 1974, p.2A:

Miss Mary Jane Barnett, 84, of 539 Ewing Court, died early yesterday at Our Lady of Mercy Hospital. Born in Hartford, she was the daughter of 1 the late John Barnett and Mrs. Pauline Barnett. She was a retired secretary for L&N Railroad, and a member of Central Presbyterian Church.

Surviving are a sister, Mrs. Marvin Thornberry, Owensboro, and several nieces and nephews.

Services 2 p.m. Wednesday at Haley-McGinnis and Owensboro Funeral Home, with the Rev. William G. Walton, pastor of First Central Presbyterian Church, officiating. Burial in Elmwood Cemetery. Friends may call at the funeral home after 6 p.m. today.



### **Barnett's Station memorial**







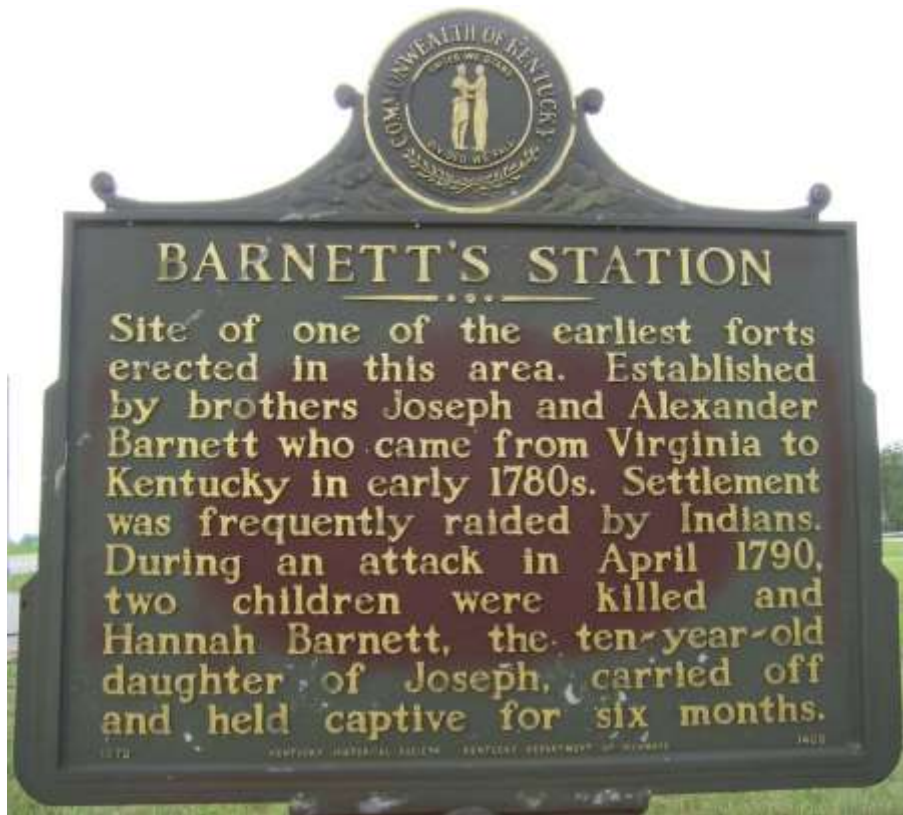
Barnett's Station memorial is near the east entrance of the Ohio County Courthouse in Hartford, KY. Dedicated on 27 May 1934 the memorial was originally erected at the site of Barnett's Station about two miles northeast of Hartford on what was then the Oswald C. Hocker (1890-1954) farm. A Kentucky historical highway marker was erected in 1973 at the site of the station on Highway 69 near the William H. Natcher Parkway. In recent years to safeguard the memorial it was moved to the Courthouse lawn.

**Inscription:**

Here stood the fort known as  
Barnett's Station  
Established by the brothers  
Joseph Barnett  
and  
Alexander Barnett  
February 1783  
or prior thereto  
One of the first three forts  
erected in western Kentucky  
It was the scene of an Indian raid  
in April 1790

—  
This tablet was placed by  
Descendents of the brothers  
Ohio County Historical Society  
Fort Hartford Chapter D.A.R.  
Ohio County Post No.44 American Legion  
Dedicated May 27, 1934





Historical highway marker erected in 1973 by the Kentucky Historical Society and Kentucky Department of Highways (marker number 1463). The marker is near Hartford, Kentucky, in Ohio County at the intersection of State Highway 69 and Barnetts Station Road. It is on the left when traveling north on State Highway 69 a short distance northeast of the William H. Natcher Parkway.

Inscription: Barnett's Station – Site of one of the earliest forts erected in this area. Established by brothers Joseph and Alexander Barnett who came from Virginia to Kentucky in early 1780s. Settlement was frequently raided by Indians. During an attack in April 1790, two children were killed and Hannah Barnett, the ten-year-old daughter of Joseph, carried off and held captive for six months.