

Addenda to “Sam Wire and the Cow-boys”

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Researching is a never-ending process. So, even though you think you are finished, you never really are. This is particularly true when you publish an article, like “Sam Wire and the Cow-Boys,” where there are so many unanswered questions.

Since the article was first published and the PowerPoint presentation was put together, a number of interesting snippets of support documentation have started to surface. In some cases it has helped clarify things, and in others it only muddies the waters. The following is what has come in so far.

Commanding Officers of the 6th Connecticut Regt

Colonel William Douglas

1st January 1777 to 28th May 1777 (Died)

Colonel Return Jonathan Meigs

12th May 1777 to 1st January 1781

Lt. Colonel David Dimon

1st January, 1777 to 18th September 1777 (Died)

Lt. Colonel Ebenezer Gray

15th October 1778 to 1st January 1781¹



Mr. Edward Freedom, who was used to confirm the identity of Samuel Wire’s widow for her Federal pension application, had known Mrs. Wire since childhood. In his deposition, he related that he was a drummer for a time in the regiment of David Dimon, but did not say he served with Samuel Wire.²

In a letter to the Honorable Jonathan C. Black, Commissioner of Pensions, dated 5 April 1886, that I found in Samuel Wire’s pension file, Mr. L.C. Weir of Cincinnati, Ohio, was writing for genealogical information. He wrote that Wire “was present with the other American troops when the British burned the Church at Danbury, Conn.” Since the Danbury Raid took place in April 1777, and would have (presuming his wife was correct on his age) made Samuel Wire about 13 years old at the time.³

In searching for information on the first question about Wire’s possible service in the 6th Connecticut, I may have also answered the second:

The history of Fairfield, Fairfield County, Connecticut, from the settlement of the town in 1639 to 1818 contains information from Lt. Col. Dimon’s son, Ebenezer, dated 13 Jan 1841. Here he explains that the regiment’s original commander, Colonel William Douglas had taken sick and died soon after his appointment in 1777. So, the interim command of the 6th Connecticut fell to his father, Lt. Col. David Dimon, whose responsibilities included recruiting and readying the regiment for service. During this time Gen. Tryon’s forces moved on Danbury.

When the alarm was raised, Dimon assembled his local recruits for the 6th and put them in service harassing the British on their march. At the subsequent Battle of Ridgefield, CT, Dimon reported directly to Gen. B. Arnold. After these two events, the ranks of the 6th were filled and the regiment was posted on the NY/CT border under the command of Col. Return Jonathan Meigs.⁴ Lt. Col. Dimon, as discussed in the article, died of a bilious fever only a few months later.

Based on the above (discounting his age for now), there is a good possibility that Wire was among Dimon's recruits and he participated with them at the Burning of Danbury. As the 6th had not been officially mustered in yet, there is no record of them taking part in the battle. They were, apparently, just lumped in with all the local militia.

Shortly after the *Sam Wire and the Cow-boys* article was posted on Continental Consulting's website, I received an e-mail from Elizabeth Snow, Samuel Wire's 4th Great Grand Daughter. In it, she explained that Levi Candee "L.C." Weir, referenced above, was Wire's grandson. She also explained that Eunice Wire's father was not happy about her relationship with this young man, Samuel, who had few prospects. Her research indicated that the child, that forced their immediate marriage, must have died young, because all their surviving children were born after the war.⁵

The short muster roll of the field, staff, and company officers of the regiment that listed William Pike as the Coronet of Captain William Stanton's 6th Troop of the 2nd Dragoons in June 1781, also listed Lt. Aaron Rhea in an illegible entry. Rhea had been an ensign in the 1st New Jersey Regiment (1778-1780) prior to joining the regiment. Where, Pike, who was a Massachusetts's man, had climbed the ranks within the 2nd Dragoons since 1777.⁶

It is quite common for pension applications filed by widows of Revolutionary War veterans to be inaccurate or incomplete. Eunice Wire's is no exception, but this new piece of information is yet another instance confirming that the information she did provide is correct.

Thanks to the efforts of Mr. David Solek, I was reminded of an additional reference, dated in 1779, to a green uniform worn by another officer in the Westchester Refugees. Though, unlike Samuel Wire's unfortunate victim, this green uniform was trimmed with silver lace, and not gold.

Major Mansfield Bearmore was born on Throgs Neck and was the first major of Delancey's Refugee Corps, but afterward had an independent command. He lived in what was known as the Cornelius Leggett house about three quarters of a mile below West Farms, where he was captured by Colonel Armand.* To make sure of his prisoner, Armand secured him on his own horse behind himself. He was nearly six feet tall and wore a green uniform trimmed with silver lace. Like his former chief, his services were confined mainly to his native county and like him, he was known for his harsh treatment

of the inhabitants who inclined to the whig [sic] side. A few weeks later he was exchanged and returned to his old campaign practices.

* **Tarrytown Argus**, 7 January 1905.⁷

I am not sure of veracity of this documentation, but on the surface it certainly reinforces the information provided, by the interviewees in the McDonald Papers, of the rather eclectic attempt to uniform at least part of the Westchester Refugees.

Notes

- ¹ **Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of the Revolution, April, 1775, to December, 1783**, Frances B. Heitman, Reprint of the New, Revised, and Enlarged Edition of 1914, With Addenda by Robert H. Kelby, 1932, (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing company, 1982), here-in-after *Heitman*, 18.
- ² Edward Freedom Deposition, 30 January 1837 (W18441), (National Archives Microfilm Publication M804, 2,670 rolls, roll 2618), **Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, 1800-1900**, Record Group 15, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
- ³ Letter from L.C. Weir, 5 April 1886 (W18441), Revolutionary War Pension Files, Record Group 15, Roll 2618.
- ⁴ **The history of Fairfield, Fairfield County, Connecticut, from the settlement of the town in 1639 to 1818**, Volume 1, Mrs. Elizabeth Hubbell (Godfrey) Schenck, (New York, NY: Published by the Author, 1889), 445.
- ⁵ Elizabeth Snow, Rea7669@aol.com, "*Samuel Wire (Samuel Wire and the Cow-boys)*," 30 March 2008.
- ⁶ *Muster Roll of the Field, Staff & Company Officers of the 2d Regiment Light Dragoons Commanded by Col. Elisha Sheldon From the 12th of May 81 to the 2d of February 82 Inclusive*, (National Archives Microfilm Publication M246, 138 rolls, Roll 115, Jacket 12-1, Frame 307), **Revolutionary War Rolls 1775-1783**, Record Group 93, National Archives Building, Washington, DC; *Heitman*, 442 & 464.
- ⁷ **Westchester County During The American Revolution, 1775–1783**, Otto Hufeland (New York: [Privately Printed], 1926), 312. The **Tarrytown Argus** was a weekly newspaper published in Tarrytown, N.Y., 1867–1920.