When outgoing President Obama made his last speech to the Democratic National Convention earlier this year, he surprised the audience by focusing on his roots. That is, on the white side of his family. He had discussed his African father many times, but had been mostly silent on his mother’s extended family.

“See, my grandparents – they came from the heartland. Their ancestors began settling there about 200 years ago. I don’t know if they had their birth certificates, but they were there.

“They were Scotch-Irish mostly – farmers, teachers, ranch hands, pharmacists, oil rig workers. Hearty, small-town folks. Some were Democrats, but a lot of them, maybe even most of them, were Republicans – the party of Lincoln.”

He made it clear to the audience that it was his mother’s family that really shaped his life. “America has changed over the years,” he said, “But these values that my grandparents taught me – they haven’t gone anywhere.”

Each passing census count shows the number of Americans who classify themselves as being Scotch-Irish is shrinking. In fact this past year the census bureau announced they will begin lumping the Scotch-Irish into the “Other Groups” category. It seems the Scotch-Irish are now mostly calling themselves American.

By comparison, Irish-America seems to be flourishing as an ethnic group, which is revealed to all of us every St. Patrick’s Day with parades that seem to be growing. However, upon closer examination of the census data it can be seen that they too are following the same trajectory of decline, but are just further back on the curve.

A couple of weeks ago I attended a sentimental gathering in lower Manhattan about the “Irish in Inwood.” Inwood is a community in the northwest corner of the island of Manhattan that was once a bastion of Irish-American strength, but today few Irish remain there. The Irish-American presenter Edward Hagan, has just published a book called “To Vietnam in Vain” where he tells of an extended tour as an intelligence adviser in Vietnam and upon his return finding that Inwood had totally changed. His friends had all gone. It was interesting during the questions and
answers portion to hear members of the audience shout out to the questioner: “And where did you live?” The meeting quickly turned into an impromptu telling of bygone answers portion to hear members of the audience shout out to the questioner: “And where did you live?” The meeting quickly turned into an impromptu telling of bygone mutual experiences from their youth. It was fun.

Irish Americans are changing in their political affiliation as well. They are moving steadily from being a solid and dependable Democratic voting block, over to the Republican and Conservative parties. In essence, becoming political allies with the bulk of the Scotch-Irish. Fox Network’s prime time lineup of O’Reilly, Kelly and Hannity provides quick evidence of this point and there is little of Irish heritage discussed by these hosts.

It is not just a migration issue either. More and more Irish-Americans are choosing to identify themselves as just Americans and responding as such in the census.

Remembering and cherishing the Scotch-Irish legacy in America is what our Society is all about. It is a noble pursuit. The contribution of the Scotch-Irish to the American dream must not be lost. Your membership is an expression of your support for that legacy.

Bill McGimpsey
President, Scotch-Irish Society of the USA

Scotch-Irish Flags & Emblems

We have received inquiries to the Society about what is the official flag or emblem that best represents the Scotch-Irish in America. So we went checking our records.

We were surprised to find little research seems to have been done in this area. We could find nothing either past or present.

We hope to address this topic in our next newsletter. If you have any information on the subject, please make it known to us. If we receive your information early enough, we will include it in our findings. It can be just a listing of data or in a written narrative. Whatever the form, we will be happy to receive it.

he donated land so that the first proper Catholic church could be built.

The Catholic church in longest continual use in the state was built for the Irish miners of Idaho City, at one time the largest city in the Pacific Northwest. While poking around the old pioneer cemetery in Idaho City, about an hour’s drive northeast of Boise, I came upon the large grave marker of Mr. Donahue, also of Co. Tyrone.

Other than being pleasantly surprised to find another Ulsterman being so important in the heritage of my state, I was pleased to see that we know exactly where he was from. Looking closely, I could see “Ballygawley” carved on the grave marker. Ballygawley is about 25 miles from the Ulster American Folk Park, host of the 2016 Ulster American Heritage Symposium.

In fact, a woman who served as our tour guide on a field trip to Dublin on the final day of the symposium, lives in Ballygawley and was in the audience to hear my talk about fellow resident Mr. Donahue, who played a large role in the mining of the Pacific Northwest United States in the 1800s. Fintan Mullan and his colleagues from the Ulster Historical Foundation (UHF) often speak about the valuable information which can be gleaned from old grave markers. That was certainly the case with Mr. Donahue.

The symposium coincided with the end of the Ulster Historical Foundation’s family history summer school, and several summer school participants also attended the symposium in Omagh. The UHF’s William Roulston was also a prominent participant in the symposium. As always, the Centre for Migration Studies and the Folk Park were wonderful hosts. As for the future of the symposium, we heard that three institutions had graciously volunteered to serve as hosts for the next symposium in 2018, when it crosses the Atlantic to be held in North America again.

For the first time ever, a Canadian location (Toronto) was chosen. Those at the 2016 symposium will remember several talks about Ulster immigration to Canada, including Mark McGowan’s “Orange, Green, and Khaki: The Making of the 208th Toronto Irish Battalion and the Religious Politics of the Great War” and Patrick Ireland’s “Roads of Remembrance: Reviving Irish Heritage in Rural Southern Québec.”

Some long-time attendees of the symposium were absent, but not forgotten. New friends were made and future collaborations generated. Two years ago, when the symposium was at both Quinnipiac University in Connecticut and in Athens, Georgia, I remember taking advantage of this opportunity for collaboration, and teamed up with Patrick Ireland (whose 2016 presentation is mentioned above). Since then, we have worked on projects together, and have co-authored “Ongi Etorri Etxera (Welcome Home): A Gathering of Homecomings. Personal and Ancestral Memoir,” that will be published in 2017. It will appear in Tourism and Memory of Home, published by Channel View Publications in the UK. John Bieter, co-author of my symposium presentation both this year and in 2012, who is of both Irish and Basque heritage, is also a co-author on the upcoming article (hence the words in the Basque language in the title).
more about the cabin...

O’Farrell’s daughters gave the cabin to the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1910 on the condition that it be moved and preserved. The cabin was moved across the street to land donated by the Army and restored first in 1912 and again in 1957. In 2002, the cabin was fully restored to its 1912 condition. O’Farrell’s cabin is included in the National Register of Historic Places and today is maintained by the U.S. National Park Service and open to the public. It is a must see next time you visit Boise.

John O’Farrell was quite the adventurer. Born in Co. Tyrone, he went to sea at fifteen and sailed the seven seas, visiting exotic places like India, Africa, Australia, China, Japan, Hawaii and the Caribbean. Sailing to California in 1847 he caught gold fever and started leading mining adventures. His sailing days were not over, however. He then sailed back to England and fought in the Crimean War (1853 – 1856) and was awarded the Crimean Medal of Valor.

In 1859, while traveling in Louisville, Kentucky, he married a Cork woman, Mary Ann Chapman Lambert. With his 19-year-old bride, and her daughter from a first marriage, they traveled first to Colorado and then to Boise in 1863.

John O’Farrell passed away October 29, 1900, five months after the death of his wife.

On the Banks of Sweet Lough Erne

John Alexander

The folksong known alternately as “Rambling Irishman” or “Lough Erne” captured my imagination from the first time I heard it in the 1970s. A song of immigration from Ulster to America, its lyrics contained hints that it dated to the eighteenth century. For years I wondered: Could it preserve a folk memory of Scotch-Irish immigration? What were its origins?

The narrator in the song identifies himself as a “rambling Irishman,” born in Ulster, who has spent many a pleasant day “on the banks of sweet Lough Erne.” Unable to endure the poverty of his station in life, he sets sail for America. On board ship, he becomes discontented as he misses his “Nancy” in whose arms he spent the last night before he came on board. At length, the crew and passengers arrive “stout and healthy” on the other side, casting anchor “in the Bay, going down to Philadelphia.” The song concludes on an upbeat, celebratory note with lads and lasses linking arms – in “blue jackets and white trousers” and “blue petticoats and white flounces.”

After more than three decades, Len Graham’s wonderful book Joe Holmes – Here I am Amongst You: Songs, Music and Traditions of an Ulsterman (2010) answered most of my questions. In the early 1960s Graham’s friend Joe Holmes of Ballymoney, County Antrim, remembered his deceased neighbor Willie Clarke singing the song many years earlier...
but could recall only one verse. However, Clarke had a daughter, Mary McQueston, who had moved to Belfast in the 1930s and was still alive. Graham called on McQueston at her home in the York Street district and, sure enough, she remembered three more verses. Thereafter, Graham and Holmes sang “Lough Erne” together in their public performances. It was subsequently recorded commercially by the Boys of the Lough in 1973 and De Danann in 1975, and passed into the repertoire of the traditional music revival then underway. Thus was rescued a song that might otherwise have been lost forever.

Years later, Graham came across another version, titled “New York Bay,” sung by Bertha Lauderdale in the Ozarks, and field-recorded by the collector Max Hunter at Fayetteville, Arkansas, in 1961. Lauderdale sings a haunting modal melody distinct from yet related to that sung in Ulster. Lauderdale’s version also differs significantly in some details of the story. The narrator identifies his place of origin as County Monaghan. The ship is named “the grand brig Eliza.” The destination is not Philadelphia, but New York.

Professor Michael O’Leary of Boston College subsequently drew Graham’s attention to a three-stanza fragment of the song attributed to “the bard Jerry Monaghan” who emigrated in about 1790 with a group of about ninety families from the vicinity of Lough Erne. O’Leary’s source was probably Andrew Arnold Lambing’s History of the Catholic Church in the Dioceses of Pittsburgh and Allegheny (1880). Lambing writes that in the 1790s a group of Catholic immigrants from County Donegal established the Donegal colony in western Pennsylvania. Jerry Monaghan belonged to this group, and the song he wrote “may still be heard in many a Butler County home.” (The northern shore of Lower Lough Erne touches County Donegal at one point, so the narrator’s reminiscence of many pleasant days on its shores is entirely plausible.)

In 1792, under the command of a Captain Knight, the brig Eliza set sail from Londonderry bound for New York, but landed instead at New Castle, Delaware. Here Jerry Monaghan parted from the main group of immigrants and settled in New Jersey. Meanwhile, the families from Donegal traveled west along Braddock’s Road — now Route 40 — through Maryland into western Pennsylvania where, several years later, they founded the Donegal settlement. In 1806, they built Saint Patrick’s log cabin Chapel in Sugar Creek, the oldest still-standing Catholic Church west of the Alleghenies (not counting the much older French and Spanish missions further west). The song “Lough Erne” thus records the journey of a group of Ulster Catholics who left the shores of Lower Lough Erne in the early 1790s and became pioneer-farmers in the western Pennsylvania wilderness. They came, of course, as part of a larger migration. Their Scotch-Irish neighbors in western Pennsylvania had been their Ulster-Scots neighbors in what is today Northern Ireland. And so the journey described in “Lough Erne” became part of a shared immigrant experience that proved foundational to the heritage of the emergent United States.

Note: This is a shortened version of a lengthier article written some time ago. The De Danann recording (with vocals by Dolores Keane) can be found on Youtube by searching on the key words “De Danann Rambling Irishman.” The Max Hunter recording of Bertha Lauderdale singing “New York Bay” can be found at the Missouri State University website at: maxhunter.missouristate.edu.

John D. Alexander is an Episcopal priest who serves a parish in Providence, Rhode Island. A native of Belfast, Northern Ireland, and an immigrant to the United States in 1963, at the age of five, he has retained a lifelong interest in Scotch-Irish history and culture, especially in the context of musical traditions. John is a member of the Society.

General Pickens and Cowpens National Battlefield Site

Robert Montgomery

On the centennial of the establishment of our National Park Service, it’s appropriate to consider Andrew Pickens, born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, on September 13, 1739 of Scotch-Irish immigrants, commander of the South Carolina militia at the Battle of Cowpens on January 17,1781.

A major battleground during the American Revolutionary War, Cowpens National Battlefield Site was established March 4, 1929, and is located in the mountainous northwest corner of South Carolina. Andrew Pickens is the namesake for one ranger district of the Sumter National Forest. It began with land acquired in 1914 in what was called the Savannah Purchase Unit and became part of the Sumter National Forest in 1936.

Within the Cowpens visitor center is a museum containing American Revolution exhibits, a fiber-optic map depicting the American Revolution’s Southern Campaign, a battlefield walking tour and a reconstructed log cabin of an earlier farmer, Robert Scruggs. Cowpens is a native South Carolina term, referring to colonial open-range stock grazing operations, usually cleared areas of 100 to 400 acres.

In the 1750s Andrew Pickens and his family traveled the Great Wagon Road south, first settling in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia and then in the Waxhaws
Pickens has been portrayed as a gruff, strict Scotch-Irish man of few words. He was also a farmer, a justice of the peace and was nicknamed the Fighting Elder in the Presbyterian Church. Additionally, he was a South Carolina delegate to the Constitutional Convention. When the Revolution began, he sided with the Patriots and was a captain of rebel militia fighting in the 1775 Snow Campaign against Loyalists.

In 1776 Pickens battled the Cherokees, who were allied with the British and killing settlers. His militia won several battles and destroyed numerous Cherokee villages along the northern South Carolina line and later, as a major under General Andrew Williamson, in Georgia and North Carolina. In the spring of 1778, he was appointed colonel of a regiment of South Carolina militia. The British occupied Augusta, Georgia and were recruiting loyalist support throughout the area. On February 14, 1779 Colonel Pickens and his 300 man militia defeated a much larger force of 700 Loyalists under Colonel Boyd at Kettle Creek in Georgia. This victory slowed their recruitment but still the British dominated. In 1780 they took Charleston and then swept inland capturing most of the Southern Continental Army. The situation deteriorated to the point that Pickens and many other militia leaders surrendered to the British, promising to sit out the war under British authority.

But Pickens’ pledge didn’t last; in late 1780, after Tory raiders torched his home and looted his property, he told the British they had broken their agreement and he was resuming guerilla activities against them. He soon played a key role in defeating British Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton at the Battle of Cowpens, for which the State of South Carolina later promoted him to Brigadier General in the State militia.

One of the final major battles in the South was the Battle of Eutaw Springs on September 8, 1781. Under General Nathanael Greene, Pickens, while leading his militia, was shot off his horse by a bullet which struck his sword belt buckle. He was not badly wounded, but it agitated him later in life. Although the patriots suffered more casualties than the British, the battle was considered a draw; the British were forced to withdraw, forever losing control of the South.

In March 1782, Pickens led a force against the Lower Cherokees and burned several villages in Oconee County. After the Revolution Pickens became a member of the South Carolina General Assembly. Pickens later bought land and built a house he called Hopewell on the banks of the Keowee River in South Carolina. He became a mediator between the Cherokees and the sovereign American nation, sympathizing with Indian causes later in life. Pickens served in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1781-1794. He was later elected to the Third U.S. Congress, serving from 1793-1795. He died August 11, 1817 and is buried at Old Stone Church Cemetery in Clemson, SC.

The Battle of Cowpens

Robert Montgomery

The British campaign was weak in the South at the beginning of the American Revolutionary War, but by 1780, in a series of disasters for the Patriots, British redcoats captured Savannah, Charleston and Camden, and much of the Southern Continental Army was defeated or destroyed. The British intended to control the entire South, inspire Loyalists and motivate Patriots to switch sides.

In October, 1780, George Washington ordered Nathanael Greene to take command of the shattered Southern Army and stop General Cornwallis, British commander in the South, from seizing all of Virginia, Georgia and the Carolinas. General Greene split his army of 2,300 men and dispatched Brigadier General Daniel Morgan, a veteran of the French and Indian Wars, with 600 men, to impede British actions west of the Catawba River in South Carolina’s backcountry. Cornwallis reacted by sending Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton after Morgan. "Wipe him out," Cornwallis ordered. "Catch him and smash him!" Tarleton was only 26, but he was an able, if ruthless, commander. He was infamous for slaughtering any remnants of the Continental Army trying to surrender. His refusal to offer quarter led to the sarcastic term, "Tarleton’s Quarter.”

Tarleton’s forces consisted of his own legion of 450 men, plus a contingent of artillery, three battalions from British regular regiments and a small Loyalist regiment, all well-fed and well-equipped veteran troops, nearly 1,200 men. On January 17, 1781, loyalist scouts located Morgan’s army east of the Pacolet River and Tarleton began an aggressive pursuit, rapidly gaining ground in spite of heavy rains and flooded rivers. On January 16, with Tarleton reported to have crossed the Pacolet and only five miles away, Morgan and his army began hastily retreating north, but the flood-
swollen Broad River blocked them; any attempt to cross the river without boats risked them being butchered by the fast moving Tarleton.

Morgan decided to make a stand at the Cowpens, a well-known crossroad and frontier pasture. He summoned all militia units to hastily rendezvous there. Camp was made in a swale between two small hills. Throughout the night some 270 South Carolina militia commanded by Colonel Andrew Pickens, along with other volunteers, drifted into camp. The Patriot forces climbed to over 800 that night, according to Morgan.

Dawn was clear and freezing at the Cowpens on January 17. Morgan, alerted of Tarleton’s approach, suspected Tarleton would make his usual frontal assault, and placed his own troops in three opposing lines. Spread out behind trees and in the wild, rough grass on the lower of the two hills, crouched 150 Georgia and North Carolina sharpshooters. About 150 yards back were Pickens and his South Carolina militia. Behind them, upon the ridge, were Morgan’s main line of 290 disciplined Maryland Continentals under Colonel John Howard, buttressed on the right by 140 experienced Virginia and Georgia militiamen. Colonel William Washington had 80 dragoons with another 45 under Lt. Col. James McCall in readiness.

Tarleton, despite having marched his army since three in the morning, nevertheless exuded confidence; Morgan was trapped by the river behind him, and the open, sparsely-wooded grassland was perfect for Tarleton’s horsemen. He positioned his soldiers in a line across the meadow as expected, his artillery in the middle, and dragoons and cavalry on each side. Fifty green-jacketed dragoons began the battle, bounding up the grass toward the sharpshooters’ position. The marksmen, aiming especially at officers, picked off fifteen of the horsemen, causing the rest to reconsider and retreat. The sharpshooters fell back to join the second line, the militia commanded by Colonel Pickens.

Except for Tarleton’s own legion and the 71st Highlanders held in reserve, the British line began to advance. The militia and sharpshooters waited until the British were within 100 paces and then got off a volley, concentrated again on the officers. The British, confused, halted and fired sporadically. Morgan’s riflemen were trained to reload and fire while on the run, so while the British were standing still and reloading, the Carolinians hit them with another volley. As planned, the militia began pulling back behind Howard’s waiting third line.

The British cavalry galloped after the retreating militia, who dodged behind trees and parried saber slashes with their rifles. Suddenly, Washington’s cavalry thundered into the fray, seemingly out of nowhere. The surprised British dragoons were overwhelmed and lost 18 men in the clash. As they fled the field, infantry on both sides exchanged volley fire. The British infantry advanced in a trot, with beating drums and the shrill sounds of fifes. An order for the Continentals’ right flank to counter their advance was misunderstood as a call to retreat. Now Tarleton’s 71st Highlanders marched toward them as well, the skirl of bagpipes adding to the noise and confusion.
Patriot Surge: Moore’s Creek Bridge, February 27, 1776

William John Shepherd

Civil strife was rampant during the American Revolution, especially in North Carolina. As the war began, Loyalists, led by beleaguered royal governor Josiah Martin, were challenged by the Provincial Congress, which oversaw the organization of local patriot militia companies. Neighbor distrusted neighbor and discontent was further elevated by rumors of a British induced slave rebellion.

In June 1775, a fearful Martin fled to dilapidated Fort Johnson on Cape Fear. Shortly thereafter, he took refuge on a Royal Navy ship as patriots burned the fort. Despite this setback, Martin convinced British officials that royal authority in North Carolina and other southern colonies could be restored by arming recent settlers from the Scottish Highlands. It was also decided to send a British fleet to the Carolinas with troops from England, Ireland, and New York.

In January 1776, Martin issued a call to arms and many Highlanders, previously granted land in return for oaths of allegiance, mustered at Cross Creek (now Fayetteville) where two Scottish officers, Donald MacDonald and Donald McLeod, As companies along the line retreated, Morgan spurred his horse up to them and ordered them to face about, and fire in unison. From thirty yards, the fusillade stopped the British cold and a fierce Patriot bayonet counterattack devastated them. The reformed militia and cavalry reentered the fray, completely surrounding the British.

The British infantry began surrendering en masse. Tarleton and some of his army fought on, others refused and fled. Finally, Tarleton saw the futility of continued battle and scampered off with a handful of his men to bemoan the awful news to Cornwallis.

The battle was over in an hour and was a complete victory for the Patriots. British losses were staggering: 110 dead, 229 wounded and over 500 captured. Morgan lost 25 and 124 were wounded, according to most updated accounts. After a couple of stalemating battles, Cornwallis and his exhausted army abandoned the Carolinas and retreated to Virginia. On October 18, 1781, the British army surrendered at Yorktown.

Cowpens was an astounding victory, won over a crack regular British army. Morgan’s unorthodox but tactical masterpiece reinvigorated the Patriots in all the colonies and became the turning point of the war in the South.

Robert Montgomery currently lives in Tucson, AZ and is a member of the Society. His great grandfather emigrated from Ulster in 1846. Bob has been a free-lance writer for years, specializing in historical non-fiction articles for “The Highlander” and “Wild West” magazines, as well as “The Tombstone Epitaph,” a century-old newspaper voted a National Historic Site in Journalism. He is also adjutant of his local post of The Scottish-American Military Society, consisting of veterans of Scottish or Scotch-Irish descent as well as veterans of the British Commonwealth Armed Forces.

Continued on page 8.
Patriot Surge continued from page 7.

were recruiting for the British army. Martin decided to unite Highlanders and ex-Regulators (prewar rebels), many of whom were Scotch-Irish from the interior, with coastal loyalists.

Meanwhile, loyalist activity spurred North Carolina patriots, many of them Scotch-Irish, to action. Along the coast, two regiments of Continental Line were organized under Colonels James Moore and Robert Howe. There were also militia units from Wilmington under Alexander Lillington and New Bern under Richard Caswell, supported by contingents from Dobbs, Johnston, Pitt, and Craven counties.

The loyalist army left Cross Creek for Wilmington on February 15, 1776. Commanded by Donald MacDonald, they numbered about 1,600, but were lacking in sufficient arms. Moore, with about 1,000 well-armed patriots, supported by artillery, fortified the bridge over Rockfish Creek, blocking their path. Approaching Moore’s position, MacDonald’s primary objective was not to fight, but to deliver British army recruits by ship to New York. With some loyalists deserting and news of Caswell marching to support Moore, it was decided to return to Cross Creek, cross Cape Fear, and make for Negro Head Point on the coast.

In anticipation, Moore directed troops to block all routes to the sea, especially Corbett’s Ferry on the Black River. The loyalists crossed Cape Fear near Cross Creek at Campbellton, and as they approached the Black River on February 23, 1776, they learned Caswell was at Corbett’s Ferry, so an alternative crossing was found four miles above the ferry. Moore, who was at Elizabeth Town, ordered Caswell to march immediately to Moore’s Creek, saying he would be there with his force as soon as possible. Caswell, with some 800 men, joined Lillington, with 150, at Moore’s Creek Bridge, a good defensive position located in a swamp over a creek, about fifty feet wide and five feet deep, flowing into the Black River ten miles above Cape Fear.

A sick and exhausted MacDonald arrived at Moore’s Creek and unsuccessfully urged Caswell to submit to British authority. MacDonald did not favor attack, as a majority of men were without firearms, but he was also too ill to participate, so his more persuasive officers prevailed. The next day, February 27, 1776, with bagpipes and a Highland rallying cry of “King George and Broad Swords,” Donald McLeod and John Campbell led the dawn attack.

At the bridge, the loyalists discovered significant portions of the flooring removed and the girders greased with soft soap and tallow. Nevertheless, McLeod and Campbell led the Highlanders across the slippery bridge as patriot cannon

Scotch-Irish Cookery

Dixie McGee Benca

Scotch-Irish pragmatism — the willingness to adapt to new surroundings and “leap into the plow” of re-building a life — defines the American Spirit. They came from Ulster to the New World with their Calvinism, with their Protestant work ethic and with a cooking style ready to fuse with the bounty of the American colonial frontier. The voices of our Ulster ancestors still echo in our daily cooking. However, many traditional food ways are being lost to modern notions of healthy eating, convenience meals and easy dalliances with other cuisines.

I was born and bred in the back country of South Carolina where I reside to this day. Once upon a time I thought it a noble idea to homage my ancestors by opening a Scotch-Irish tavern. One week into the venture, I inadvertently became the chef. Two decades on, I’ve made it my mission to use the success of McGee’s Scot-Irish Pub to highlight the food history of the Carolinas. I am honored to have been invited to share my enthusiasm with the members of the Scotch-Irish Society of the USA.

We’ll start with an almost forgotten fermented dairy product... Clabbered Cream or Bonnie Clabber. The word comes from the Gaelic “bainne clabair.” The Huguenot French would have recognized it as a form of Crème Fraîche. In the American South, it was customarily eaten with molasses, cinnamon and nutmeg for breakfast. It was found in the backcountry of the Carolinas in the frontier settlements of the Scotch-Irish. The Reverend Charles Woodmason, an itinerant Anglican minister who travelled around Camden, South Carolina, in 1767 and 1768, noted that “the Scotch Irish there had only Indian Cornbread and water and ‘live wholly on butter, milk, and clabber.’”

Dixie McGee Benca is a chef and a business woman with an avid interest in the food history of the Carolinas. Dixie has co-owned McGee’s Scot-Irish Pub for two decades with her husband John. Out of the kitchen, she enjoys exploring the foothills of Southeastern United States, listening to Celtic music and working on her family farm in Starr, South Carolina. Dixie is a member of the Society and a new contributor to our newsletter.
and rifles opened fire. Both leaders fell mortally wounded, along with many Highlanders who were either shot from the bridge into the water or hit once they were across. Other loyalists, including the ex-regulators, fled. Patriot casualties were light, two wounded and one killed: John Grady of Anson County. Loyalist losses were estimated to range from thirty to seventy.

Too weak to travel, MacDonald was captured, surrendering his sword to Moore, who gracefully returned it. Many others were also captured, with nearly 850 men paroled at Smith’s Ferry, while thirty officers, including Donald MacDonald, were incarcerated in Halifax before being sent to Philadelphia. Another notable prisoner was Allan MacDonald, husband of Flora MacDonald, renowned for her role in the escape of ‘Bonnie Prince Charlie’ after the failed Jacobite rebellion in Scotland.

Meanwhile, Martin continued to insist to London that prospects of returning the colony to royal authority remained strong. Moore however, moved his regulars into Wilmington, but sent the militia home. When advance elements of the British fleet arrived in March 1776, no effective loyalist base in North Carolina remained. They proceeded instead to attack Charleston, South Carolina, where they met with a stinging defeat. The decline of British authority quieted fears of a slave rebellion and many loyalists sought shelter in the British strongholds of New York and Nova Scotia.

Moore’s Creek Bridge was a decisive factor in North Carolina being the first colony to vote for independence on April 12, 1776. It was also celebrated throughout the colonies as one of the first victories won by an American army, three weeks before George Washington drove the British out of Boston. Unfortunately, there were arguments over who was in command, Lillington or Caswell. Moore, though not present, was the real hero as he maneuvered troops effectively to force the loyalists to fight on ground of his choosing. While difficult to determine the Scotch-Irish percentage of the victorious patriot forces, their widespread presence is evidenced by the prevalence of such quintessential Scotch-Irish surnames as Allen, Alexander, Jackson, Johnstone, and Wilson.

William John Shepherd is a member of the Society and a frequent contributor to our newsletter. A Pennsylvania native, John has worked as an archivist in Washington, D.C., for 25 years. For further reading, he recommends Dr. Bobby Gilmer Moss’ “Roster of the Patriots in the Battle of Moore’s Creek Bridge” (1992), R.M. Dunkerly’s “Redcoats on the Cape Fear” (2012), and the numerous articles and books by Hugh F. Rankin.

Bonnie Clabber or Clabbed Cream

Prep time (30 minutes over 3 days)

Ingredients:

2 Qts Heavy Cream
(raw/unpasteurized cream, if you can get it, has more live culture)

1/2 Gal Buttermilk

Cheesecloth, Large Strainer and Catch Basin.

Process: Pour the heavy cream into a shallow pan and leave in a warm oven for 24 hours (just the pilot on or a large pan of water just off the boil – not more than 100° F). Remove from oven and add buttermilk (for the live culture). Allow to sit at room temperature (about 75° F) for another 24 hours. Strain Clabber through cheesecloth over a catch basin for another 24 hours and you’re done. Store your Bonnie Clabber in an air tight container for 2 to 3 weeks.

Note: Clabbered Cream can be eaten as is, but it is best used as a base for other dishes. Add sugar to taste for a Whipped Cream or Crème Fraîche substitute dessert topping or one of my favorite ways to enjoy: a generous scoop of slightly sweetened Clabbered Cream atop an oven fresh buttered Cornbread Pone drizzled with warm hot Pepper Jelly.

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Pickett’s Charge by Phillip Thomas Tucker

“Phillip Thomas Tucker cuts through the myths and misconceptions that surround Pickett’s charge to offer a fresh defense of Robert E. Lee and a probing examination of what happened that fateful afternoon. The result is a thought-provoking and eye-opening study of this pivotal moment in American history.”

Louis P. Masur, Rutgers University

What distinguishes this book from the many prior works on this battle is that it heavily emphasizes the key role of the Scotch-Irish on both sides at this turning point moment in American history. The book emphasizes and celebrates the Scotch-Irish heroics and sacrifice in the battle.

Men of Substance – The London Livery Companies’ Reluctant Part in the Plantation of Ulster by Robert Stedall


Stedall wrote, “James I believed that the London Livery Companies had the deep pockets and commercial acumen to see the advantage of his proposed plantation. Yet they were merchants not pioneers or farmers, and the project seemed highly risky to them. For years the Companies paid lip service to the role that was expected of them in an attempt to protect their huge investment, but they failed to establish the security that was needed for settlers and Gaelic Irish alike. ...With land in short supply and the population reduced to subsistence farming, many Irish, initially Presbyterian settlers, but later native Irish Catholics, left for America, Canada and the larger British cities. Thoroughly angry ‘Scotch-Irish’ played a leading part in supporting George Washington in the American Wars of Independence. Those who remained suffered deprivation from famine and disease on a dwindling supply of arable land. Unlike in England, the development of a manufacturing industry to absorb the oversupply of agricultural workers was discouraged. Successive protectionist governments in London feared the impact of cheap Irish goods undercutting English prices.”


Historians Dayton and Salinger follow Ulster-born Robert Love, as he walked through Boston’s streets (1765 – 74) warning newcomers “in his Majesty’s name” to depart the town in fourteen days. Love recorded the names of every “stranger” he encountered, along with their backstories, occupations, physical descriptions and future plans. Appointed warden at age sixty-eight, Love had an unusual capacity for remembering faces. He kept meticulous records of everyone he spoke to, including where they lodged and whether they were lame, ragged, drunk, impudent, homeless, or begging. The result is a vivid account of ordinary people on the move in a colonial city at a critical moment in history. Dayton and Salinger use Love’s inventory of Boston newcomers to weave a story of gender, the economy, Native Americans, African Americans, northern slavery and much more.

Mike Scoggins interviewed for “Paul and Nick’s Big Food Trip” Episode 6 – York County, South Carolina

In August, Paul and Nick headed to York County in the central region of the South Carolina Piedmont or “foothills” to cook for descendants of the influential Bratton family. They also visited the producer of one of the hottest chilli peppers in the world, got a taste of the Carolina peach and found out about the State’s tradition of “slow and low” barbecue.

I was interviewed on August 30 at Historic Brattonsville in McConnells, York County, SC, the site of the Scotch-Irish Bratton family settlement dating back to the 1760s. Brattonsville is also the location of the important Revolutionary War battle known as Huck’s Defeat or the Battle of Williamson’s Plantation, in which a battalion of Scotch-Irish Presbyterian militiamen defeated a heavily-armed British and Loyalist raiding expedition on July 12, 1780.

Paul and Nick also interviewed Bratton descendants Robert and Emma Hall at Brattonsville concerning their Scotch-Irish heritage. The following day, Paul and Nick prepared a mouth-watering BBQ meal at the home of York County’s nationally known barbecue entrepreneur, Dan “The Pig Man” Huntley. In addition to Robert and Emma, the chefs also played host to Bratton descendants Tommie Bratton and his family. The modern day Brattons reported that this was the best meal they had ever eaten!

Editor: Paul & Nick’s Big Food Trip is produced by Waddell Media, a producer of lifestyle formats and documentaries for the UK, Irish and International markets. This series follows the trail of Ulster-Scots who travelled and settled in the New World. In this series the chefs visit Virginia, North and South Carolina, East Tennessee and Washington D.C. The Society has been helping with contacts here in the U.S. but as of yet does not have access to the series. We hope to provide our members with a link sometime in the future. Past newsletter articles were written on Paul and Nick’s visit to Philadelphia, Huck’s Defeat and Historic Brattonsville and can be found on the Society website.
Dave Borland poses the question, “What is Scotch-Irish?”

I grew up and live in a hot bed of Scotch-Irish history, Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. People streamed across the Alleghenies in the 1700s seeking freedom and land as they vowed to escape the tyranny of both chosen landowners of the English government who promised land after time of tenureship (which didn’t happen) and a tyrannical religion imposed from London (which did happen). When Scotch-Irish pioneers crossed the mountains and arrived at the Point in Pittsburgh they found lands similar to where they had lived in Northern Ireland and in their original homeland of Scotland. There were rivers, hills and fertile ground to grow familiar crops. Water was also plentiful. They could grab some land, plant some crops, make some whiskey and worship as they pleased. It was Valhalla to those Scotch-Irish.

Over the centuries, they created one of the most powerful industrial areas in the world. They were joined in the nineteenth century by thousands of immigrants from Eastern Europe, with different faiths, with similar desires to live their own way and be free to practice their religions.

Today, this area is still robust, but the Scotch-Irish are almost unknown and I think I know why. I believe we are do’ers and not say’ers. I believe we are reticent about bragging about our accomplishments. I believe we are subtle, but productive, going about the business at hand. This land of mine and yours was created, stabilized and jettisoned into the nineteenth century by sheer will and the personal and joint accomplishments of the Scotch-Irish. But today, in our country, no one talks or writes (with the exception of the great Scotch-Irish writer from Pittsburgh, David McCullough) about the Scotch-Irish who were greatly responsible for shaping this bountiful century and the centuries since. I guess bragging is just not in our genes.

Member Karol Brown comments on Andrew Jackson

Regarding the article on Andrew Jackson by William John Shepherd, the main reason some people have been “un-admiring” of President Jackson was his forced removal of Native Americans, such as the cruel Trail of Tears, which went through several states. I have read some books about their part of our history. While people at the time may have been insensitive to the plight of “Indians” being sent from the only home they had ever known with very little other than the clothes on their backs, we today can only read their stories with horror, especially if we or some of our relatives are “part Indian.” It is not mere political correctness, as Mr. Shepherd says.

Hello members!

Do you have an opinion about something you read in our newsletter? We welcome your comments and opinions in a few lines for the member’s column. If you have more to say please consider writing an article. Without contributions from members the newsletter would not happen.

Old Hickory battered off the front of the twenty dollar bill

This is a follow up to my March 2016 article regarding politically correct pressure on the U.S. Treasury to remove Andrew Jackson from the $20 bill. On April 19, 2016, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew announced his surrender on the matter by stating Harriet Tubman, a worthy figure to be sure, would replace Old Hickory on the front of the $20 bill, with the seventh president being relegated to the back like a thief in the night. Unfortunately, unlike Alexander Hamilton, who is to remain on the front of the $10 bill, Jackson was not the subject of a recent musical sensation that might have won public votes in his favor.

Lew also announced civil rights and women’s suffrage figures would go on the backs of the $5 and $10 bills, respectively. While this idea has merit, it is inconsistent with the decision to move Jackson to the back of the $20 bill. This begs the question about images on the $1, $50 and $100 bills. Should not George Washington on the $1 bill be countered with slaves and Indians, U.S. Grant on the $50 with Confederates, and Benjamin Franklin on the $100 with dispossessed Tories? Ironically, the relevance paper money will have in an increasingly digital future marked by electronic payments is questionable at best.

William John Shepherd

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In this issue we highlighted two of our National Parks, Cowpens and Moore’s Creek, where the Scotch-Irish played an important role fighting for this country to become a nation. Scotch-Irish President Woodrow Wilson signed the act that created the National Park Service on August 25, 1916. It was a new federal bureau in the Department of the Interior that would be responsible for protecting the 35 national parks and monuments managed by the department at that time. Today the National Park System is comprised of more than 400 areas of national significance.

Woodrow Wilson served as president of Princeton from 1902 to 1910 before becoming President of the United States in 1913. In April of this year the Princeton University Board of Trustees announced that it would continue to honor Woodrow Wilson by keeping his name on its public policy school and a dormitory building.

Students protested to drop Wilson’s name from The Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and the residential hall Wilson College. Members of the Black Justice League, among others, said Wilson was racist in his attitudes and his policies. The Wilson Legacy Review Committee that was created following the protests acknowledges fully that Wilson was racist for his practice as a university president to prevent the enrollment of black students and the policies he instituted as U.S. president that resulted in again segregating the federal civil service.

Historians don’t dispute this characterization but point out that Wilson’s views need to be taken in consideration of a time when many Americans held similar views.

The university report calls for efforts to make the school more inclusive and present a more honest view of Woodrow Wilson.

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The Scotch-Irish Society of the USA is pleased to announce that the Eighth Biennial Scotch-Irish Identity Symposium will be held on Saturday, June 3, 2017, at the McCelvey Center, 212 East Jefferson Street, York, South Carolina. The theme for this symposium will be “The Scotch-Irish and the American Revolution.” Interested parties are invited to submit papers on this topic, or any other topic related to the history and culture of the Scotch-Irish in the United States, for inclusion in the symposium. For more information, please contact Scotch-Irish Society vice president Michael Scoggins at 803-818-6768 or micscoggins@chmuseums.org.