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JOSEPH REED

York County, Pennsylvania 1774

Joseph Reed/Reid/Read was born in Ireland 27 November 1733 and died 19 October 1804. He married at York County, Pennsylvania 23 January 1765 Jeanette Brotherton, born in Ireland 3 December 1745 and died at Cross Creek, Washington County, Pennsylvania 27 January 1838.

Joseph Reed immigrated as a young child to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. German settlers there encouraged recent Scotch Irish immigrants to settle the frontier borders of the county as a buffer against the Indians. The Reeds settled in Martic township in the southwestern corner of present Lancaster County, the area where Conastoga wagons originated. The family soon spread across the Susquehanna River into York County.

Joseph bought land from his brother in York County in 1769, containing a sawmill built by George Orson. He was often referred to thereafter as Joseph Reed, Miller. He also was a farmer. In 1775 he was elected a member of the Committee of Safety for York County.

In 1776 Joseph Reed was Captain of the Militia and was elected to the Provincial Conference for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Delegates met at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia, June 15 to 25. They instructed delegates who would meet in July to vote to separate from Great Britain and raise an army.

In 1777 Joseph was elected Justice of the Peace for York County. When Howe invaded Philadelphia, the Capital was moved from there to Lancaster, then to York, Pennsylvania. During this time York County sent two militia companies, those of Reed and Graham, to winter with General Washington at Valley Forge. York County had two Captain Joseph Reeds from 1778 onward. One was a ferryman who died in 1782; the other was Joseph Reed, Esquire, Miller, the subject of our discussion. He became guardian of the first mentioned Joseph's children, at their request, and later purchased rights to operate the ferry across the Susquehanna. There was probably a relationship between them, however, they can clearly be distinguished through official

records. Joseph, the miller, became quartermaster of the York County Militia. Reportedly he was in charge of guarding the Hessian soldiers captured by Washington.

In 1779 Colonel Marshall requested Joseph Reed to transport Reverend Joseph Smith and his household across the Allegheny Mountains. He received two hundred acres of land for providing the wagon. Others went ahead to cut a trail as this was the first wagon to cross. His son-in-law, also Joseph Reed, drove the team, and remained in Washington County, married to Joseph's daughter, Agnes.

Joseph Reed was a Presbyterian. His wife came to America with her parents at the age of two. They had nine children: James, Nicholas, Margaret, Agnes, Jeanette, Esther, Joseph, Ann and William. After the Revolutionary War, they remained in York County where he operated the mill, ran the ferry, and farmed until his death. He was buried in the Chanceford, Pennsylvania Cemetery, his stone being clearly marked "Reid", the older, Scottish spelling. Two of the children remained there but Jeanette, the widow, and most of the children moved to the Cross Creek area of Washington County. Jeanette died there thirty-four years later, and was buried in Cross Creek graveyard.

Prior to the War, in 1774, Joseph took out a license to run an inn, along with his many other activities. Land records of 1779 show that he was still an Innholder in 1779.

Kelly Loyd Stewart 96-26