

ROBINSON RUN SKETCHES

III. *Pioneers John and Martha McDonald*

MILTON M. ALLISON

An Address at a John McDonald Family Reunion¹

MR. CHAIRMAN; Your Excellency, the Governor of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. Duff; friends and kinsfolk, some of whom I have not seen since last we met in the general family reunion a half century ago:

Whatever else may be said of our origins as a social group, we know that we are not a family "after the order of Melchizedek" who is described in Hebrews 7:3 (R.S.V.) as "without father or mother or genealogy." As to "father and mother," we boast a common heritage in those worthy pioneers, John and Martha Tarvin Noble (Nobile) McDonald, who, before their marriage, came a year apart, Martha in 1772, John in 1773, into near-by Robinson Run Valley, which now extends through small areas of Washington and Allegheny counties, Pennsylvania, but was then entirely contained in Yohogania County, District of West Augusta, Virginia. As to "genealogy," we have all been "sought out and set in order" according to "our generations and our father's houses" by our kinswoman, Mrs. Virginia Davis Shriver, a recognized specialist in genealogical research. In her work she has been ably aided and abetted by our cousins the Lesnett sisters, Mrs. Grace Lesnett Shaw and Sara; another cousin, Mrs. Kathryn MacDonald Hartman, state genealogist for the D.A.R. of Pennsylvania; and others. Their findings, along with those of Mrs. Margaret Dickson Donaldson of the Allison-Bradford connection, have been placed at the disposal of our distinguished cousin, James Edward Allison, senior member of the firm of Allison and Allison of Los Angeles. (The junior member of the firm is a younger brother, David Clark Allison. The superior work of these men over a period of fifty years places them in the front rank of American architects.) Cousin Edward has made use of the genealogical material in fashioning for us a Family Tree. Modeling a sturdy giant of the forest, trunk, branches, limbs and twigs, he has made a masterpiece

¹ Held at the Raccoon Presbyterian Church, Candor, Pennsylvania, on September 16, 1950. The then Governor James H. Duff, who had expected to attend, was detained elsewhere, but Mrs. Duff read a personal letter from him explaining his absence and expressing his regret. The speaker nevertheless "addressed him with fanfare and it brought the desired laughter."—*Ed.*

of its kind—complete even to leaves and squirrels and acorns. I say and mean, “acorns.” Mention of another common food for squirrels is quite unthinkable in this connection! A glance at the foliage will establish identity of the hardwood and confirm the verdict: “By your leaf, you’re an oak”—“Great oaks from little acorns grow”—Though little squirrels eat (nuts), we know.

Now to get along through my assignment within the allotted ten to fifteen minutes. This sketch of our ancestors will have to be just that; the time will permit scarcely more than a brief treatment of Father John and Mother Martha and even scantly mention of their descendants of the first generation only. To cross as by leaps and bounds, the life stream of a father and mother and their eleven children in as many minutes will require some literary high-stepping with many stones left untrod. This sketch, no doubt, omits items dear to you as family lore. For this lack I plead both my ignorance and my aim at brevity. (As a preacher, my aim may not be too good.)

The Protestant MacDonalds fled Scotland, according to Cousin Virginia, from whose material I shall quote freely, at a time of religious persecution and “took” the Isle of Rothlin from the McHenrys. (Have wondered why I don’t like those McHenrys. One of them must have resisted!) From Rothlin the MacDonalds came southwestward to Ireland and spread over the northern provinces. In due time our ancestor John McDonald (Irish spelling) was born of a well-to-do family at Listravanich, County Fermanagh, on April 3, 1738. The year 1760 found him in Baltimore, Maryland, whither he had come in company with an elder brother, “Andrew” or “Angus” or “Alexander” by name, the feeling being in favor of Andrew. The brother married in 1760 and settled down in Baltimore. For some years, likely in partnership with his brother, John was an exporter of flax to Belfast. His place of residence in 1772 is established, by a bill of sale for a negro wench, as Susquehanna Hundred, Maryland, in Cecil County on the eastern shores of Chesapeake Bay. This bill of sale is exhibited here today and is dated August 4, 1772. That same year he explored for land in the region south of Fort Pitt, which had been evacuated by the British garrison in 1772 and was later called Fort Dunmore.

2 For an account of the Ewing stockade and the massacre of the Walkers by marauding Indians in 1781, see the author’s article on “Ifly—‘Ghost Town,’” *ante*, 35:94-97 (June, 1952).

From 1770 to 1773, some seventeen or more families came from Nottingham parish (Presbyterian), around Colora, Cecil County, Maryland, to take up land in the Chartiers watershed. Among them were the James Ewings who homesteaded at the mouth of Robinson Run near the present West Carnegie.² Eventually a minister whose name was to become a household word throughout this western frontier area, and who was pastor to many of these people, Doctor John McMillan, migrated west from Fagg's Manor, Chester County, in eastern Pennsylvania. He settled, as you know, south of Canonsburg, and established among others, the Chartiers or "Hill" Presbyterian Church, also Jefferson Academy and Jefferson College at Canonsburg, now incorporated with Washington and Jefferson. Doctor McMillan is represented here today by our Cousins Lesnett, who are his descendants through Thomas Dell Lesnett, Sr., a great-grandson of the educator. Whether Father John came as a member of the group of migrants from Nottingham parish or was influenced by them to come I do not know. At any rate, the year 1773 found him in possession of his homestead tract, called Mount Pleasant, which is the present McDonald family property at the western corporation limits of the borough of McDonald. In December, 1775, having meanwhile improved the land, he "moved out," whence the chronicle does not state, "to live thereon."

In his new home bachelor John, aged thirty-six, began to realize that "it is not well for man to live alone." The little lovebugs, however, seem to have conquered him gradually and over a period of four years. At the age of forty, having wooed, he wed the beloved Martha, who is described as a "bonnie, redhaired lassie," aged seventeen. (Maybe he was waiting for her to grow up). She was the youngest daughter of Colonel and Mrs. Joseph (Nobile) Noble II, who with most of their family and several slaves had come from Prince Georges County, Maryland, in 1772, to take up land upon which developed Noblesburg, now Noblestown. On the site of the present-day United Presbyterian Church in that place, Colonel Noble, an Episcopalian, erected a little log chapel which he designated in true catholic spirit, "a house of prayer for all people." Therein on April 28, 1778, John McDonald and Martha Tarvin Noble were married by Dr. John McMillan.

My paper "Concerning Noblesburg, Fort McDonald and Fort Beelor," prepared in 1942 for the sesqui-centennial celebration of the founding of the United Presbyterian Church of Noblestown, and since

revised lengthward,³ deals somewhat with the Noble family and records the location of Mrs. Joseph Noble's grave where she was buried about February 2, 1796. Suffice it to say here that through that elect lady we are descended from Adam Thoroughgood (1602-1641). A young scion of English gentry, Adam Thoroughgood came to the colony of Virginia in 1621. He built and lived in what is believed to be the oldest brick house now standing in "Ye Olde Dominion." Through Mother Noble we are also blood relatives of the Dents, of whom was born Julia, the wife of General Ulysses S. Grant, the eighteenth President of the United States. Some natives of the mentioned Commonwealth strut the fact that they are of the "F.F.V.'s"—First Families of Virginia. Of these there are few, if any, more "F.F.V." than "Ve are." A picture of the mentioned house, made a shrine in 1921, is on display here today. The roots of Cousin Edward's tree spring from Adam Thoroughgood. He was granted 5,350 acres by the Crown in token of his having brought to the new colony an "importation" of 105 colonists, among whom was one Augustine Warner, a great-grand-grandfather of one George Washington and the ancestor, also, of one Robert E. Lee. So, how, I ask you, would they have got here had it not been for us?

Now as we come back to Father John and Mother Martha, aged forty and seventeen, respectively, let us trust that the none-too-young husband did not entertain the mistaken notions of those whose policy concerning wives is expressed in the saying, "Takem young, treatem rough, tellem nothing." But when his mother-in-law first visited the newlyweds at Mount Pleasant she was "moved with indignation" at the sight of her daughter, of all people, out at the creek washing clothes with the darkies. Let us suppose that her Martha was at the creek by her own choice. Time proved her an excellent housekeeper which included, no doubt, the oversight of her female slaves. Let us, furthermore, conclude that in due time instead of John's telling her nothing, she told him aplenty, in the better sort of way, as his counsellor and helpmeet. At any rate, when in 1807 John bought a bill of goods (the same bill is on display here today) from his merchant son-in-law, George Allison, among the items purchased were feminine necessities, dress goods and the like. John had undoubtedly been handed Martha's order and dutifully brought the same home from town, even as you and I

3 Published under the title, "The Nobles of Noblesburg," *ante*, 35: 133-156 (September, 1952).

and the other lords of creation in all the generations.

It is not known just when the word "old" was substituted for the name John and the name "McDonald" was suffixed by the words "had a farm," but that "Old McDonald had a farm" is factual prose that somehow got into a song along with the repetition of a lot of barnyard noises for local color. The truth is that this particular McDonald grew "rich enough to give us all a farm," or at least a little patch or two 'most anywhere around over this general region. Our Father John was very like the "Father of our Country," G. Washington, of whom it is said: "If he liked anything more than land, it was more land." At his death on January 17, 1815, John McDonald left real estate to his wife and children in amount of 5,911 acres, including 1,000 acres at Mount Pleasant, 1,000 acres in the adjoining Primrose Hill plantation, 1,111 acres at Mill Creek (Hookstown), 2,000 acres at West Logstown, now Aliquippa, and 800 acres across the state line in Brooke County, Virginia, now West Virginia. His will was witnessed by Judge James Allison and is on file in the courthouse at Washington, Pennsylvania. His specie wealth increased a lot after the Revolutionary War. He was one of the substantial depositors and perhaps also an incorporator of the Bank of Pittsburgh, which opened its doors in November, 1814 (chartered in 1813-14) as he held \$15,000 worth of its capital bank stock (a large amount for those days). He also owned human chattel to the extent of fourteen negro slaves.

John McDonald figures somewhat in the minutes of the Yohogania County court, where his name is misspelled in careless transcription to read "McDaniel." He was a gentleman justice of the court. He was also a ranger on the frontier during the War for Independence. I suggest that a military marker be placed at his grave here in Candor churchyard. He was one of the founders of this Raccoon Presbyterian Church wherein we meet today, which dates, I believe, from 1778.⁴ He also is credited, if I am correct, with one of the largest cash gifts made in his time to the support of the new Jefferson College, Canonsburg.

4 Margaret S. Sturgeon, in her *History of Raccoon Presbyterian Church*, states on page one: "Ours is one of the oldest churches in Western Pennsylvania, as proved from the following extract culled by permission from the private journal of Rev. Jno. McMillan, D.D., which reads as follows, '1778—1st Sab. of Dec., preached at Raccoon from Rom. 8, 6. Rec'd £7 - 10 - 6.'" Similar entries indicate that McMillan preached "at Raccoon" in June, 1780, and "at Mr. McDonald's place" the following month.

When Martha Noble McDonald died in 1833, at Noblestown, she was buried by the side of her husband, but it was only this summer of 1950, at the expense of several of her descendants, that an inscription was cut below Father John's in the large and well carved table-stone that covers both graves. Well do I recall the Sabbath morning when, in company with "Uncle Jimmy" or John James McDonald, I came as a boy to this church and saw on the ancient tombstone a freshly cut (with a horseshoe nail, likely) pair of initials, "M.K." Those were the name-letters of one of the biggest-hearted, best-natured, thoroughly uninhibited and most daring youngsters of the Tom Sawyer sort that this parish has ever had the honor to produce. He was from early youth a member of this church of which he became a trustee. For years he came here on Sabbath days to sit soberly among his boys. At his death, God bless his memory, he, Mark Kelso, was lauded as one of the most substantial citizens of this part of the county. May I remark that there likely appeared marks thereafter on Mark's "thereafter," but, be that as it may, Mark made his *mark* that day. Before long the initials were sanded out, but the depression made in the stone had to be reckoned with by the recent cutters.

The first coming of the stork to Father John and Mother Martha was on this wise. The "merry month of May," 1779, was not so merry on Robinson Run. Marauding Indians from Ohio were expected that spring. Lack of militia protection at Fort McDonald, a stockade for the protection of the local settlers and their cattle built near John's cabin, invited tragedy. As late as 1781, according to relevant records in the *Washington-Irvine Correspondence*, the fort was not adequately munitioned or garrisoned. Fearing a raid in the dark of the moon of this particular night with a blessed event impending, a hurried trip was made on horseback by John and Martha the four or five miles northwestward through the woods to the protection of Sister Mary Noble Beelor's home here in what is now Candor village. This home, a stockaded farmhouse, was that of Captain Joseph Beelor, his mentioned wife and family. It is listed as Fort Beelor in the *Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania*, by George D. Albert, and was located, according to the Reverend Van Emmon Stevenson, who was a lifelong resident of this community, across the field in front of Raccoon Church over to the southeast at the western edge of the present manse property. The next day, May 10, 1779, twin sons were born to the McDonalds and named Andrew and William.

(1) *Andrew McDonald*, the elder twin, graduated at Jefferson College on October 27, 1803. He studied theology for three years with Doctor McMillan and became a licensed Presbyterian minister in 1806. Three years as a missionary to the Indians were followed by pastorates at White Oak Flats, now Mt. Carmel Church, Aliquippa, conjointly with Sharon Church, Carnot. Later he relinquished Sharon and served as first pastor at the Sewickleyville Church, now the prominent First Presbyterian Church of Sewickley. The location of his manse required by way of going to church a three-mile horseback ride to White Oak Flats and at least that far by horseback to Sewickleyville when the river could be forded. Otherwise he went by rowboat. He is the accredited founder of the present day Mt. Carmel, Sharon, and Sewickley Presbyterian churches. On April 3, 1810, when he had been in settled charges for about a year, the Reverend Andrew, aged thirty-one, was married to Caty Riddle, aged nineteen, by her minister, the Reverend Joseph Patterson, first pastor of Candor Church, of which the bride's father was a ruling elder. For a honeymoon, the newlyweds journeyed to Baltimore in their own carriage to visit the McDonald relatives in that place. They went to housekeeping at "Cornfields," a plantation of 1,000 acres which was willed to Andrew at the death of his father in 1815. Cornfields was so named because of the cultivation of corn there by the Logstown Indians from across the river, before the coming of the white man. The house occupied was built by the groom the year of the wedding. It was popularly called "the Log-Manse" and was much admired because of the long, pillared porch on the east side facing the river, which at that point flows almost directly north. The painting by David Clark Allison, exhibited here today, is according to a description of the Log Manse by Mrs. Stella McDonald Moore, who in her childhood knew the place well. Cousin Helen Urling of Baden owns some of the literary effects of the Reverend Andrew McDonald. A list of the books in her possession, together with certain lectures and sermons of his preparation and authorship, were filed by me some years ago in the libraries of the Western Theological Seminary and the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Andrew was opposed to owning slaves but retained two trusted paid negro servants, Cuffy and Betsy, who lived in a cabin near the manse and served three generations of McDonalds. Andrew McDonald died in 1846 at the age of sixty-seven years and is buried in Mt. Carmel churchyard. His wife, born in 1791, died

in 1877, aged eighty-six years.

(2) *William McDonald*, born on May 10, 1779, and known as "Twin William," was married at the age of twenty-two years to Phoebe Williams on December 8, 1801. They occupied land owned by his father and lived upstream from Andrew about two miles. He was a live-stock dealer who was evidently too honest for his own good, for his financial affairs became sadly involved before the death of his father. For that reason (imprisonment for debt, being the rule of the day) the 1,000-acre patrimony, otherwise his, was willed to his children instead. "Twin William" was a member of the White Oak Flats Church, of which his brother was pastor. He died in 1852 at the age of seventy-three years. His wife, Phoebe, was a descendant of Josiah Williams and his wife Phoebe Rodgers, who was in turn descended from "Rodgers, the Martyr." This man was likely the Reverend John Rodgers, burned at the stake at Smithfield, England, on February 4, 1555, the first Protestant martyr to suffer under the persecutions of Queen Mary's reign. He was survived by his wife and eleven children.⁵ For a century the Andrew and William McDonald families have had much to do in developing Beaver County, Pennsylvania. In 1906, the Jones and Laughlin Steel Company bought the lands inherited by the twin brothers. The main office building of the company is built near the site of the Log Manse.

(3) *John McDonald, Jr.*, born on July 1, 1781, entered Canonsburg Academy (of which institution Judge James Allison was the first president of the first board of trustees)⁶ on January 3, 1800, and graduated on September 9, 1804. He began reading law on October 31, 1804, in the Pittsburgh office of James Ross, Esquire, following the latter's long service as one of Pennsylvania's first two United States senators. John McDonald, Jr., was admitted to the bars of both Washington and Allegheny counties, and was known as a brilliant lawyer. He was married on February 7, 1804, to Mary Morrow and went to house-keeping in a brick house owned by his father on Water Street, Pittsburgh, then in a desirable residential section of the town. He became president of the Bank of Pittsburgh, which until it closed its doors during the Great Depression of the 1930's was advertised as the oldest bank west of the Allegheny Mountains. On the first board of directors

5 *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, ch. 22.

6 Joseph Smith, *History of Jefferson College*, 34 (Pittsburgh, 1857).

of this institution were John McDonald, Sr., George Allison, the president's brother-in-law, and Colonel George Vallandigham, an uncle by marriage to his mother's sister. This uncle is represented here today in Ralph and Besse Allison who are his great-great-grandchildren. John, Jr., died on May 20, 1831, at the early age of fifty years. On the following day the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas adjourned "for the purpose of enabling the members of the Bench and Bar to attend the funeral of the deceased," and as a mark of respect for "a highly esteemed member of the profession."⁷ The funeral service was held in the First Presbyterian Church on Wood Street, and burial was made in the churchyard. Later his remains were removed to Allegheny Cemetery. His surviving daughter was Martha McDonald Smith, whose descendants live in Princeton, New Jersey, and New York City. A son, Zantzinger McDonald, left no heirs.

(4) *James McDonald*, the fourth son of John and Martha Noble McDonald, was born on August 29, 1783. He became a colonel of militia and that title attached to him. He inherited the 1,000-acre estate adjoining the Mount Pleasant plantation to the west on Robinson Run. When the Pittsburgh-Virginia railroad (now the Panhandle Division of the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad) was laid through the property in 1852, the station established there was named Primrose after the James McDonald home called Primrose Hill. "Beautiful for elevation" and a "joy to behold" is the situation of that big sixteen-room house with family and servant quarters. Conspiring to please the eye are the type and arrangement of buildings, the brook below the hill skirting the house grounds to the east, the spring, the sloping lawn and the driveway, the stately old trees, the mammoth sycamore at the springhouse, the pines and the elms. In essential points the place is the same today as it was a hundred years ago. It stands now as it was then without a rival as an attractive country estate (unless it be Mount Pleasant with its golf links) along the railroad right-of-way from Pittsburgh to Steubenville. The house was remodeled to its present proportions in 1892 or 1893. There are still extant pictures of it before that time. Whether this original brick house was the one to which Colonel James brought his bride, Julianne Cooke (born December 17, 1799), after their marriage in 1827, I do not know.

The master of the plantation was forty-nine years old in 1832

⁷ *Pittsburgh Gazette*, May 24, 1831.

when he engaged my maternal grandfather, Samuel Kennedy, as a farmer. The Kennedys lived in a tenant house, which was standing in my boyhood on the ridge back of the homestead, but which has long since been torn down. There was formed that year a friendship that lasted through three generations of the Kennedys and the James McDonalds and was strengthened when my mother, Nancy Jane Kennedy (1849-1931), married the colonel's grandnephew, Jesse Spencer Allison (1846-1911). The Kennedys in 1832 were recently from Ireland, the husband from Belfast, the wife from Londonderry. My grandmother, Lillie Anne Hamilton, was of genteel ancestry and a direct descendant of Captain Hamilton, the defender of Derry in the siege of 1669.⁸ The Kennedys, though in humble circumstances, were never considered by the family in the big house as "just hired hands." And even after the Kennedys had moved downstream to the old Gabriel Walker place, near the present Rennerdale, where my mother was born in 1849, there was friendly intercourse between them and both Colonel James and the Squire Edward McDonalds.

At Primrose Hill, the colonel and his lady maintained the easy, hospitable ways of life, in the manner of the slaveholding society of the old ante-bellum South, and their four children were brought up in that tradition. Financial income was largely from sheep and general farming supplemented by revenue from rents, bonds, and mortgages. There were two daughters and two sons: Martha Melvina, born on October 9, 1828; Margaretta Jane, born on June 27, 1833; John James Cooke, born on March 5, 1839; and Noble, familiarly known as "K," born on March 13, 1841. This letter was adopted by Noble as a first name. It was "simply that and nothing more," not even a dot to make it an initial. This explanation I received from the "letter man" himself. Into this home was brought as a baby at the death of his mother, who was a niece of Aunt Julianne's, Silas Gault, born April 13, 1853, who while never adopted as a son was thereafter considered a member of the James McDonald household, being familiarly known as "Gotty." In 1855, the noted artist, David G. Blythe, spent several weeks at Primrose Hill and painted portraits of Colonel James, his wife and their four children. These portraits, the property of our cousin, Mrs. Lucy Mitchell Laughlin Gault, now hang in the galleries of the Butler Art Institute of Youngstown, Ohio.

8 See "The Walls of Derry" and "A Man's Foes."

Fortunately, at the time when the family, consisting then of Melvina, John James, K, and "Gotty," were beginning to be "land poor," very valuable deposits of oil, gas, and coal were found underlying much of the 1,000-acre tract, and oil drilling was begun about 1893. Margaretta Jane had died nearly twenty years before, on July 24, 1874, and Melvina, "Viney," did not live to enjoy the benefits of this "find," for she died on July 5, 1893, at the Columbian Exposition, or first World's Fair, in Chicago. But John James lived until October 27, 1914, and K until July 21, 1920. Meanwhile, ninety-seven gas and oil wells were brought into production on the James McDonald property.

For many years K made horses his hobby and bought and bred but seldom sold blooded racing stock. He trained on a private one-mile track in the meadow before the homestead. At one time he was in possession of forty-eight head. John James was of scholarly tastes, a book-lover though not a great reader, and made himself responsible for the commissary and other matters of housekeeping and entertaining. The house was elegantly furnished throughout. There were lovely antiques and imported chinaware. Most of the time both a housekeeper and a caretaker were employed. During much of my boyhood Jimmy Walker and wife served in these capacities. The dairy farm across the road toward the east was managed separately, the Seabrights being the farmers there for years.

K was the director of two banks, the First National of McDonald and the First National of Burgettstown, and John James, I believe, had a seat on the Pittsburgh Stock Exchange. In all their business and social relationships they were men of probity and honor. Both were of affable and kindly disposition and were beloved by children and young people. They maintained family prayers and were adherents of Raccoon Church.

From 1910 onward the brothers were in Erie most of the time. There K put up for several years at Hotel Fischer, and for a considerable period John James was a patient in St. Vincent's Hospital, where he died. The first Mrs. Silas Gault, "Cousin Annie," was a native of Erie and in her last years she and her husband had taken up residence there. Silas Gault, who died on September 13, 1933, is survived by his second wife, our cousin, Mrs. Lucy Mitchell Laughlin Gault of Hookstown and Erie. By terms of a will read in the back parlor at Primrose Hill on the day of K's funeral, it was shown that Silas Gault fell heir to all of K's property whatsoever. Coal to a considerable amount was sold for a

price reported to be in excess of \$600,000. Before his death, Gault lost the entire estate and died practically penniless. Mrs. Lucy Gault, as the last mistress of Primrose Hill, has preserved many valuable keepsakes, irreplaceable records and little papers, personal pictures and such, along with the portraits by Blythe. I am indirectly indebted to her for certain "memorabilia" in my possession.

From 1910 on until the deaths of both of the brothers I maintained at their invitation friendly written correspondence with them. My brother Samuel Kennedy Allison as a boy spent weeks at a stretch at Primrose Hill and my sisters Virginia or "Dott" and Mary (now Mrs. H. B. Scott) and myself were frequent house guests there, especially on national holidays during our childhood and youth. Our parents also were close friends of "Jimmy and K" and welcome guests in their home. Mrs. Laughlin (later Mrs. Gault) and her two sons, Claude and James, were guests who made annual visits to Primrose Hill during my boyhood days. For a number of years, or from my eighth to my sixteenth year, the Jesse Allisons were Thanksgiving or New Year's Day guests at Primrose and these visits were reciprocated by the brothers when they came the same years as Christmas Day guests to the Allison home. On one or two occasions, Cousin Lizzie McLean, who wrote and read the sketch at the reunion of 1900, was at Primrose with us at Thanksgiving. My Uncle John Kennedy, for years a ruling elder in Raccoon Church, at the colonel's request was with the latter when he died on April 3, 1863. The colonel's wife, Julianne Cooke McDonald, survived him until April 29, 1881.

The James McDonald family is now extinct and the mortal remains are buried in the family lot in Candor churchyard. I write as one of the closest friends John James C. McDonald ever had. My brother Samuel was even more intimately acquainted with both of the McDonald brothers to whom he was very dear: a request for his legal adoption by one of the brothers was refused by our mother. It is because of this close friendship that I have written thus at length concerning the James McDonalds.

(5) *Margaret McDonald*, born on October 18, 1785, was married to Dr. Robert Glenn and went to housekeeping in the log house at Noblestown that was occupied by Glenns only, until it was torn down according to the terms of the will of Miss Margaretta Glenn, the last survivor of her McDonald-Glenn line, who died in 1924. Careless of

family heirlooms, "Ettie" abandoned, to be broken in her chicken yard, a turkey-plate first owned by Martha Noble McDonald and the match of the one now owned, through inheritance from the same Mother Martha, by Virginia Longwell. It was with her daughter, Margaret Glenn, that Mother Martha made her home after Father John's death. A grandfather's clock, reputed to have belonged to John McDonald, Sr., was rescued from destruction by the house-razers and now belongs to cousin Sue Allison Cort.

(6) *Martha McDonald*, born on November 23, 1787, was married on December 19, 1805, at the age of eighteen years to George Allison, aged thirty-one, son of Associate Judge James Allison, aforementioned, and his wife, Mary Bradford, sister of David Bradford, Esquire, famous leader of the Whisky Insurrection of 1794. George Allison was established by his father in a general merchandising business in a building that stood on the southeast corner of Market Street at Third Avenue in Pittsburgh, on the site of the building still standing and occupied for years by the Gusky Clothing Store. George was a director of the then new Bank of Pittsburgh, of which his brother-in-law, John McDonald, Jr., was president. The family attended the First Presbyterian Church where the son, Alexander McDonald Allison (1819-1878), the grandfather of the Allison-Kelso-Lesnett kinsfolks, was baptized by the pastor, Doctor Francis Herron. After several years in residence in Pittsburgh, the family moved to Florence, Pennsylvania, thence to a farm inherited by Martha near Mill Creek or Hookstown, Beaver County. After her husband's death in 1840, Martha moved to Noblestown where she lived in a little brick house now incorporated in the store and dwelling on the upper side of Main Street at the corner of the road separating it from the Catholic Church property. There Martha died of cholera in 1855.

Nearby on the same street stands the Methodist Church which was designed and built over fifty years ago by her great-grandson, Cousin Edward Allison. It was his first contract for a church building and is a frame structure in excellent preservation. The record of sound workmanship there begun by the architect in the ecclesiastical field has been expanded to include such great and famous metropolitan churches as the First Baptist and the First Congregational churches of Los Angeles. And, as representative of the Allison brothers' achievements in the field of educational institutions stand the buildings of the University

of California at Los Angeles. Nearer to their old home and testifying to the genius of Cousins "Ed and Dave" are some buildings on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh, and the Watson Memorial and Bethel Presbyterian churches of the Presbytery of Pittsburgh. Martha McDonald Allison lies buried in Candor churchyard as does also her husband George and some of their children, including Alexander McDonald Allison. A photo in India ink, likely taken from a daguerreotype, the property of Sara Lesnett, is on display here today, as is also a daguerreotype of George Allison which belongs to me. Martha Tarvin Noble's turkey-plate, aforementioned, belongs to Martha McDonald Allison's great-granddaughter, Mrs. Martha Virginia Lesnett Longwell, the sixth Martha to own it.

(7) *Alexander McDonald*, a brother next younger to Martha, was born on January 6, 1790, and was three years her junior. It would seem that Alexander spent considerable time or else practically lived as a boy at the Allison home, where his board was paid by his father. At least an amount was specified for that purpose in the settlement of a receipted account now in my possession. He was the only immediate descendant of John, Sr., and his wife, surviving to adulthood, who had no children. His wife, whose name is unknown, lived less than a year after their marriage. His grandnieces, Elizabeth McLean and Martha Allison Lesnett, remembered seeing a beautiful ring which "Uncle Alex" said had belonged to his wife. He died in 1864. A daguerreotype of him on display here today belongs to me, a descendant of his namesake. The name Alexander deriving from this man was borne by my grandfather, Alexander McDonald Allison, my half-brother, Alexander Marshall Allison, several of my Allison cousins, among them the late Rev. Dr. Alexander B. Allison and his son the Reverend Alexander B. Allison, Jr., and my own son, Lieut. Samuel Alexander Allison, "a Triple-Threat Man" of the U.S.A.A.F.⁹

(8) *Edward McDonald*, the youngest son of Father John and Mother Martha was born on August 13, 1792, at Mount Pleasant as were all of the family except the twins. He married Margaret Nesbitt and lived on at Mount Pleasant, which 1000-acre homestead he inherited. His wife died in 1839, and sometime later he married Margaret Snodgrass. He was a member of the Pennsylvania Legislature and was

⁹ Now Major Samuel Alexander Allison of the Strategic Air Command.

locally known as "Squire." He was also active in the work of the Presbyterian Church. His property, by direct descent of inheritance, is now owned by Mr. Nesbitt McDonald, who is here today. The town of McDonald was named for the Edward McDonalds, upon whose land much of the town was laid out.

(9) *Elizabeth McDonald*, born on July 20, 1794, was married to John Mitchell at the home of her sister Martha Allison in Florence. Her home in Mill Creek, where she went to housekeeping, is still standing. Mrs. Mitchell's senior surviving descendant is her granddaughter, Mrs. Lucy Mitchell Laughlin Gault of Hookstown and Erie.

(10) *Rachel McDonald*, was born on June 23, 1797, and is believed to have lived less than a year.

(11) *Mary McDonald*, the youngest daughter and child of Father John and Mother Martha, was born on July 22, 1801. She became the wife of the Reverend William Nesbitt, who for many years was pastor of the Presbyterian Church of New Bedford, Pennsylvania. Some of the Nesbitt descendants are in Canada and others live in Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

While it was my intention to deal only with ancestors had in common by us who are attending this reunion, I have for the sake of the record dwelt at length upon the James McDonalds who are not likely to be written about again by anyone who was as intimately acquainted with them as myself.

Note: Having read and "ad-libbed" to the end of the record of John McDonald, Jr., the writer engaged in extempore reminiscence and comment about the James McDonalds, then closed as follows: "Time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barok, of Samson also and of Jephthah, of Margaret, Martha, Alexander, Edward, Elizabeth, Rachel and Mary. 'Many other things did "these worthies" which are not written in this book,' but these are written that ye may believe that we are 'Some Punkins!'"