

Prologue

I've always wanted to use this photograph in a narrative, but only lately did the opportunity present itself with the discovery of Halsey and McDowell family histories mixed in with my own family memorabilia.



The young woman is Jennette Halsey 1872-1956, known to my family as Auntie Jennette. I was too young to remember her and she wasn't a blood relative--Auntie Jennette was my maternal grandfather's godmother. Though what I found of her life was interesting, it didn't really grab my attention.

I searched her ancestry a few generations back and came across the story of her great great grandfather, Robert McDowell 1761-1802. In the late 1780s, he brought his wife Margaret McCormick and their children from the strife-torn Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania to a peaceful life at the head of Cayuga Lake, where Ithaca, New York, now stands.

Read about the McDowells, Halseys and McCormicks; the account book of Lansing blacksmith Abraham Bloom; Robert McDowell's part in the Yankee-Pennamite War; and the identities of Jonathan Woodworth, Ira Stephens and Richard Loomis.

I've posted the "Story of the McDowell Family" that was mixed in with my own family's papers. There's a short paragraph devoted to a McDowell ancestor who, in 17th century Scotland, ended up with his head on a pike.

Nancy Ettensperger
June 2025
AncestorsandOthers.net

**“Auntie” Jennette
and her
Great Great Grandfather Robert McDowell**



Jennette Halsey 1872-1956

This lovely young woman is Alice Jennette Halsey, the only child of Jonathon Gosman Halsey 1847-1931 and Alice Howard 1853-1899. Jennette was born August 21, 1872. She was baptized at St. John's Church in Ithaca, NY.

Jennette's father, known as John G. Halsey, is a child of William McDowell Halsey 1811-1881 and Eliza Gosman 1822-1899. This couple raised their children at 308 Cayuga Street in Ithaca, now known as the Beebe-Halsey House. Two other children of this marriage, who feature in this narrative, are Nicoll Halsey 1845-1921 and Jean Louise Halsey 1857-1952.

Moving back up the tree, the parents of William McDowell Halsey are Nicoll Halsey 1782-1865 and Euphius McDowell 1784-1870, of the Halsey House in Trumansburg, NY.

Euphius is a daughter of Robert McDowell 1761-1802 and Margaret McCormick 1760-1835 who came to Ithaca in the 1780s when it was known as Ulysses Township.

* * *

In 1892, Jennette married Dr. J. A. McGaughey and the couple lived in Chicago, where, in 1897, my maternal grandfather, John I. Pearce, was born.

At his birth, my grandfather's mother was attended by Dr. McGaughey. My grandfather wrote: *At the time of my birth, my mother was critically ill and Aunt Jennette took me to her home, until Mother was able to look after me.* A bond was formed and “Auntie” Jennette became a life-long part of the Pearce family.

In 1923, Jennette and her second husband, Ives Levi Lake, witnessed the marriage of my grandparents in New York City. When Auntie Jennette died, circa 1956, she left personal possessions to my grandparents. And, it would seem, Auntie Jennette also passed on some of her family memorabilia.

Robert McDowell 1761-1802

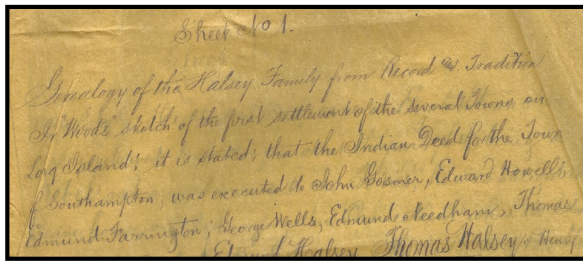


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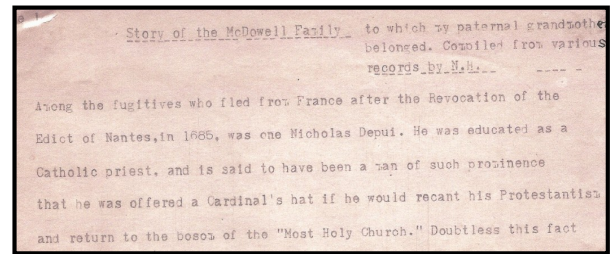
Robert McDowell
Lot 94, Ithaca, NY

Finding Robert McDowell

"Genealogy of Halsey Family"



"Story of the McDowell Family"

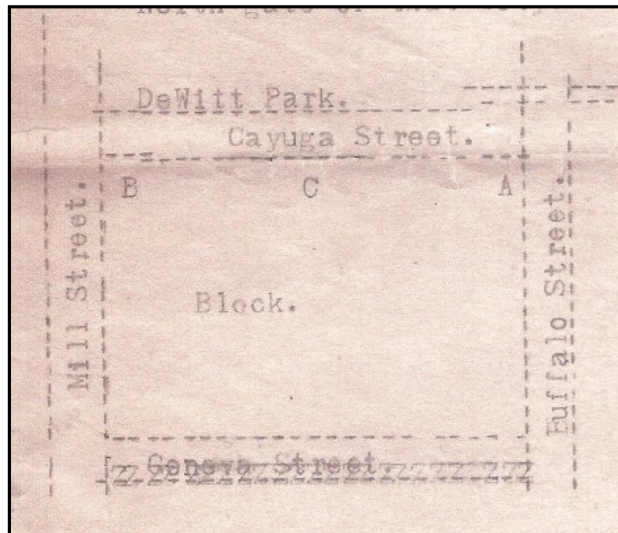


My grandparents were gone by the 1980s and my older brother cleared out their stuff, packing interesting looking papers into a few cardboard boxes. These boxes were "archived" in the back of his closet until 2022. I was next in line to take on this family memorabilia.

The material in the cardboard boxes was familiar, until I got to these two documents. Where did they come from and who were these people? Turns out, they were Auntie Jennette's people!

The document on the left, titled "Genealogy of the Halsey Family," consists of nine sheets of 8" x 14" onion skin or tissue-type paper, bound on the left side and written out in a clear, beautiful hand. On the top right corner of the first page is written, in different handwriting: "Return to J.G. Halsey, Room 404, 167 Dearborn, Chicago." I was to discover this was Auntie Jennette's father. The document looks like it's a compilation of information from different sources.

The document on the right is a five-page, typewritten "Story of the McDowell Family," compiled from various sources by N. Halsey. This Halsey is Nicoll Halsey 1845-1921, sibling of John G. Halsey and Jean L. Halsey. On the last page is a map with a key.



A - Log House built 1790 by Rob. McDowell in Ithaca Settlement, at South East corner of block.

B - Fine residence built by Jon. B. Gosman, my maternal grandfather, in Ithaca Village, at North East corner of same block. This was my birthplace.

C - House purchased by my Father, in Ithaca City, in center of same block, facing East, where two of my brothers and my sister were born.

The general site of the log house marked A had been commemorated with a plaque affixed to a boulder in DeWitt Park. The residence marked B is long gone though you can find photos of it. The house marked C, built circa 1820, still stands at 308 North Cayuga Street.

Robert McDowell - Revising History

Robert McDowell first came to Cayuga Lake in 1788, not earlier as reported in various history books. He was fully engaged in Kingston, Pennsylvania for the whole of 1786 and 1787.

If you look for information about Robert McDowell, the first thing you'll probably find is the version set down in Peirce and Hurd's *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins and Schuyler Counties, New York*, 1879.

In the month of September 1786 [sic: Spring 1788], Robert McDowell, Ira Stevens, and Jonathan Woodworth moved with their families from Kingston, near Wilkesbarre, Pa., to Tioga Point and Chemung. The next [sic: same] summer Robert McDowell, Nehemiah and Charles Woodworth (sons of Jonathan), Abram Smith, Joseph Smith and Richard Loomis came from Chemung by way of Catharine, to the head of Cayuga Lake, and there cut and put up a quantity of marsh hay, and then returned to Chemung.

In the spring of 1788 [sic: 1789]...Mr. McDowell, accompanied by Jane, his eldest daughter, then about seven years of age, and two boys,--one a negro,--returned to the rude farm at the head of the lake, where Ithaca now stands, and planted a quantity of corn and sowed some spring wheat, and followed up this enterprise in the fall of the same year by bringing in his entire family...

Peirce and Hurd relied on family stories written by Robert McDowell's son-in-law Nicoll Halsey 1782-1865 (if this document exists, I don't know where it is), the 1845 remembrances of Nehemiah Woodworth, and an 1847 lecture by Horace King. Peirce and Hurd noted there were discrepancies in the dates between these sources.

Today there are four more sources to consult: 1) the records of the Susquehanna Company, 2) the remembrances of Deborah Woodworth Tracy, Nehemiah's sister, 3) the remembrances of Dr. Oliver C. Comstock who married a granddaughter of Robert McDowell, and 4) a book by Charles Yapple, "*Jacob's Land*."

The Susquehanna Company records tell us that Robert McDowell was in Kingston, PA, during 1786 and right to the end of 1787. This information serves to correct the dates in the Nicoll Halsey history. Robert McDowell explored Cayuga Lake in 1788, not earlier as stated by Halsey. The Woodworth siblings' stories corroborate this.

Dr. Comstock said that Robert McDowell settled at the head of Cayuga Lake in 1789. This is second-hand information from his Halsey in-laws, but the date is confirmed by the Woodworth siblings.

Charles Yapple's book is a tour-de-force. Read it! It's an in-depth look at the Yapple, Dumond and Hinepaw families and the world they lived in.

If you parse out all the relevant information from these sources, fire up an Excel spreadsheet and make a time-line, you'll end up with:

1788:	McDowell and others explore head of Cayuga Lake and cut hay
Spring 1789:	McDowell and others plant crops at head of Cayuga Lake
Fall 1789:	McDowell, Woodworth, Hinepaw, Yapple and Dumond families in residence on land of the future town of Ithaca

Robert McDowell - The Problematic Plaque

History points to two sets of pioneer families who built cabins at the head of Cayuga Lake in the late 1780s--the Robert McDowell and Jonathan Woodworth families and the Yapple/Dumond/Hinepaw contingent. By virtue of placing their cabins on land that would become Ithaca, all could be considered the city's first settlers, but over time the latter three have prevailed in recognition.

As reported in the 6-16-1903 *Ithaca Daily Journal*, this bronze tablet, courtesy of the DeWitt Historical Society, was installed on City Hall at the corner of Seneca and Tioga to recognize the Yapple/Dumond/Hinepaw families. This building was torn down in 1965. Reportedly, in 1985 the plaque was found stored in the boiler room of the county jail. I believe the tablet is back at its original street location. Google Street View shows a plaque affixed to a building that looks like a parking garage at the corner of Seneca and Tioga.



*In April 1789 on four hundred acres of the old maize lands of the Iroquois **The Three Pioneers** Jacob Yapple • Isaac Dumond • Peter Hinepaw from Kingston NY cast seed and in September 1789 brought their families twenty souls built houses and began the settlement of Ithaca. Erected by the DeWitt Historical Society of Tompkins County.*

Within days of the June 16, 1903 news article about this tablet, local historian Charles F. Mulks 1837-1907 fired off a letter to the *Ithaca Daily News* which was printed on June 18, 1903.

To the Editor of the News: In commemorating the names of Yapple, Hinepaw and Dumond as Ithaca's pioneers, it seems to me that something is due to the memory of Robert McDowell, who came about the same time. Mr. Mulks made his case--he cited the McDowell family graves in the city cemetery, the purchase of Lot 94, and their early affiliation with the Methodist church. Mr. Mulks went on to give a bit of family history and explained McDowell's connection with the senator and congressman Hon. Nicoll Halsey who had married McDowell's daughter Euphous.

Photo of The Three Pioneers Tablet

<https://www.hmdb.org/PhotoFullSize.asp?PhotoID=386696>

The Yapple/Dumond/Hinepaw contingent had a good PR team. Two other plaques include their names. As far as I can tell, the signs exist today.

1927 - Log Cabin, at the corner of University Ave & Cascadilla Park Rd

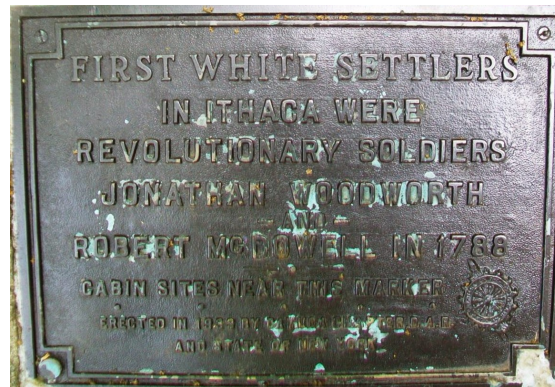
1932 - Original Lane, on East Buffalo

Hinepaw = Heimbach, Heinpaugh, Hinepaugh, Himepough, Hympaugh, Himebaugh

The idea of recognizing Robert McDowell simmered for the next thirty years. He was mentioned in Henry E. Abt's *Ithaca*, published in 1926. Dr. Luzerne Coville, chairman of the Historical Committee that developed *The History of Tornado Hook and Ladder Co. Number 3 of Ithaca, New York*, published in 1931, took a great interest in Robert McDowell.

In the 1930s, a move was afoot to erect historic markers. Funding was available from the State of New York and the Cayuga Chapter of the DAR scouted out locations in Ithaca and Tompkins County. The DAR, aided by interested townspeople and Cornell professors, produced a list of 70 historic spots for consideration. One of the first plaques was installed on DeWitt Place, in honor of Simeon DeWitt, founder of Ithaca.

The 8-14-1933 *Ithaca Journal* reported a bronze tablet had been attached to a boulder in Dewitt Park commemorating two pioneer settlers of Ithaca, Robert McDowell and Jonathan Woodworth. Their local descendants were, respectively, Jean Halsey and Mrs. John B. Smelzer. The marker was situated across the street from Jean Halsey's house, the Halsey family home at 308 Cayuga Street.



*First White Settlers in Ithaca were Revolutionary Soldiers
Jonathan Woodworth and Robert McDowell in 1788
Cabin sites near this marker.
Erected 1933 by Cayuga Chapter, D.A.R. and State of New York.*

Jean's obituary reports she was a charter member of the DeWitt Historical Society of Tompkins County. Jean's brother Nicoll lived with her on Cayuga Street for the last years of his life and his genealogy research is evident from the document he left behind. Local historians Charles F. Mulks and Dr. Luzerne Coville had put in their two cents' worth about Robert McDowell.

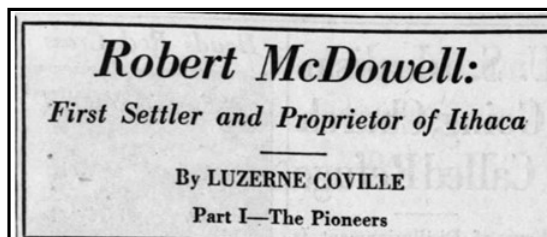
Likely, Jean wanted to see her great grandfather honored for his contribution to Ithaca's beginnings. And she had an ally in Nellie T. Smelzer, genealogist, member of the DAR, curator of the DeWitt Historical Society and descendant of Jonathan Woodworth.

Times change. A new century arrived. The phrase "first white settlers" became the focal point of the plaque and turned it into a political lightning rod and a target for vandalism. The plaque was removed in 2020. Its language was deemed to send an exclusionary message and its historical accuracy was questioned. The plaque is reportedly archived at The History Center in Tompkins County in Ithaca.

Photo of McDowell/Woodworth Tablet
<https://www.hmdb.org/PhotoFullSize.asp?PhotoID=386493>

Robert McDowell - Log Cabin and Lot 94

Starting on August 12, 1935, the *Ithaca Journal* published a six-part series on Robert McDowell. It was authored by Dr. Luzerne Coville, retired doctor and professor, founding member of the DeWitt Historical Society and, for a few years, Ithaca City Historian. Dr. Coville applied this epitaph to Robert McDowell: **First Settler and Proprietor of Ithaca**



8-12-1935 *Ithaca Journal*

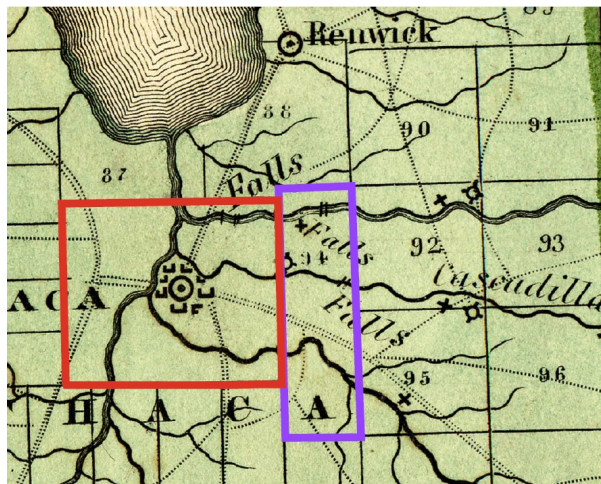
Dr. Coville introduced the articles with an explanation that “some five years ago in giving a sketch of the beginnings of Ithaca history certain errors were made...largely due to the disparity in the narratives available at that time...Recently much more material has come to hand.”

Dr. Coville was referring to the 1931 *History of Tornado Hook and Ladder Co. Number 3 of Ithaca, New York*. He was chairman of the historical committee that developed this publication. The book starts off with a history of Ithaca and includes the story of the first settlers. It stated McDowell settled in his cabin in the fall of 1788, thereby beating out the other group. (It's highly likely this is the source of the 1788 date and claim of first settlers on the Woodworth/McDowell plaque; the word “white” on the plaque is a product of its time.) Dr. Coville's 1935 newspaper articles corrected the date to 1789.

So, Dr. Coville now put McDowell and the Yapple, Dumond and Hinepaw families on the same timeline--initial exploration in 1788; settlement in log cabins in 1789. That accounts for the **First Settler** part of the epitaph Dr. Coville gave to Robert McDowell.

But, **Proprietor of Ithaca**? That's an eye-catching headline. It's hyperbole, but there is something behind it.

When Robert McDowell arrived at Cayuga Lake in 1788, the area was a designated Military Tract--land set aside as payment for service in the Revolutionary War--but it had not yet been surveyed.



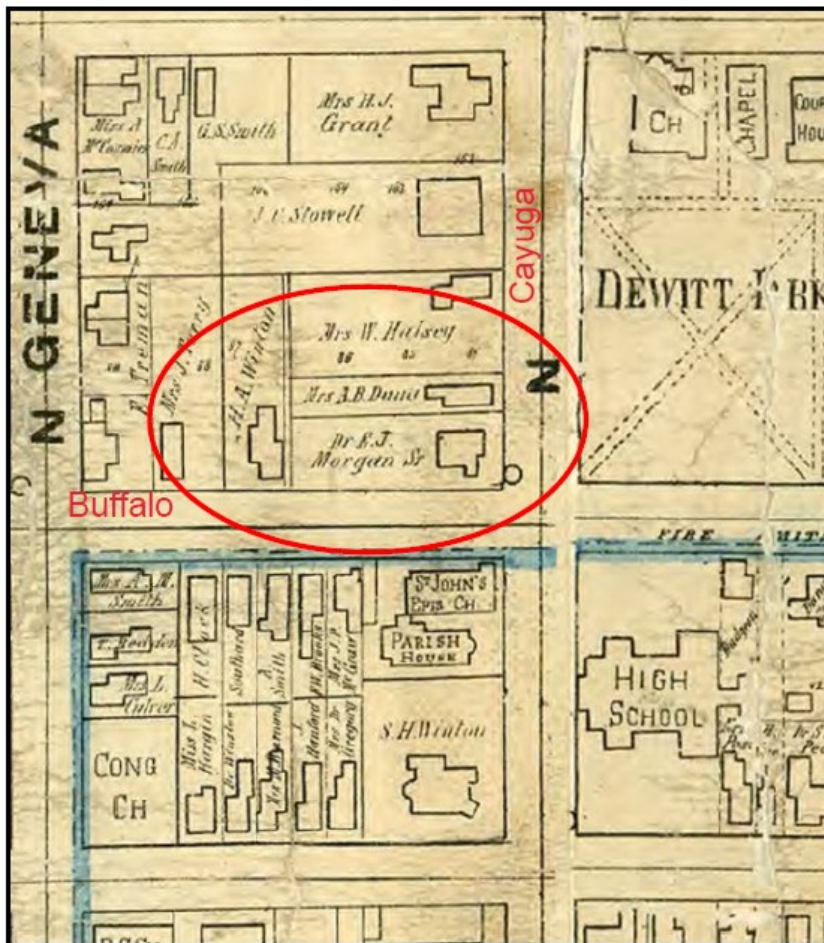
There was a pre-existing 1,400 acre parcel (red outline) in Ulysses Township that had been granted to Martinus Zielie in 1782. It was now owned by Abraham Bloodgood and this is where Robert McDowell built his log cabin.

1829 Map

<https://tompkins.nygenweb.net/hecht-collection/Tompkins-County-Burr-Atlas-Map-1829.jpg>

After Ulysses Township was surveyed, Robert McDowell purchased Lot 94 (600 acres, purple outline on preceding map). The Bloodgood Tract, on which McDowell built his cabin, and Lot 94, which he just purchased, were contiguous. So, in effect, for a very short period of time, McDowell was, very loosely speaking, the “*Proprietor*” of all the land that would form the town of Ithaca!

Where exactly was Robert McDowell's log cabin?



The map in my Nicoll Halsey document shows the location of the log cabin at the southeast corner of the block bordered by Buffalo and Cayuga Streets.

In his 1852 book *Methodism in Ithaca*, Rev. Charles D. Burritt reports the McDowell cabin was located on the Bruyn parcel.

In 1818 Andrew DeWitt Bruyn purchased Village Lot 84 from James Banfield, Jr. and Lots, 85, 86, and half of 87 from Simeon DeWitt. (Deeds A/111, D/75) The lot numbers are visible on this map in the Halsey lot at 308 Cayuga.

Dewitt Park is across the street. The log cabin was located a block west of Tioga Street, the dividing line between the Bloodgood Tract and Lot 94.

By the end of 1789, Robert McDowell, age 28, and his family were installed in a cabin on the Bloodgood Tract.

It is said that the McDowell's sixth child, Robert, was born in Ithaca on March 10, 1790. Here is another contender for first child of a settler.

1889 Beers Map

<https://nyheritage.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15085coll6/id/123/rec/5>

In December 1792, Simeon DeWitt 1756-1834, the New York State Surveyor General, purchased the Bloodgood Tract. In 1797 he purchased an adjoining portion of Lot 94 from Robert McDowell. In 1806 he drew up a plan for the future town of Ithaca. This map, archived at Cornell, is titled: *A Map of Ithaca and the Adjoining Land Belonging to Simeon De Witt, 1806*.

Is the shaded rectangle on Buffalo Street west of Cayuga Street Robert McDowell's log cabin or his barn or some other outbuilding? Note the water course, identified on the map as Spring Brook.



Two sources say there was a large spring, called the McDowell Spring, located near the cabin. As shown on DeWitt's map, a brook flowed from the spring and ran north to Cascadilla Creek. The spring existed when Rev. Burritt wrote his book in 1852 but was covered over by 1903 when historian Charles F. Mulks wrote about Robert McDowell.

When Andrew DeWitt Bruyn owned the property, he turned it into a place of "artistic beauty, with its flower-beds and bowers and large spring of water bordered by aquatic plants." (*Initial Ithicans*)

A Map of Ithaca and the Adjoining Land Belonging to Simeon De Witt, 1806
<https://digital.library.cornell.edu/catalog/ss:1312673>

Someone else studied DeWitt's 1806 plan and thought the shaded rectangle on Buffalo Street was the location of Robert McDowell's cabin.

Fast forward to 1954. W. Glenn Norris 1895-1969, Tompkins County Clerk for 18 years and County Historian for 25 years, put his historical research and imagination to work and executed a watercolor based on DeWitt's map.

The painting depicts the view from South Aurora Street on South Hill, looking over the plain toward Cayuga Lake.



This detail shows Robert McDowell's cabin near DeWitt Park. Smoke is rising from the chimney. Fencing surrounds the cabin and pasture area. Crops of some sort are growing to the left of the cabin site.

By 1794, the McDowell family left the cabin and located at the corner of South Aurora and Prospect Streets on South Hill, the very spot that commanded this view of Ithaca.

Thanks to the Sovocool Family for preserving this gem of Ithaca's history.

A description of this painting is found in the *Bulletin of the DeWitt Historical Society of Tompkins County*, Vol. 20, 1971-1972, Page 27, in an article titled "Historical Paintings by W. Glenn Norris, Boardman House, November 21, 1971."

When the Yapple/Dumond/Hinepaw contingent arrived, before the Military Tract had been surveyed, it is said they set their sights on a 400 acre parcel. As it would turn out, the three pioneers built their log cabins on the future Parcel 94. Likewise, the McDowell and Woodworth families built cabins on the existing Bloodgood Tract. It's not known exactly what their plans had been for acquiring title. Charles Yapple closely examines this complicated issue in his book "*Jacob's Land*." In the end, if the settlers thought they had laid claim to the land they built on, they were mistaken.

The Military Tract drawing was held in the summer of 1790. Hendrick Loux of the First New York Regiment was awarded Lot 94, 600 acres, in Ulysses Township. His patent was dated July 8, 1790.

On January 26, 1792, Hendrick Luycks, late of the First New York Regiment, sold Lot 94 to wealthy land speculator Jeremiah Van Rensselaer of Albany, New York. The sale price was £37. (Albany NY Deeds 15/63)

On April 24, 1792, Robert McDowell of Tioga County, New York, yeoman, entered into an agreement with Jeremiah Van Rensselaer for the purchase of Lot 94. The lot was described as being in the County of Tioga, late the County of Montgomery, and in the Township of Ulysses, the same land granted by patent to Hendrick Laux. The mortgage would be void on the payment of £200 plus interest on or before January 1, 1797. (Tioga County, NY Mortgage Book 1/14)

It would be interesting to know how Robert McDowell engineered this. That he was highly motivated to acquire title to land is without doubt. He had spent the last ten years in a pitched political battle to retain title to land acquired by his father in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania. You have to wonder what the Yapple, Dumond, Hinepaw and Woodworth families thought of McDowell's acquisition. And was Henry Loux cheated by Van Rensselaer or was Robert McDowell gouged, or was this the norm? Well, the rich get richer as evidenced by Mr. Van Rensselaer's 432.43%-plus-interest profit from this transaction!

On December 1, 1792, Simeon DeWitt purchased the 1,400 acre Bloodgood Tract on which McDowell and Woodworth had built cabins. (See note on next page.)

Likely Robert McDowell paid off the mortgage by the end of 1793 because he started to subdivide the tract at the beginning of 1794. His deed to Lot 94 was recorded in Herkimer County, the records of which went up in flames in 1804 when the county clerk's office burned. But reference to the deed appears in the Cayuga County Grantor Index Book Vol. 1.

Jeremiah Van Rensselaer to Robert McDowell
Town 22 (Ulysses), Lot 94, 600 Acres
Book H-A 1794, Page 347.
Recorded: circa March 1794

On January 12, 1794, McDowell accommodated his neighbor Peter Himepough (Hinepaw) by selling him 150 acres of Lot 94 for \$115. The deed description includes reference to a Buttonwood tree marked "RM." John Yapple was a witness. The deed reports the grantor and grantee were each of the Town of Owego, Tioga Co., New York. Were they wintering in Owego? Anyway, by the end of 1795, Himepough sold out to Abraham Markle.

On November 4, 1794, Robert McDowell sold a 170 acre parcel on Lot 94 to Andrew Myers for £275. This was the north end of the Lot 94.

On March 29, 1797, Robert and Margaret McDowell sold a 90 acre parcel from Lot 94 to Simeon DeWitt for \$725. This was the center section of Lot 94. Combined with the Bloodgood Tract, Simeon DeWitt now owned the land on which he would plan the future city of Ithaca.

In the end, from among the five known families that arrived at the head of Cayuga Lake in 1788/1789, only Robert McDowell built a homestead on land that would become Ithaca:

- The Woodworth family moved north of Ithaca to Milton (Lansing) around 1793, then across Cayuga Lake to Ovid (Covert) and put down roots.
- The Isaac Dumond and Jacob Yapple families started over in the town of Danby (just south of Ithaca) where they had purchased a 600 acre tract on January 30, 1793. (Tioga Co. NY Deed 3/66)
- By the end of 1795, Peter Hinepaw/Himepough moved on. In 1797, Peter Hymbaugh/Heimbach is found in Genesee Co., NY. In 1800 he sold off some of his 800 acre tract in Danby, NY he had acquired in 1791 (Tioga Co. NY Deed 4/486). Peter Himebaugh finally settled in Erie Co., PA. One deed filed in Erie County lists his children as of 1838. (Erie Co. NY Deed 1/615) Peter's sons Peter, Jr. and Matthias have headstones that read Himebaugh.
- Robert McDowell moved onto Lot 94, just south of Six Mile Creek on South Hill. For years to come, his family would benefit from his acquisition of Lot 94.

According to *The History of the Treman, Tremaine, Truman Family in America* by Ebenezer Mack Treman, 1901, Vol. 1, p. 769, the parcel on which McDowell and Woodworth built their cabins was sold on December 1, 1792. The absentee landowner Abraham Bloodgood sold the 1,400 acre tract to Simeon DeWitt for £500. The deed for this transaction was destroyed when the Herkimer County Clerk's office burned in 1804, as was Robert McDowell's deed for Lot 94. And, like McDowell's deed, the transaction is entered in the Cayuga County Index Book Vol. 1 as recorded March 1794 in Book H-A on Page 36.

On September 30, 1795, Robert McDowell and Peter Himepough purchased 100 acres from John King in the southeast corner of Lot 92 for £80. A few months later, Robert McDowell quit-claimed his interest to Himepough for £60.

On June 6, 1799, Robert and Margaret McDowell sold 150 acres in Lot 61 to Daniel Congle for \$150. On September 2, 1801, Robert and Margaret sold 50 acres in Lot 47 to Matthew Messeker for \$125. I don't know how the McDowells acquired these properties.

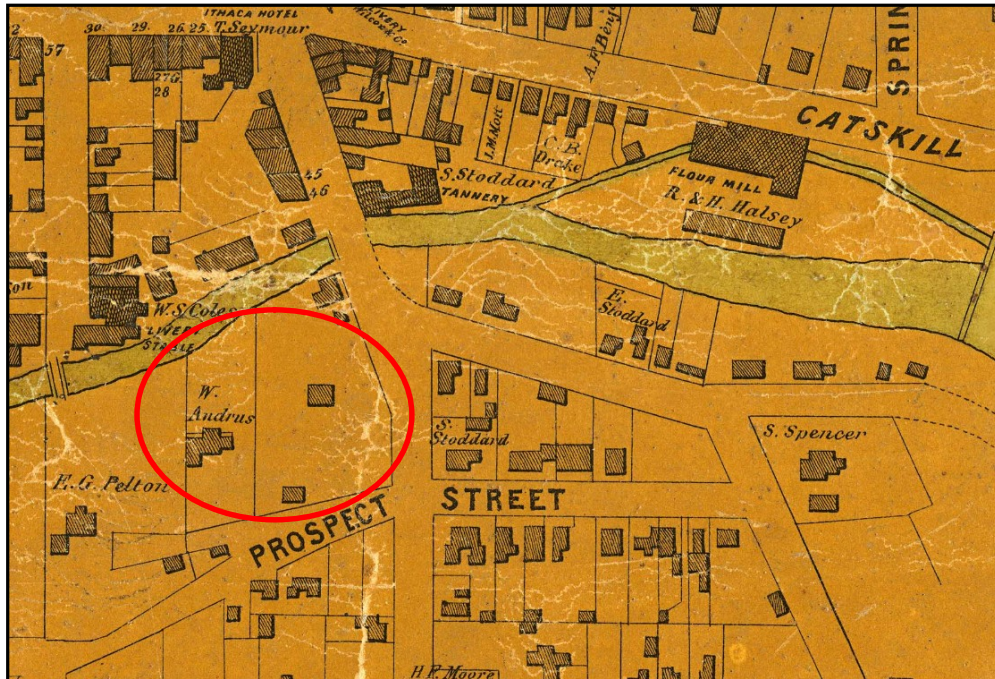
Robert McDowell - A New Start on South Hill

Robert McDowell moved from his log cabin at Buffalo and Cayuga Streets to a spot on his newly-acquired Lot 94.

Robert McDowell dwelling site, northwest corner of Prospect and South Aurora.

Near the left edge of this clip is Tioga Street, the west boundary of Lot 94.

<https://tompkins.nygenweb.net/hecht-collection/1851-Ithaca-Map/Ithaca-East-Map-orig.jpg>



Historian Charles F. Mulks, the champion of Robert McDowell when he argued for his inclusion among the first settlers of Ithaca, had previously submitted a few local history columns to the *Ithaca Daily News*. In a January 9, 1900 article, Mr. Mulks, talking of Richard W. Pelton, first husband of Robert McDowell's daughter Jane, wrote:

After the death of his father-in-law, Robert McDowell in 1802, Pelton as his successor was the owner of 87 acres on South Hill. It was then a farm of which some portion still remained in timber or woods. He lived where his father-in-law McDowell had before lived which is on the same ground covered by the present Andrus-Whiton mansion on South Aurora Street.

Is there information to fact-check Mr. Mulks' assertion? Probate records are absent (or I can't find them) regarding Robert McDowell's real estate, even though he had male children age 16 and under at the time of his death. We know he died intestate in 1802.

In 1838, Robert McDowell's grandchildren, Robert and William Halsey, purchased a mill and 17 acres on Lot 94 along Six Mile Creek for \$25,000 from Jacob M. McCormick (Deed JJ/226). The Halsey brothers operated the mill, through fires and floods, until the last great conflagration in 1874. You can see the mill on this map. And, as everyone is related, Jacob Miller McCormick (14th village president of Ithaca) is a son of Margaret McDowell's cousin Henry McCormick who had married Robert McDowell's niece Hannah Miller.

By law, Margaret McDowell was entitled to dower rights. Back then, married women couldn't own property. Everything belonged to the husband, but dower rights gave a widow a life estate in her husband's real estate of one-third of the land's income. The daughters Jane and Euphys would benefit through their husbands (who were certainly delighted with this fine piece of subdividable property).

Over time, the land on Lot 94 still owned by Robert McDowell at the time of his death was sold off one way or another. The deeds are many and complicated, but they do confirm the South Aurora Street location as reported by Mr. Mulks. With the help of FamilySearch's experimental OCR search, it was possible to sift out some of the deeds in which Margaret's dower rights are mentioned.

Deeds of Interest - Lot 94

In 1807, 17-year-old Robert, Jr. died and around 1808 Margaret McDowell left the family property to live with her married daughter Euphys Halsey in Halseyville/Trumansburg. Still living was the son John McDowell and daughter Jane McDowell Pelton.

1808 - Seneca Co. Deed Book F/80. 4 acres to Luther Gere and John M. Pearson.
The grantors are Richard and Jane Pelton, Nicoll and Euphys Halsey and John McDowell and wife Jane. Margaret McDowell relinquished her dower rights. Mr. Gere would construct the Ithaca Hotel on this parcel.

1808 - Seneca Co. Deed Book D/353. 87 acres on South Hill to Richard W. Pelton.
This parcel is the farm on South Hill mentioned by Mr. Mulks that belonged to Robert McDowell. The grantors are Nicoll and Euphys Halsey and John McDowell and wife Jane. The two siblings quit-claimed their interest in the property to their sister Jane's husband, Richard W. Pelton, for \$50. There is no mention of Margaret's dower rights.

During the War of 1812, John McDowell died as did Mr. Pelton. Pelton's widow Jane McDowell married Archer Green in 1817. The Pelton children grew up and it was their turn to inherit. The children kept a block of land near the Six Mile Creek. Jane retained her dower right and lived on the lot at the corner of Aurora and South Prospect Streets. The rest of the 87 acres, running up South Hill from Prospect to Mechanics/Hillside, was leased to a developer.

1824 - Tompkins Co. Deeds I/81, I/89, I/248, I/249
Four deeds were executed in 1824 between Margaret McDowell and her Pelton grandchildren. She relinquished her dower rights in their lots provided each grandchild pay her \$4 on the first day of May of each and every year during her natural life.

1825 - Tompkins Co. Mortgages C/244
In 1825, Nicoll Halsey and Archer and Jane Green granted a 30 year lease to David Ayers to develop a good portion of the property. Yearly payments were arranged for Jane Green and Margaret McDowell. Margaret was to receive \$26 per year for the rest of her life.

David Ayers 1793-1881 came to Ithaca in 1817 and immediately involved himself in the Methodist Episcopal Church. He single-handedly raised funds for construction of the first church building. This must have been pleasing to Margaret McDowell. Who better to develop the McDowell property? Historian Mulks tells us Ayers went bankrupt in the process and fled to Texas, which was still a foreign country, beyond the reach of the law. Apocryphal? Probably--but it's a good story. Mr. Ayers did move to Texas where it seems he was quite successful. But what happened to Margaret McDowell's \$26 a year?

Robert McDowell - Life on South Hill

By 1794, Robert McDowell started over, clearing, building and planting on South Hill.

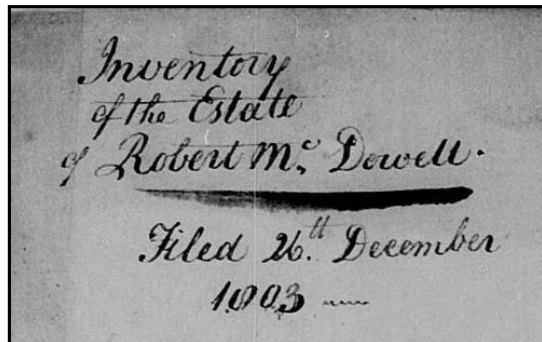
1800 Census - Ulysses, Cayuga County, New York

Robert McDowell	
1 M under 10	Robert
1 M 10-15	John
1 M 26-44	Robert McDowell
1 F under 10	Euphios
1 F 16-25	Jane
1 F 26-44	Margaret McDowell

There are tax assessment records for Ulysses from 1799 to 1804. Robert McDowell's real estate was assessed at \$650--higher than most, but less than a few other people. The Humphrey Interview says Robert McDowell built a frame house on South Hill. The value of McDowell's personal property ranged from \$52 to \$68.

In the Ulysses town records, Robert McDowell had been designated as a farmer, but laterly was called Esquire, with its overtones of respect and some prosperity or to reflect his appointment as Justice of the Peace. He served on juries, was Commissioner of Schools for a few years and served a term as Assessor for the town. In 1794, Robert McDowell was a member of the Board of Supervisors for Onondaga County.

Robert McDowell died on June 1, 1802 and was buried in the Ithaca City Cemetery, on land he had once owned. It seems a cruel fate, after finally seeing the fruition of all his unrelenting labor, to die in the 42nd year of his life.



Robert McDowell died intestate. Margaret McDowell filed a \$1,000 bond and was appointed administrator of his estate on May 10, 1803.

In December, Margaret, aided by Archer Green and neighbor John Smith, made a list of the Goods, Chattels and Credits belonging to Robert at the time of his death. The inventory provides a window into life on South Hill.

The appraisal of Robert McDowell's goods can be viewed at FamilySearch, Cayuga County Probate Records, Surrogates Records, Box 2, Film 7342436, Image 395 of 938.

The Peach and Apple Trees of a Nursery	\$50.00
Eight Acres of Wheat at \$3 per Acre	24.00
Five do. Rye at \$1.50. do do	7.50
Five do. Flax & Oats at \$4 do do	20.00
Potatoes	3.00

The peach and apple trees of a nursery		\$50.00
8 acres of wheat	at \$3/A	24.00
5 acres of rye	at \$1.50/A	7.50
5 acres of flax and oats	at \$4/A	20.00
Potatoes		3.00

A story is told about Archer Green when he was married to Robert McDowell's daughter Jane and living on the South Hill farm.

Mr. Green once found some small boys stealing apples from his orchard on Michigan Hill (now South Hill). They had filled six bags when discovered. Mr. Green read the culprits a lecture on larceny but, being a fair man, gave them one bag for their labor in his behalf.

3 cows	at \$14	\$ 42.00
3 yearlings	at \$4	12.00
3 calves	at \$1.50	4.50
12 old sheep	at \$1.75	21.00
12 lambs	at (not legible)	
1 old sow		5.00
7 young hogs	at \$2.00	14.00
21 geese	at 50 cts	10.50
6 hens	at 12½ cts	0.75
1 beehive		4.00

Cows, sheep, pigs, geese and hens--a well-rounded farm yard.

One of Robert McDowell's first civic posts was Pound Master. The job was to round up wayward livestock and other stray animals. The town allowed pigs to roam free "unless they were a bother."

To protect domestic livestock, the town paid a bounty of \$5 for each wolf or panther's calf killed in town.

The livestock list does not include oxen, though the inventory shows two yokes and a sled. In his lecture of 1847, Horace King told this story about Robert McDowell. The tale was, in part, a commentary on the state of the roads.

Mr. McDowell set out for Owego with a load of grain drawn by an ox team. For three nights he turned his cattle out to browse, and himself returned home to sleep; and for two nights after, serving them in the same manner, he walked to Owego to procure rest—and with his load arrived there on the sixth day.

The distance from Ulysses to Owego is approximately 30 miles. So the first day, the ox team covered five miles, McDowell walked five miles back home to sleep and in the morning it was five miles back to the oxen to resume the journey. Well, you can do the math. Maybe this trip was the inspiration for Robert McDowell to become an Overseer of Highways, which he did in 1795.

3 new hoes	at 87½ cts	\$ 2.625
2 old hoes	at 37½ cts	0.75
3 hay forks	at 50 cts	1.50
Clevises		0.625
Plough and irons		6.00
7 harrow teeth	at 25 cts	1.75
Old wagon irons		6.00
1 ox sled		0.50
2 ox yokes and irons		2.00
1 set of ox shoes and nails		2.00
Old iron at Conradt's		4.00

Here are the basic tools of a farmer, though I don't see a scythe or a sickle on the list.

Of interest is the "old iron at Conradt's." Likely this is Major Peter Conrad 1769-1827 who came to Tompkins County in 1795 and lived in Lansing. Peter and Robert McDowell both came from Hamilton Township in Northampton County, PA.

Though one is not listed, Robert McDowell must have had a fire arm for hunting and protection. Militia groups were formed in the newly-settled parts of New York State and one Samuel Tubbs was appointed Lieutenant Colonel Com-

mandant of the Tioga County, NY Militia. In 1791, Tubbs' Battalion included a unit at the head of Cayuga Lake: Robert McDowell captain, Peter Hinchpaugh lieutenant and Isaac Dumond ensign. By 1799, Robert McDowell was Second Major in the Cayuga County Militia.

4 axes	at 75 cts	\$ 3.00
3 augers		2.125
Shaving knife and adze		1.50
Beetle rings and wedges		1.00
Two trammels	at \$1	2.00

Here are the contents of Robert McDowell's tool box. With these he felled trees, built houses and outbuildings, chopped firewood, made fences, and constructed furniture.

In 1798 Robert McDowell was appointed one of the Commissioners of Public Lots. Six lots in each town in the Military Tract were set aside for church or schools. In November 1800, the town of Ulysses held a meeting to inform the Public Lots commissioners how to go about leasing the parcels. These were probably the first planning commission/zoning regulations in Ithaca:

- Each lot was to be 100 acres.
- The tenant would clear one-third of that and set out 100 apple trees.
- The tenant was to build a house 18 feet x 18 feet which would be well-shingled and in good order.
- One-half of the improved land was to be put in grass.

Robert McDowell acted as Superintendent for the Town of Dryden's public lots and his neighbor John Smith was the surveyor.

Loom		\$ 5.00
3 reeds and geers		3.00
Little wheel		3.00
Great wheel		0.75
40 lbs wool	at 37.5 cts/lb	15.00

Two spinning wheels and a loom were ready to turn the flax crop and the 40 pounds of wool into cloth.

During the summer of 1789, while Robert McDowell and Jonathan Woodworth were preparing their homesteads at the head of Cayuga Lake, Woodworth's daughter Tracy, age 17, lived with a Cole family in New Sheshequin, PA, for the express purpose of learning to weave.

Bedsteads, beds and bedding	\$56.00
Chest	3.00
Churns	1.00
1 butter tub	0.375
Hollow ware and frying pan	13.50
4 pails	1.00
6 new pewter plates	2.00
2 platters and bason	1.75
Plates, tea cups etc. etc.	6.25
2 tables	0.50
3 baskets	1.50
2 smoothing irons	1.00
2 bells	1.50
Soap and leach tubs	1.75
Shovel and tongs	1.00
2 boxes and one reel	1.50
16 old barrels	5.00
1 old saddle	3.00
1 old, woman's saddle	2.50

I don't see chairs or benches on this list, but there's an array of household items.

By inference, the saddles turn up in a few family stories. In a Pelton genealogy, Jane is remembered: *Miss McDowell came up the Susquehanna river with her father and with him rode on horseback from Owego to Ithaca, NY, in the spring of 1789, the first white girl there.* Jane, at this time, was all of seven or eight years old.

Margaret McDowell saddled up a horse when she and five others attended the Quarterly Meeting of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Appleton. It is said they had to ride single file through the woods along an Indian path.

1 note of (blank)	\$ 2.50
1 note of (blank)	5.00
Credit by an account against Jacob Green	74.50

In the 1803 Ulysses assessment, Jacob Green is listed next to Margaret McDowell. His assessment was modest--\$40 real estate/\$70 personal property--compared to Margaret, whose house and lot were assessed at \$500 and personal property \$95.

It is said Jacob Green was a brother of Archer Green (second husband of Jane McDowell) and that "He had a log house, near the iron bridge now across Six-mile Creek." There is another story that says Jacob Green left Ithaca hauling a wagon load of lumber in 1812 and was never heard of again.

Robert McDowell - Abraham Bloom's Account Book 1788-1810



Abraham Bloom 1763-1839 came to Cayuga County in 1789 or 1790, from Northampton Co., PA, and settled on Lot 91 in Milton (now Lansing). The story goes like this: When Abraham, his wife Margaret LaBar and Abraham's brother Henry came up to Cayuga Lake, the bride rode on the horse and the brothers walked.

It's a good story, but it doesn't account for the fact that Abraham Bloom was

a blacksmith. Somewhere along the line there must have been a wagon loaded with blacksmith tools, anvils, material to build a forge and the apparatus for shoeing oxen. But the one thing 27-year-old Abraham Bloom could carry with him was the Account Book he started in 1788.

The 1788 and 1789 entries in the Account Book are Bloom's Pennsylvania customers. Just about all of them can be found in the 1790 census for Upper Mount Bethel Township in Northampton County. Abraham Bloom lived there, near his wife's family, and he also had property in Lower Smithfield.

The 1790 to 1810 accounts are the early settlers in Cayuga/Tompkins County. Peter Hinebaugh heads the list, followed by Jacob Yapple, Robert McDowell and Isaac Dumond. Jonathan Woodworth and the Smiths have accounts.. There's Abraham Markle, who is known for constructing the first frame house in Ithaca--Mr. Bloom made hinges and latches for Mr. Markle.

The Account Book is a "Who's Who" of the early Lansing settlers: The brothers Moses and Nicholas Dupue (most likely cousins of Robert McDowell) have accounts, as well as William Goodwin who gave land for the Asbury Church burial ground. The list goes on--Abram Minier, LaBars, Teeters and others. There is an inserted sheet with the name of Robert McDowell's right-hand-man Richard Loomis and his son Amon--Mr. Bloom paid them to work on his barn.

After Abraham Bloom's death, the Account Book remained in the possession of his daughter Christina Bloom who lived on her father's homestead until her death in 1897. Historian Charles F. Mulks, who championed Robert McDowell's inclusion among the first settlers of Ithaca, came by the book and penciled in identifications of the early settlers.

The Account Book ended up in storage and was rediscovered around 1935. Rev. Edward T. Horn, secretary of the DeWitt Historical Society and pastor of the Lutheran Church, made a careful study of the accounts and presented his findings to the DeWitt Historical Society on January 24, 1936. Rev. Horn toiled mightily to sort out the names, convert pounds and shillings to dollars, and transcribe Mr. Bloom's phonetic English spelling which had been filtered through his native German language.

In 1939, Rev. Horn's lecture was published in seven issues of the *Trumansburg Leader*. I was trolling through this newspaper for sightings of Robert McDowell when up popped a list of Mr. Bloom's numerous customers. It didn't take long to track down this 200+ year old account book, archived at The History Center in Tompkins County in Ithaca, NY. The archivist scanned it for me and now this gem of information is available to the digital world.

Following are the 1790 entries in Abraham Bloom's Account Book. Rev. Horn deduced that Bloom was working with the new settlers on the flats near the head of Cayuga Lake during the months of May and June. Most likely the homesteaders were working together in a cooperative effort. Wouldn't it be interesting to know exactly what went on? One clue comes from a McDowell family story, as related by Dr. Oliver C. Comstock, which says *The first grist mill called a tub mill was erected by McDowell and Hinepaugh on the Cascadilla in 1789 or '90*. These entries are just about the only time Mr. Bloom described what he did using just the word "work." All other entries in his Account Book are specific to blacksmithing, items he sold from his store (moccasins and whiskey), or for agricultural products he sold (pumpkins and wheat).

In addition to his charges for "work" in 1790, Mr. Bloom charged Jacob Yapple for six days' labor gathering corn, use of his horse, and mending a scythe; and Mr. Bloom made a weeding hoe for Mr. Widener. Rev. Horn could not identify Michael Widener; neither can I.

Date of Debit	Debtor	Description	£/s/d	Calculated by Rev. Horn
7-02-1790	Peter Himepaugh	Work	6.06.0	42 days
7-03-1790	Jacob Yapple	Work	1.19.6	13 days
7-05-1790	Nicholas Dupue	Work	0.18.9	6 days
7-12-1790	William Goodwin	Work and 1791	2.07.2	15 days
7-15-1790	Michael Widener	Work	0.13.5	4 days
7-17-1790	Robert McDowell	Work	0.18.6	6 days
8-07-1790	Joseph Smythe	Work	1.00.0	6 days
8-30-1790	Isaac Dumond	Work	1.14.0	12 days

There is a credit to Joseph Smythe's account dated "in the year of 1790." Mr. Bloom received from Mr. Smythe nine and half bushels of corn valued at £1.8.6. Now Mr. Bloom was 8 shillings, 6 pence in Mr. Smythe's debt.

Rev. Horn converted pounds, shillings and pence to dollars, factored in an exchange rate, and determined a shilling was worth 12.5 cents. He calculated the number of work days using a labor rate of 37.5 cents per day.

Robert McDowell, Abraham Bloom, William Goodwin, and Nicholas Dupue all came from the same area of Northampton County, near the Delaware Water Gap, as did the Smiths and a number other first settlers.

"Robard Macdole"

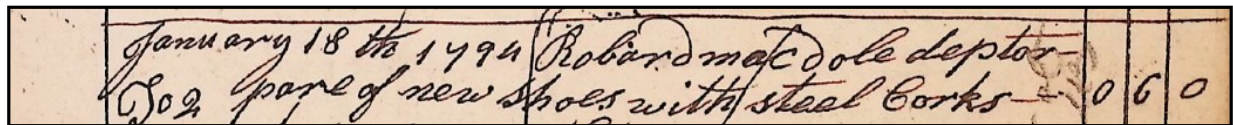
On July 17, 1790, Abraham Bloom started an account for "Robard Macdole." The entry reads "To work" and the cost 18 shillings and 6 pence. Robert McDowell was a steady customer until his death in 1802.

McDowell's account contains no entries for 1791. In fact, there are few entries in the account book for 1791 and only one new customer, David Smith, who had come to Cayuga Lake with Robert McDowell.

There are debits in McDowell's account in August and September 1792 for mending three chains and one wedge, three new buckles and one bell clapper, removing two pair of shoes, and making one new pair of shoes. (The shoes were often enhanced with "calks," a blunt projection welded to the bottom of the shoe to provide better traction for horses or oxen.)

1793 shows charges in January, April, May and July, most involving shoes, though there is one charge for sharpening.

By 1794, the McDowell family had settled on Lot 94, just south of Six Mile Creek. Robert McDowell travelled the five or six miles up to Bloom's blacksmith shop in Lansing from January through October. The year started with two pair of new shoes with steel calks.



Robert McDowell's debits for 1794 continue as follows:

	£/s/d
January	
Making 1 new chain	0.9.7
Making 4 new bands	0.4.0
Mending 1 iron shovel	0.0.3
February	
Making 1 set of cutting box irons	0.8.0
Making 2 new chisels	0.5.0
March	
Making 1 kettle pail for ____ (more?)	0.2.6
April	
Making __ spikes (the number is a blot)	0.1.0
2 sharpenings and making 1 bolt	0.1.6
June	
Mending 1 chain	0.1.0
3 lynch pins	0.0.6
2 pair of maul rings and new wedges	
weight 19 and a half	0.10.6
Upsetting 1 axe	0.1.0
Setting 1 shoe	0.0.6
Setting 2 pair of shoes	0.2.0
October	
Blacksmith work	2.13.4
1 pair of new shoes	0.2.6
Setting 1 pair	0.1.0
1 new spear	0.2.6
Mending 1 spear	0.2.0

1795 has six charges through the summer and fall for shoe work. In March, Mr. Bloom charged Robert McDowell for laying one axe and upsetting one axe.

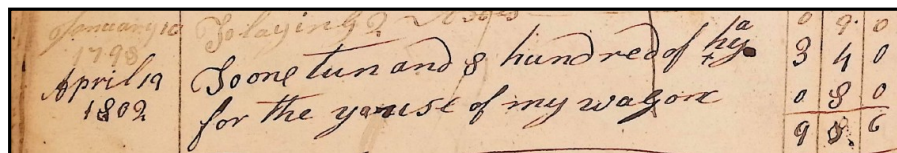
Charges for 1796 and 1797 involved shoes and one sharpening plus May 1797 charges for laying one plow blade and making two plow plates and some nails. In August 1797 there was a charge for laying one axe with steel. In June of 1798, Robert McDowell brought two axes to Mr. Bloom for laying.

An undated debit reads: "Robard Macdole received of me 18 pounds and 1 quarter of Iron."

On the credit side are iron and cash received from Robert McDowell:

1794	45 pounds of iron	1.6.3
August 1796	Received in cash	2.0.0
Jan 16	Received in cash	0.4.2
April 1, 1802	Received in cash	2.8.0

The last entry in Mr. Bloom's account book for Robert McDowell is dated April 19, 1802. Mr. Bloom charged Robert McDowell 3 pounds and 4 shillings for "one ton and 8 hundred of hay" and 8 shillings "for the use of my wagon." The wagon was something special as noted by Rev. Horn. In 1798, Mr. Bloom had paid \$62 for his wagon, a sum equivalent to a half year's income.



Robert McDowell died on June 1, 1802, six weeks after his last transaction with blacksmith Abraham Bloom.

Rev. Edward T. Horn's lecture
 1939 *Trumansburg Leader* (Trumansburg, NY)
 view here <https://trumansburg.advantage-preservation.com/> or at NewspaperArchive.com
 February 3, 17, 24
 March 3, 10, 17, 24 (list of names)

Abraham Bloom's Account Book 1788-1810
 For \$25, a PDF is available from The History Center in Tompkins County, Ithaca, NY
archives@thehistorycenter.net

The Dupui General Store Ledger: 1743-1793
<http://www.babybows.com/home.htm>

Robert McDowell's father, John McDowell, married Hannah Dupui. One of her relatives ran a trading post near the Delaware River in Northampton County, PA. John McDowell had an account at The Dupui General Store for the years 1743 through 1758. Ephraim Bloom, father of Abraham Bloom, also had an account before the Bloom family headed for Lansing, New York.

Robert McDowell - Ithaca City Cemetery

Dr. Luzerne Coville writes in his 1935 article:

On a sunlit slope, in the oldest corner of our city cemetery, beneath the sheltering arms of an aged oak tree is a group of stones: Robert McDowell, died 1802, aged 42 yrs. Margaret, his wife, died 1835, aged 75 years. Euphias McNiel (assuredly her aunt and foster mother) died 1806, aged 84 years. Their babe, Henry; a daughter, Hannah, aged 10 years; and sons Daniel and Robert aged 10 and 17 years.



On June 2, 2019, a ceremony was held at the Ithaca City Cemetery. Wayne Thurston of the Sons of the American Revolution Binghamton and Finger Lakes Chapters had coordinated an effort to obtain and install ten new headstones for the cemetery's Revolutionary War Veterans.

The new headstone reads "Robert McDowell, PA Militia, Rev War, 1760, Jun 1 1802"

Excerpt from a Centennial Poem written by Julia Beers Jackson published in the April 29, 1889 *Ithaca Daily Journal*:

*Some quaint gray stones there yet remain,
facing the north, more not refrain,*

*Inscribed, "Robert McDowell, his wife
Margaret, and their children five,*

*In the nineties here were laid away", to the
living all unknown to-day.*

*These stones record one household hearth,
mossy with age, molding to earth.*

Margaret McCormick McDowell
1760-1835

Clues to Margaret McDowell's birth family are sparse.

1. *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins and Schuyler Counties*: Robert McDowell married Margaret McCormick who came with her father John McCormick from Scotland to America about the period of the Revolution.
2. Margaret's obituary: *When 14 years old she made a profession of religion and joined the Presbyterian Church in some town in Chester Co., PA.*
3. "The Story of the McDowell Family" that ended up with my family memorabilia: *John McCormack emigrated with his family from Scotland and settled in Kingston, PA, then moved to Chemung in 1788.*
4. Dr. Luzerne Coville, in his 8-12-1935 *Ithaca Journal* column "Robert McDowell, First Settler and Proprietor of Ithaca," wrote that Euphios McNeil, buried in the McDowell plot at the Ithaca City Cemetery in 1806, was Margaret's aunt and foster mother.

Clues 1 and 2 tell us Margaret's father is John McCormick and Margaret lived in "some town" in Chester County. Clue 3 sounds suspect and, further, there are no signs of a relevant John McCormick in Kingston or Chemung.

Clue 4 is highly interesting and I would sure like to know where Dr. Coville came up with this bit of information! Logic says Euphios had been married to a McCormick (Margaret's father's brother?) and then married a McNeil. As it turned out, there are some nice connections between Euphios, two of her sons, David McCormick 1762-1838 and Henry McCormick 1749-1813, and the McDowell family.

- The family story goes that one Joseph McCormick lived and died near Giants Causeway, County Antrim, Ireland. His widow Euphios came to America, with a varying number of children, and settled in Chester County.
- In 1768, "Uphias McCormick" is on the Easttown, Chester County Provincial Tax List.

Now we need to get Margaret from "some town" in Chester County up to near the Delaware Water Gap in Northampton County so she and Robert McDowell can clap eyes on each other.

As the "Story of the McDowell Family" says:

Robert McDowell needed just such a helpmate, sprung from stock as sturdy and as grave as his own, to second him in the pioneer work which he undertook.

The *Story of the McDowell Family* compiled by Nicoll Halsey 1845-1921 states that Margaret was born in 1750. It's probably a mistake or a typo, but oddly it could account for her last known child being born in 1792. Margaret's obituary and gravestone transcription indicate a birth date of 1760.

It's likely Margaret's father died and she was taken in by her Aunt Euphius. Euphius's second husband was Hector McNeil. Starting in 1772, Hector's name appears on the tax rolls of the Scotch-Irish enclave of Upper Mount Bethel Township in Northampton County. Hector and Euphius can be found in Upper Mount Bethel into the year 1800.

Situated next to Upper Mount Bethel is the Cherry Valley homestead where Robert McDowell grew up. On this 1817 Melish-Whiteside map, the McDowell property is located in Hamilton. Robert's brother-in-law Abraham Miller owned a tract in the same neighborhood. Stroudsburg was the location of Fort Penn, the homestead of another brother-in-law, Jacob Stroud.



During the Revolutionary War, Hector McNeil; Jacob Stroud; Abraham Miller; Robert McDowell, his brothers and father; and David and Henry McCormick all served in Northampton County.

The 1778 Wyoming Massacre forced Robert McDowell and his widowed sisters Jane Shoemaker and Sarah Lee (with tiny babies in their arms) to leave Kingston and find refuge back home in the Cherry Valley. Hector and Euphius McNeil, and presumably Margaret McCormick, were living in Upper Mount Bethel.

The stage was set for the union of Robert McDowell and Margaret McCormick.

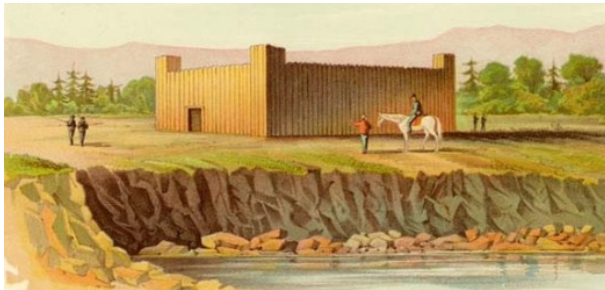
Margaret and Robert married in probably 1779. They were each 19 years old. Their first child, Jane, was reportedly born on November 22, 1780.

- Margaret's cousins David and Henry McCormick married Miller sisters, daughters of Robert McDowell's sister Winty and her husband Abraham Miller. Henry married Hannah circa 1780, and David married Sarah in March of 1787.
- The 1781 Pennsylvania Tax and Exoneration return for Hamilton Township lists Robert "McDool," Henry McCormick and Abraham Miller.

By 1784, Robert, Margaret, and their children, Jane and Hannah (born 1782), along with Robert's sisters Jane and Sarah, moved back to the Wyoming Valley to reclaim their land.

- In 1787, Henry and David McCormick are found in the Susquehanna Records, most notably living alongside Robert McDowell in the Wyoming Valley. (S9/108)
- Henry McCormick and Robert McDowell witnessed a deed in Northampton Co. on June 27, 1787, when McDowell's sisters Jane and Sarah sold their shares of their father's farm in Cherry Valley to John Shaw, their brother-in-law. (G1/347)
- David McCormick reported in his pension application that his two discharge papers were destroyed when the house of Robert McDowell in Wyoming, where he was living, burned. (David's last discharge was at the end of 1783. US Rev. War Pension Files)

Family stories say that on May 5, 1784, Margaret's third child was born at Forty Fort. The girl was named Euphys. I wonder if the child was literally born in the fort?



The year 1784 was another tumultuous year in the Yankee-Pennamite War. Alexander Armstrong was terrorizing the Wyoming Valley. On May 13, 1784, he and his henchmen forced 150 families from their homes. Were Margaret and the children secured in Forty Fort to keep them out of harm's way?

In March of 1784, a great flood along the Susquehanna had destroyed over 100 houses, provisions, household furniture, farming implements and livestock, though Robert McDowell managed to save his cattle. Maybe the McDowells were living in Forty Fort because their house was destroyed in the flood or maybe it had burned down as reported by Margaret's cousin David.

In 1786, Margaret's fourth child came along and was named John. By now, life in the Wyoming Valley had settled a bit, but the McDowell, Woodworth, McCormick, and Miller families were planning to move on.

In the spring of 1788, Robert McDowell, Jonathan Woodworth and Ira Stephens travelled up the Susquehanna to Tioga Point and Chemung. In May Margaret gave birth to their fifth child, Daniel. Some say he was born in Chemung, but perhaps Margaret and the children remained in the Wyoming Valley until the fall and came up with Mrs. Woodworth and her children.

Mrs. Woodworth's daughter, Deborah Woodworth Tracy, remembers the trip up the Susquehanna:

We started in September 1788 in company with two more families, in what was called a durham boat, owing to our boat being heavily laden and the river low. We were fourteen days in going one hundred miles. Often times the men on coming to reefs would be obliged to carry the women on shore and with shovels make a channel for the boat to pass through. Two or three days after we started, Mother had an opportunity of getting passage in a light boat and arrived at Tioga before we did, Father being there to meet her. We stayed there until the crops were harvested and then went five miles up the Chemung where we spent the winter with a family by the name of Stoddard.



Durham Boat

The McDowell family could have spent the winter with any number of relatives who had made the same trip up the river--Robert's siblings Daniel McDowell and Winty Miller, or Margaret's cousins David and Henry McCormick.

Likely the McDowell family took up residence in their cabin at the head of Cayuga Lake by the fall of 1789. In March of 1790 the sixth child arrived, Robert, Jr. The last McDowell child was born in May of 1792. Henry lived only a few months and was buried in the Ithaca City Cemetery.

We have, second-hand, Margaret's impression of her homestead near Cayuga Lake.

I remember Mrs. McDowell. She was at quarterly meeting and spoke in love feast, and told how they came to Ithaca, and where they camped out the first night. She spoke of the cold spring that year and no roads to travel by.

Margaret McDowell is pretty famous in some circles for being the founder of Methodism in Ithaca. Rev. Charles D. Burritt tells the story with a flourish.

Early in 1793, there came a Baptist minister, Elder Starr, who settled in the place, and as soon as was convenient, gave out notice that he would preach. On a pleasant Sabbath morning in the month of June [sic: November 1793], the few inhabitants gathered for the first time in their new home, to listen to the Gospel's pleasant sound. Where the meeting was held we have not discovered, but probably in the house of one of the first three families mentioned, as we learn that the McDowall's left their home to attend it. Quite a number were present from the adjacent country, and among them were particularly observed two men who knelt during prayer. They were Methodists. After the sermon, one of these men, whose name was Conklin, and who resided about six miles north, arose and introduced his companion as a Methodist preacher, asking that he be permitted to preach to the people. He gave his name as William Colbert. Immediately after the re-

quest, Elder Starr arose and remarked that the Methodists were a new sect, holding strange doctrines, and said the people did not care to hear from him. Mrs. McDowall felt for the preacher, and proposed to her husband to invite him to preach in her house, which Mr. McDowall cheerfully acceded to, and in the evening, to an attentive congregation, the doctrines of free grace and full salvation were proclaimed. Mrs. McDowall heard with a sincere heart, felt that these blessed doctrines were those which she had been seeking for years, and began in her heart to say, "this people shall be my people; their God shall be my God." She became soon after a Methodist; the first in Ithaca.

William Colbert's pragmatic diary entry for Friday November 22, 1793, reads: *I preached at Mr. Atwater's from Acts III, 19, and baptized a child for Mr. Konkle and at night preached at Robert M'Dowall's, at the head of the Cayuga lake, from Isaiah XXI, 5.*

It is likely the traveling preacher William Colbert 1764-1833 knew of the McDowells before he found his way through the wilderness to the settlement at Cayuga Lake. Colbert often stopped at Daniel McDowell's house in Chemung and he visited Robert McDowell's sisters Sarah Jackson and Jane Blanchard in the Wyoming Valley. In 1804, Rev. Colbert married Elizabeth Stroud, daughter of Robert McDowell's sister Elizabeth and her husband Jacob Stroud.

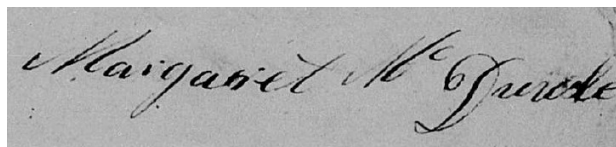
One hundred years later, the Methodists were still talking about Margaret. The June 1901 *Church Helper*, newsletter of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Ithaca, published a retrospective of the origins of Methodism in Ithaca.

In our last issue of the HELPER we traced the origin of Methodism here from the day of its first convert, in 1793, when a Presbyterian lady, Mrs. McDowell, gave herself and family to the cause, up to the coming of David Ayres among us in 1817. Here it should be said that the McDowell family lot in the oldest part of our village cemetery contains four graves, those of Mr. and Mrs. McDowell and two of their children, one buried in 1799, the oldest date on any stone in the cemetery. This lot should be speedily enclosed by an iron fence and religiously cared for by the Methodists of Ithaca as a sacred spot, since here lies its first convert, that elect Christian lady whose home was always open to the early itinerants for shelter and for services, and whose steadfast loyalty kept the society in existence until Mr. Ayers, under the providence of God, became its new life and leader.

In Ithaca, Margaret endured the deaths of five children between 1792 and 1812 and her husband in 1802.

Apparently the townspeople knew her as Peggy. After Robert's death, the name "Peggy McDowl" is entered in the Ulysses town records in the overseer of the poor account. Presumably Margaret was carrying on Robert's work—he had been the first overseer of the poor in Ulysses.

At Robert's death, Margaret was in charge of his estate. This is her signature from the inventory.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Margaret McDowell". The ink is dark and the paper appears aged.

At some point, aunt Euphios O'Neil came to Ithaca. In 1806, she was buried at the Ithaca City Cemetery, near the McDowell plot.

In 1808, Margaret left Ithaca. The homestead on South Hill was now occupied by her daughter Jane. Margaret moved to Halseyville to live with her daughter Euphios, married to Nicoll Halsey.

For the last years of her life, Margaret lived in this house--quite different from the log cabin she came to in 1789. The Halsey House, built in 1826, stands today.



The Nicoll Halsey House in Halseyville, Near Trumansburg, NY (Cafferty)

Books Lost. MEMOIRS of John and Charles Wesley, 2 vols. Life of John Wesley, 1 vol. Life of Mrs. Fletcher 1 vol. Pilgrims Progress, 1 vol. The friends to whom I have loaned these books will please return them soon. MARGARET McDOWELL. Halsey-Ville, Dec. 29th, 1834.
--

Just months before she died, Margaret placed this advertisement in the Trumansburg newspaper, asking friends to please return her books.

Margaret was buried in the McDowell plot in the Ithaca City Cemetery.

A notice in the August 5, 1835, *Trumansburg Advertiser* announced that a *Funeral Sermon on the death of Mrs. Margaret McDowell, late of the Town of Ulysses, will be preached in the Methodist Chapel in the Village of Ithaca, on Sunday, August 9, 1835.*

Margaret McDowell's Obituary

Trumansburg Advertiser and Weekly 4-29-1835

On the 27th April, 1835, at the house of the Hon. Nicoll Halsey, Mrs. MARGARET M'DOWELL, in the 76th year of her age. The biography of this devoted child of God, would be the history of the rise and progress of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the "Lake Country."

When 14 years of age she made a profession of religion and united with the Presbyterian church in some town in Chester Co., Pa. After her marriage with Robert M'Dowell, Esq., she lived in Wilkesbarre, until their removal to the "western wilds," where they ultimately settled at the head of Cayuga Lake, now Ithaca.

For the last 27 years she was resided with her son-in-law, at whose residence she died. Soon after her arrival at "the head of the Lake," she became acquainted with a doctrine in Theology at that time new to her, to wit, (using her own familiar phrase,) "FREE SALVATION." She embraced and loved the doctrine which then was, and still continues the praise and glory of the M.E. Church, to which she was immediately attached. The first quarterly Meeting ever held in this region, was held at her house.

More than 40 years ago the subject to this memoir, with the residue of the church, being five or six in number, accompanied the Rev. Messrs. Valentine Cook and Broadhead, to a quarterly meeting holden at Appletown (now Seneca Co.). The preachers and the little band above named, went to this meeting on horseback, following each other in single file along an Indian path. On their way tither, they met two men who enquired if they were Land hunting? The ministers replied, that they were soul hunting, and (strange as it may appear to some modern divines,) immediately set about seeking their souls, and did not leave them till they had solemnly commended them in God and the power of His Grace.



Mrs. M'Dowell at a Love Feast at Chenango Point, some years after this interesting occurrence, heard both of these individuals thank God, that some few years before, they were faithfully exhorted by some soul hunters who they had providentially met in the almost unbroken forests of the West.

Mrs. M'Dowell lived by faith in the Son of God, and amid the ravages of disease and death, that faith sustained and cheered her, and now we trust, the hope of her long pilgrimage is consummated in everlasting life. Communicated.

Illustration of the First Methodist Church in Ithaca, NY. Erected in 1819. 7-29-1989 The Ithaca Journal

Robert McDowell and the Yankee-Pennamite War

It is said that Robert McDowell and Jonathan Woodworth came to Cayuga Lake from Kingston, Pennsylvania. Kingston meant nothing to me, besides being a place to come from, until I came across a 1788 deed (using FamilySearch's experimental text search) filed in "Connecticut Patents, Kingston Township, Patent Records 1785-1810." In this deed, Robert McDowell sold his share of his father's property in Kingston to his siblings. Why was this deed filed in Connecticut Patents? What did Connecticut have to do with a guy living in Pennsylvania?

It turned out that Robert McDowell found himself right in the middle of the Yankee-Pennamite conflict in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania. Volumes have been written about this episode in history, all of which can be read for the whys and wherefores and details. Early on, Robert McDowell's father invested in four lots in Kingston totaling 427 acres. This investment caused more heartache and bloodshed for his family than he could have imagined.

I don't know the extent of Robert McDowell's participation in the many skirmishes and battles that took place. He was in his late teens and early 20s at the time. A family story says he was at the Wyoming Massacre in 1778. More certain is his part in the civic/political activities in the Wyoming Valley, where numerous documents include his name.

In short, King Charles II of England granted Connecticut and William Penn, proprietor of Pennsylvania, the same (some say overlapping) tract of land which included the Wyoming Valley. (Bad maps? Poor memory?) Situated along the Susquehanna River, it was a huge attraction to settlers. In 1753 a Connecticut entity called the Susquehanna Company was set up to sell the land. By 1768, the Company had divided the Wyoming Valley into townships: Wilkes-Barre, Hanover, Plymouth, Kingston, and Pittston.

In 1769, a group of men who had purchased land through the Susquehanna Company (Yankees) arrived in the Wyoming Valley to take possession of their land. Here they met an equally determined group of Pennsylvania settlers (Pennamites) already in residence. This was the start of a 30-year conflict between the two groups over title to the land, intersected by the Battle of Wyoming during the Revolutionary War.



The Valley of Wyoming
Jasper Francis Cropsey, 1865

Robert McDowell's father, John McDowell 1714-1779, settled in the Cherry Valley in what is now Monroe County, PA. His farm was located about seven miles west of the Delaware Water Gap, five miles southwest of Stroudsburg, and three miles east of Jacob Brinker's mill. John McDowell and some of his Pennsylvania neighbors purchased lots from the Susquehanna Company. John McDowell along with Zebulon Butler, Obadiah Gore and Elijah Shoemaker were among the original purchasers. It's unlikely John McDowell ever lived in the Wyoming Valley. Four of his children, Robert, Daniel, Sarah and Jane, braved this dangerous outpost.

The route from the Delaware River to the Wyoming Valley passed by John McDowell's farm on Cherry Creek. It then turned northwesterly and ran through mountain gaps and the Great Swamp, "a rough and gloomy country covered with pine, spruce, laurel bushes and hemlock and thickets, mire and ooze." Near the Wyoming Valley the trail went through the Shades of Death, an area rendered dark and lonely by the thick tree canopy. Anyone fleeing from the battles in the Wyoming Valley would first plunge into the Shades of Death before struggling the 40 or 50 miles across the Great Swamp to the Delaware River and safety.



Nicholas Scull, 1777
<https://www.raremaps.com/gallery/detail/42691>

John McDowell lived in this area. Smithfield and Scots are early names for Cherry Creek.

After the initial conflict of 1769, the balance of power seemed to shift monthly, but by 1771 the Yankees were in control and hostilities ceased for a while. There had been a lot of arrests, jail time, and destruction of property, but apparently few people died in the conflict.

Hostilities flared again in 1774. In December of 1775, Pennsylvania sent in a large force to expel the Yankees. John McDowell got wind of this and hastened to the Wyoming Valley. The Yankees gained the upper hand in this conflict.

- Letter of 12-13-1775 Charles Stewart to Governor Penn: *I had daily intelligence from Wyoming whilst I was over the mountain. Great divisions have arisen at Wyoming lately....John McDowel and his son-in-law, Jacob Stroud, from Fort Penn, set off last Sunday to bring away from Wyoming their relations, who are numerous, and secure the moneys due them at Wyoming, which are considerable.* (H2/851)

The revolutionary war started in 1775. The names of Robert McDowell, his brother Daniel McDowell, brother-in-law Col. Jacob Stroud (whose home became Fort Penn) and Henry and David McCormick are found in Northampton County's "Rangers on the Frontier." Their job was to patrol the frontier and provide warning of approaching trouble. McDowell's sisters Sarah McDowell Lee and Jane McDowell Shoemaker were living in Kingston at this time.



The infamous Battle of Wyoming, or Wyoming Massacre, was fought on July 3, 1778. A contingent of British troops, Tories and Indians descended on the Wyoming Valley. It was a bloodbath, resulting in the deaths of 160 or more militia fighting in defense of the Valley. Many were killed by Indians as they tried to escape or after they had been taken prisoner. Lieut. Elijah Shoemaker, husband of Jane McDowell, was tomahawked by a traitorous acquaintance. The settlement was plundered and burned. Jane and her sister Sarah fled with their tiny babies and hundreds of other women and children through the Great Swamp to places of safety. Jacob Stroud's Fort Penn provided shelter to the refugees. John McDowell's home was always open to the troubled Wyoming settlers.

The following family story comes via Dr. Comstock, as told to him by Euphios and Nicoll Halsey. The time frame of the story is after Robert McDowell came to Cayuga Lake in 1788. Michigan Hill is an early name for South Hill.

The Indians who occupied the hill, now called Michigan hill, then called Indian town, supplied the new settlement with venison and other game. One of this number at least was a participant in the bloody massacre of Wyoming. He was recognized as the Indian who shot Mr. McDowell's horse upon which he was fleeing, at the same time shooting him in the leg.

- The McDowell land, about three miles from Forty Fort, was chosen as the site for a mass grave for the victims of this battle. In October 1778, Lieut. John Jenkins was put in charge of a burial party. The men gathered the remains off the battlefield and buried them in McDowell's meadow near the Susquehanna River. Thirty years later, the bones were removed and eventually placed in a vault beneath the Wyoming Memorial (photo) that stands on the same property in today's Wyoming Borough. (Brewster 172, 627-28)

The father John McDowell died in 1779. In 1780, Robert McDowell, biding his time until it was safe to return to the Wyoming Valley, was operating the farm in Cherry Valley and married to Margaret McCormick. The widowed sister Jane and her child were also living on the farm. Listed as "McDool," Robert appears on a 1781 tax list for Hamilton Township. Margaret's cousin Henry McCormick is also listed.

By 1783, the siblings Robert, Daniel (free after being captured by Indians on June 12, 1782), Sarah and Jane returned to the Wyoming Valley.

Also in 1783, the Jonathan Woodworth family, coming from Connecticut, arrived in the Wyoming Valley, after a trek across the Great Swamp. Likely the Woodworths were close neighbors to the McDowell family. (List of settlers 1783 - H3/1332)

On December 30, 1782, the Decree of Trenton was issued. It declared that the Wyoming Valley belonged to Pennsylvania. The Yankees would have to give up their property claims. At this point, records show Robert McDowell's presence in the Wyoming Valley.

- Faced with expulsion, the Yankee settlers started to look for somewhere else to live. On February 12, 1783, at Wilkes-Barre, 396 residents, including Robert and Daniel McDowell and Jonathan Woodworth, signed an agreement appointing Obadiah Gore as their agent to explore a tract of land in New York State. (S7/261)

Gore presented a petition to the New York Legislature requesting the state *Grant lands on the Susqh. River beginning near the mouth of Owego Creek, or where the Pennsylvania line crosses the said Susqh. River and extending up said river (and including the water of the same) to Onoquaga (today Windsor, NY), be appropriated and surveyed, 500 acres to each memorialist.* (S7/269)

Receiving no response to this first request, on January 26, 1784, Gore presented to the New York State Legislature a sketch of six towns and an interesting reference to Cayuga Lake: *I have, with a number of said Inhabitants, surveyed and Designated six towns of six miles square--as laid down by a Sketch herewith Exhibited; and would point out a suitable Tract of land on the East side of the Cayuga Lake (at or near the Cayuga Town), to extend southerly by said Lake, to accommodate the rest of said Inhabitants.* (S7/348)

Lieut. Obadiah Gore had first-hand knowledge of Cayuga Lake. During the Sullivan Campaign (1779), he was part of the 600 man party under Col. William Butler sent down the east side of Cayuga Lake to destroy Indian towns and crops. But, as we know, the land surrounding Cayuga Lake was surveyed for the Military Tract.

- In April of 1783, a list was compiled of Wyoming Valley settlers divided according to political outlook--those who supported the laws of Pennsylvania and those aligned with Connecticut. Robert McDowell is listed under Connecticut. (S7/290)

In September 1783, Alexander Patterson and company arrived to enforce the Decree of Trenton. His method of enforcement was severe harassment and brute force. Patterson had been terrorizing the Valley for a month when he crossed paths with Robert McDowell.

Testimony was taken from people wronged by Patterson and his ilk. Robert McDowell gave the following deposition. On March 19, 1784, a hearing was held before the Pennsylvania General Assembly regarding the investigation of Patterson's conduct. Berks County representative Col. Daniel Clymer read McDowell's deposition in his absence. Author Oscar J. Harvey found this deposition in one of Col. John Franklin's "Plain Truth" articles published October and November 1804 in *The Luzerne Federalist*. (H3/1352 and S7/452)

Robert McDowel, being sworn, deposed that in October last (1783) he was standing at the Wilkes-Barre Garrison; was taken by Elisha Courtright and taken before Esquire Seeley. When deponent came there he was told that a complaint had been made against him by Ezekiel Schoonover and Lieut. (Moses) Van Campen that deponent had said that the authorities here had no authority to act. The constable took deponent to the fort by Seeley's orders. Captain Shrawder told deponent that for his conduct the corporal should take care of him until he could be sent to Sunbury. Deponent was sent by a corporal to Sunbury, to be committed by a mittimus from Seeley. He (McDowel) got bail at Sunbury and returned home.

After being at home a day or two Constable Courtright came to deponent and told him that Esquire Patterson wanted to see him. Deponent went to John Hollenback's [inn], went into the room where Patterson was and sat down. Patterson told deponent to stand up, which he did. Deponent was asked who was his bail at Northumberland. Patterson said, 'the authorities at Northumberland laugh at our authority here, therefore I will have you put in irons and will send you back again.' Upon which Patterson called the Sheriff a number of times, when the Under Sheriff, Simms, came. Says Patterson, 'I command you in the name of the United States to take this man and put him in irons, and take him down to Sunbury.'

The Sheriff took deponent into custody. On their way to Yarrington's (at the Garrison) they met Captain Robinson, who told deponent to stay at Yarrington's until next morning, and he would try to settle the matter. He advised deponent to take a lease of his house, or of a piece of land, and said that would settle the whole--the old and new affair. Deponent declined taking a lease, and then walked to Hollenback's with Captain Robinson; stayed there some time with him and the Sheriff. After some conversation Captain Robinson and the Sheriff said to deponent, 'You may go home and not meddle yourself any more with the affair; you may go and stay at home in peace.' Deponent went home.*

Afterwards he was on his way from home to attend Court at Northumberland. He called at a public house in Salem; went in where there were a number of people drinking, and among them deponent saw Esquire Patterson, who, casting his eyes upon him said: 'So! So! McDowel, you are here. Will you sit in company with a tinker.' (Patterson was a tinker by occupation). Deponent said: 'A body will do anything at times.' At that Patterson said: 'You rascal, begone out of the house this minute,' and at the same instant arose, and did not give deponent time to go out before he knocked off deponents hat, and then struck him twice on the side of his head, and then shoved him out of the house. Deponent went to Sunbury court, stayed there about three days, and then was discharged without any trial. (H3/1352-1353)

*Under rules issued after the Decree of Trenton, the Yankees were to relinquish their claims in writing, lease one-half of their land to a Pennamite until April 1, 1784 and then sell or remove their buildings and leave their land entirely. Robert McDowell was having none of this.

- Ninety people, including Robert McDowell and his sister Jane Shoemaker, signed a petition dated November 11, 1783. It implored the Continental Congress to provide a *Court agreeable to the Ninth Article of the Confederation finally to hear and determine relative to the title of said Lands between the Petitioners & the State of Pennsylvania.* (S7/320)
The Ninth Article provides that Congress will help resolve conflicts between states relating to boundaries, jurisdiction and other issues, but only as a last resort.

Throughout 1784, the Wyoming Valley was a scene of constant conflict. Patterson and his soldiers kept up the harassment of the Yankees. Families were turned out of their homes, food and personal property stolen or destroyed. Cattle were driven away, fishing seines destroyed and highways and fences obliterated. Water supplies were polluted and wells filled up. Men deemed opposed to the rule of Pennsylvania were harassed and jailed (like Robert McDowell).

To add to the general misery, the valley was inundated by the Great Flood of March 15, 1784, which swept away homes and everything else in its path. Jonathan Woodworth's daughter Deborah wrote of this flood in her remembrances.

The April 3, 1784 *Pennsylvania Journal and the Weekly Advertiser* (Philadelphia) published extracts of a letter from Wyoming. Robert McDowell and Nicholas Dupuis (probably a cousin to McDowell) were able to save their cattle and horses.

Extract of a letter from Wyoming, dated March 20.
 "The late great fresh, at the breaking up of Susquehanna, has been most distressing to the inhabitants living on the low lands. In the neighbourhood of Kingston, Robert McDowal and Nicholas Dupuis, drove off their cattle and horses in haste, when the fresh was coming on, but all those belonging to their neighbours perished. Every house was swept away, and their provisions almost totally destroyed.
 "At Jacob's Plains and Abraham's Plains, only three houses are left in that neighbourhood. Frederick Jackson, from Jacob's Plains, is missing, supposed to be drowned. In the Shawanese settlement, there is not a building left on the low lands, their goods and provisions are mostly destroyed; and not a mill being left in all our settlements, the inhabitants are under the necessity of boiling wheat and corn to support their families.
 "Kingston settlement consisted of about 30 families; those at Jacob's and Abraham's Plains, of about 35 families; and that on Shawanese low grounds, of about 40 families.
 "This is the unhappy situation of the few inhabitants of Wyoming, who have so lately suffered every danger on this side death, many of their nearest and tenderest connections having gallantly lost their lives in defence of their country, and had their houses burnt, and plantations laid waste, by the relentless fury of the savages!
 "The distresses of the war obliged us to build our houses in the low grounds, for the better defence against our enemies. But we were not apprehensive of the dreadful consequences of a deluge, which has left us in a most distressed situation!"

In the neighborhood of Kingston, Robert M'Dowal and Nicholas Dupuis drove off their cattle and horses in haste, when the fresh was coming on, but all those belonging to their neighbours perished. Every house was swept away and their provisions almost totally destroyed.

In the ongoing campaign to rid the Valley of Yankees, on May 13, 1784, Patterson and his soldiers expelled 150 families. They were forced out of their homes and pushed out of the valley. For seven days, 800 dispossessed men, women and children struggled through the Great Swamp to the Delaware River.

- After this last egregious act, Pennsylvania state sheriffs and deputies were sent in to round up Patterson and his men. At the beginning of June, 1784, Sheriff Antes dispatched Robert McDowell to the Delaware to inform the refugees they could return home. (H3/1386)

The returning Yankees found Pennamites squatting on their land. Hostilities escalated. In the meantime, charges were brought against Patterson and his people for riot, assault, robbery and false imprisonment. They were found guilty, fined and fired from their positions. This undermined the power of the Pennamites and the last Pennsylvania troops left the valley at the end of November.

- In the last week of October 1784, Robert McDowell, Col. Zebulon Butler, Samuel Decker and “other influential members of the Susquehanna Company” went to the courthouse in Easton to look after the interests of eleven men who had been arrested by Patterson on trumped up murder charges. The case was thrown out and McDowell and his companions covered the jail fees and costs for the men in return for notes. (H3/1451)
- In November of 1784, Col. John Franklin dispatched Robert McDowell to Easton with two guineas “for the prisoners.” (Miner, p. 368)

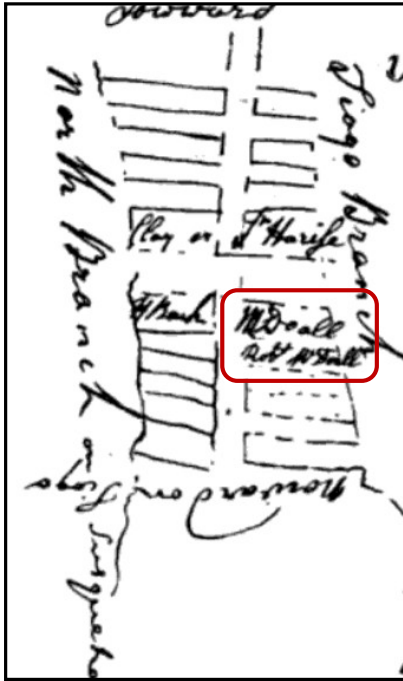
In the midst of all this, life went on. Robert McDowell’s third child, Euphios, was born at Forty Fort on May 26, 1784.

During 1785 and 1786, the Yankees strove to move forward, governing their own lives and working political systems to secure title to their properties in the Wyoming Valley.

- A petition, dated February 20, 1785, and signed by 92 men and four woman who had settled under rights acquired from the Susquehanna Company, was sent to the Legislature in Philadelphia. The petition asked for the placement of a fair civil authority to govern their area. Among the signers were Robert McDowell, Jonathan Woodworth, and McDowell’s widowed sisters Sarah Lee and Jane Shoemaker. (H3/1464)

On September 25, 1786, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed a resolution that created Luzerne County. The Wyoming Valley inhabitants were no longer residents of Westmoreland County, Connecticut.

In May of 1786, the Susquehanna Company’s Committee for Granting Townships, composed of Zebulon Butler, Obadiah Gore and others, issued a grant for the formation of the township of Athens, located in today’s Bradford County, Pennsylvania. And, of course, the tract encompassed the same piece of land recently granted by Pennsylvania to Josiah Lockhart.



- On May 1, 1785, the State of Pennsylvania held a land lottery and Josiah Lockhart of Lancaster drew the first ticket. He chose a 1,038 acre tract on Tioga Point which would include the village of Tioga Point/Athens. Mr. Lockhart sketched this village plan and here we find the names of Robert McDowell and his brother Daniel McDowell (McDoall). By conventional standards, the plan is upside down. Turn it around and you'll see, bracketing Tioga Point, the Tioga Branch (Chemung River) to the west and the North Branch of the Susquehanna River to the east. (Murray, p. 262)

Already situated on the site was the store of Matthias Hollenback who had come up to Tioga Point from Wilkes-Barre around 1784 to establish a branch of his lucrative trading post. Hollenback escaped death during the Wyoming Massacre and was able to help the women and children in their flight through the Great Swamp.

On September 12, 1782, Robert McDowell's brother Daniel was captured by Indians and taken to Niagara. As the story goes, on the way, the party spent a night near Chemung. Daniel was impressed by the beauty and richness of the area and vowed to return if he made it through the ordeal. Return he did, and history tells us he was one of the first store clerks at Hollenback's trading post.

Lockhart sent this map to Matthias Hollenback on July 27, 1785. The inclusion of the McDowell brothers on the map was probably speculative, or maybe they actually were leasing lots. Daniel and other Wyoming Valley people would draw lots in the new township of Athens from the Susquehanna Company.

Tired of the struggle to settle title to their lands in the Wyoming Valley, Col. John Franklin (de facto leader of the Yankees in the Wyoming Valley) lead a movement to create a new, independent State and, some say, Tioga Point/Athens would be its capital. Ethan Allen and some of his Green Mountain Boys showed up to spur on the cause. After so many years of unendurable repression, Franklin and his followers felt this was a justifiable action. The state of Pennsylvania would view it as treason.

In May and June of 1786, on behalf of the Susquehanna Company, John Franklin and John Jenkins surveyed the new township of Athens. Though Daniel McDowell drew Lot No. 1 in the second division, he didn't settle there. In 1788, he became a founding settler and the first town clerk of Chemung in New York State.

Josiah Lockhart's map - *History of Old Tioga Point and Early Athens, PA* by Louise W. Murray, 1908, p. 262 <https://books.google.com/books?id=PkgVAAAAAYAAJ>

Franklin/Jenkins plats of Athens Township and Village - *Early Times on the Susquehanna*, 2nd Edition, Mrs. George A. Perkins/Mrs. Sarah Perkins Elmer, 1906, pp. 95, 99, 107 and 254 <https://archive.org/details/cu31924028854770>

Meanwhile, back in the Wyoming Valley, in the newly-formed Luzerne County:

- A general election was held in February of 1787. Robert McDowell and Jonathan Woodworth ran for the post of Commissioner. (S9/18) They each received one vote. Did they vote for each other or each for himself?
- On April 26, 1787, Robert M'Dowl of Kingston, yeoman, swore an Oath of Allegiance to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. (S9/114)
- In November 1787, a county militia was formed and Robert McDowell was appointed Captain for the Lower District of Kingston. (H3/1581)
- Margaret McDowell's cousins, Henry and David McCormick, appear in the 1787 records of the Susquehanna Company. (S9/108) David had just married a daughter of Robert McDowell's sister Winty.

By the start of 1788 Robert McDowell was ready for a change. His brother Daniel had left in the spring of 1786 with others from the Wyoming Valley to settle in Chemung, NY. In the same year, Robert's sister Wyntje and her husband Abraham Miller joined Daniel in Chemung.

Two years before, in 1786, Robert had sold his interest in his father's farm in Cherry Valley. On November 22, 1786, Robert McDowell, yeoman, of Wyoming, Kingstownship, Luzerne County, eldest living son of John McDowell, deeded to his siblings an undivided half of his two-tenths share. Sale price was £174.8. (Northampton Co. Deed G1/417) On the same day, Robert sold the other undivided half of his two-tenths share to his brother-in-law Jacob Stroud for the same amount of money. (Northampton Co. Deed G1/418) Witnesses were Elijah Drake and George Palmer. John McDowell's farm eventually ended up in the hands of his daughter Hannah and her husband John Shaw. (See Odds and Ends for a description of the McDowell farm.)

Robert McDowell's widowed sister Sarah married Philip Jackson and the McDowell land in the Wyoming Valley was in good hands.

In the spring of 1788, Robert McDowell, Jonathan Woodworth and Ira Stephens (another Wyomingite) travelled up the Susquehanna from Kingston. They would meet family and friends in Tioga Point and Chemung. Then they went up to Cayuga Lake to scout around for a few days. Robert McDowell and others returned to Cayuga Lake in July and spent six weeks cutting, drying and stacking 60 tons of hay for their cattle which were driven up in the fall. Peter Heinpaugh and Isaac Dumond appeared on the scene.

A decision made, Robert McDowell went back to Kingston to sell his share of his father's land. On September 26, 1788, Robert McDowell of Kingston, Luzerne County, sold his two-tenths share of his father's land in Kingston to Philip Jackson, second husband of Sarah McDowell, for £50. Witnesses Lord Butler and Thos Duane. (Luzerne Co. Deed 1/362 or the Connecticut Patent File)

In future years, Robert McDowell made a few trips back to Northampton and Luzerne counties. On August 12, 1790, he appeared in Northampton County to verify the signatures of his sisters Jane and Sara for the filing of a 1787 deed transferring their shares of their father's Cherry Valley farm to Hannah and John Shaw. (Northampton Co. Deed G1/347) This deed was dated June 27, 1787 and witnessed by Robert McDowell and Henry McCormick.

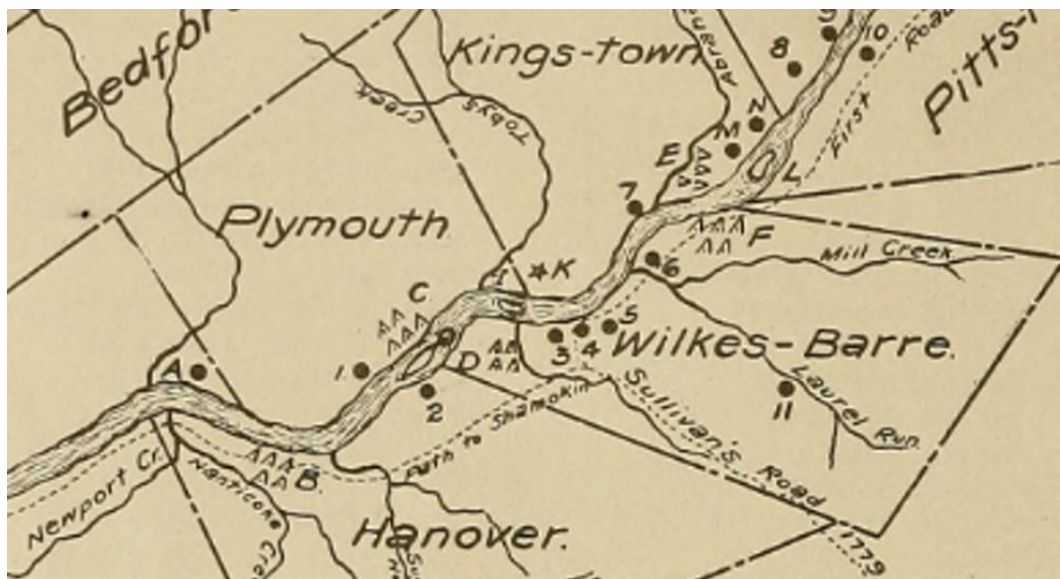
On April 26, 1794, Robert McDowl of Onondaga County, New York, sold his share of Lot 30 in Providence Township, which his father had acquired from the Susquehanna Company. Robert's 1/5 undivided part was purchased by Conrad Lutz for £20. Witnesses were Lord Butler and Amhurst Taylor. (Luzerne Co. Deed 3/23)

On February 5, 1787, Sarah McDowell Lee and 129 others residents of the Wyoming Valley, signed a petition directed to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. They thanked the Assembly for making the district a separate county and then expressed their need to have something done about confirming title to their lands. The stress of the past years was summed up in this paragraph. (S9/23)

These lands have been the source of such disorders, such losses, and such sufferings, that we have reason to deplore the fatal day when we and our fathers first set foot upon this hostile ground. But here we now are, an indigent and distressed people. A people whose substance often acquired, has often been destroyed. Even what our various enemies at any time left us, or allowed us respite to procure, has repeatedly been overwhelmed & ruined, or swept away, by destructive floods. So that we are now more wretched, and are enduring greater hardships, than at the first moment of our migration hither.

Map of the Wyoming Valley in the Early Days

- 7. Forty Fort
- 8. Wyoming Massacre
- K. Kingston
- M. Wyoming Monument located on McDowell land



Stephens, J.B., *History and Directory of Newton and Ransom Townships, Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania*, 1912, p. 8 <https://archive.org/details/historydirectory00step/page/n3/mode/2up>

Did any of the McDowell boys serve during the Sullivan Campaign? Did Robert get a first-hand view of Cayuga Lake in 1779 before he made a bee-line for its shores in 1788?

There were three boys in the John McDowell family. The eldest, John, Jr., died in a skirmish with Indians, but the date is uncertain. The 2013 obituary for Boyd McDowell, a descendant of Daniel McDowell, claimed Daniel was with the Sullivan Campaign. As far as I can tell, there are no family stories hinting at Robert McDowell's participation in the Sullivan Campaign. There is only the one story about the Wyoming Massacre.

Sullivan's army included two militia groups from Wyoming (Simon Spaulding's Independent Wyoming and Capt. John Franklin's Wyoming Militia), but the records are lost. So, we'll just have to wonder what exactly impelled Robert to bypass his siblings and acquaintances in Tioga Point and Chemung and trek through the wilderness up to Cayuga Lake.



There was every opportunity for Robert McDowell to join up with the Sullivan Campaign. On its way from Easton to Wyoming, the army picked up stores at Brinker's Mills, three miles from the McDowell farm in Cherry Valley, and there was a lengthy stay in Wyoming waiting for supplies. Robert could have joined up at either place. Another point of contact could have been Fort Penn, the home/fort of Robert's brother-in-law Col. Jacob Stroud which was close to the Cherry Valley farm. The company of Lieut. John L. Hardenbergh stopped here for a few days on account of rain before proceeding to Wyoming.

On September 20, 1779, Lieut. John Jenkins wrote in his diary that *Lieut. Gore went on a command with Col. Butler to the Cayuga Lake*. Lieut. Obadiah Gore and Lieut. John Jenkins were residents and civic leaders in the Wyoming Valley. Gore was part of the 600 man party under Col. William Butler sent by Sullivan down the east side of Cayuga Lake to destroy Indian towns and crops. So Obadiah Gore got a first-hand look at the country and later recommended it for settlement by Wyoming Valley people.

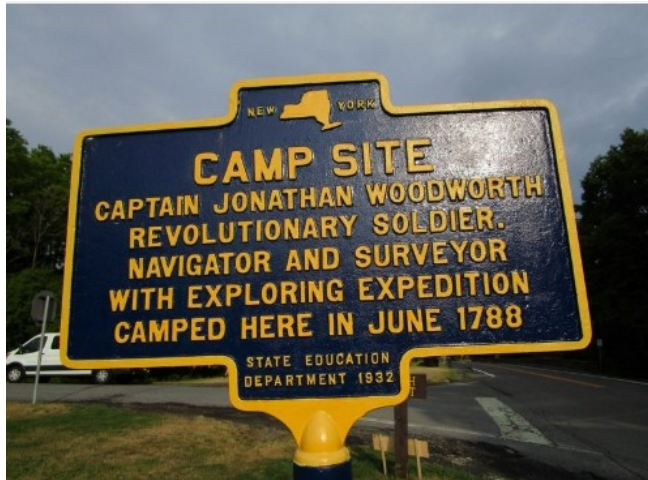
On their return home to Kingston, surely Gore and Jenkins described the land around the lake. Every soldier who kept a diary remarked on the beautiful land, well-built structures and the bountiful crops, gardens and fruit trees--before applying the torch.

The father John McDowell died September 25, 1779. I thought maybe if his father had a lingering illness, Robert McDowell would be needed at home to run the farm instead of going off with Sullivan. But likely not. One month before he died, John McDowell was issued a grand jury indictment for running a Tippling House without a license!

Map of Gen. Sullivan's march from Easton to the Seneca & Cayuga countries.
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3791s.ar106400/?r=0.741,0.764,0.464,0.214,0>

Cook, Frederick, *Journals of the Military Expedition of Major John Sullivan Against the Six Nations of Indians in 1779*, 1887 <https://archive.org/details/cu31924095654384/mode/2up?view=theater>

Who is Jonathan Woodworth?



In December of 1783, Jonathan Woodworth 1738-1818 brought his family from Connecticut to the Wyoming Valley. On the last day of their trek across the Great Swamp, a company of armed men from the settlement came out to escort them safely into Wilkes-Barre. The family included wife Mercy and children Nehemiah, Charles, Deborah, Jonathan and Oliver.

The Woodworth family soon moved to a site about one mile above Forty Fort. It is likely they were neighbors to the McDowell family. This culminated in their collaborative move to Cayuga Lake.

In the summer of 1787, the Susquehanna Committee hired Jonathan Woodworth to re-survey Kingston. Woodworth was to follow the old boundaries as much as possible. The map was certified by the state surveyor under the Compromising Act of 1799 and used to issue warrants that finally settled the land titles. (Brewster, pgs 38, 80)

The year 1788 finds Jonathan Woodworth leading the expedition to the shores of Cayuga Lake. His boys Nehemiah, age 20, and Charles, age 18, and Squire Robert McDowell were among the explorers. Along the way, the expedition camped by Taughannock Creek, commemorated by the above sign.

But, better than a roadside plaque to be remembered by, Jonathan Woodworth's children left behind their stories of the move to Cayuga Lake. In 1845, Nehemiah's memories were set down by Covert Town Historian Orlo Horton. Before her death in 1854, Deborah Woodworth Tracy penned her own story.

Jonathan Woodworth was nearing 50 years in age when the pioneers headed for Cayuga Lake. He had spent a life-time on the sea, straight through the Revolutionary War, and his adventures were many. His daughter attributes the family's move to the Wyoming Valley as her father's wish to "prevent his sons from going to sea, as he said he was unwilling they should suffer what he had."

It is said Jonathan Woodworth built a cabin on land by the old County Courthouse, which would put him a bit northeast of DeWitt Park, but on the same block. As told by Deborah Woodworth, the family was flooded out of their first cabin in the Inlet Valley, south of Buttermilk Falls. They made a dramatic escape to higher ground at today's DeWitt Park.

By about 1793, the Woodworth family moved north to Lansing, then over to Ovid, now called Covert, and put down roots.

Jonathan Woodworth's Findagrave memorial has a round-up of his military service.
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/210363861/jonathan-woodworth>

Who is Ira Stephens?

Most stories about Robert McDowell lead off: *In 1786 [sic: 1788] Robert McDowell, Ira Stevens and Jonathan Woodworth moved with their families from Kingston, near Wilkesbarre, Pa. to Tioga Point and Chemung.* And this is the last we hear of Ira Stevens/Stephens in connection with Robert McDowell (except if he was the Stevens involved in the bear incident on Cayuga Lake, and he probably was). Who was Ira and where was he going on the trip up the Susquehanna? Apparently his destination was Athens/Tioga Point where he had drawn three lots from the Susquehanna Company.

Ira's father Jedediah Stephens 1716-1790 left Connecticut for Plymouth in the Wyoming Valley in the 1770s, bringing along his wife and a dozen or so kids, one of whom was Ira, born in 1759. Ira shows up in the records of the Wyoming Valley. His 16-year-old brother Rufus was killed and scalped by Indians at the Battle of Wyoming. In 1786, Ira Stephens and Jonathan Woodworth were witnesses to a will.

A Sons of the American Revolution application reports Ira Stephens was a private in Captain Spaulding's "Independent Company" of Wyoming. He enlisted in 1777, served until 1780 and was at Valley Forge, in the battle of Germantown, and with the Sullivan Campaign. Maybe it was Ira who was familiar with Cayuga Lake and pointed his friends in that direction.

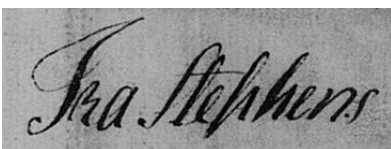
In 1786, when the Susquehanna Company laid out the town of Athens/Tioga Point, Ira drew three lots: 1st Division, small town lots, Lot 42. 2nd Division, 10 acre lots, Lot 4. 3rd Division, 100 acre farm lots, Lot 53. Perhaps it was on Ira Stephens' land that Jonathan Woodworth planted crops in the spring of 1788?

Ira Stephens first settled on his Lot 4, then moved up to his 3rd division lot, then he purchased a lot further north. Finally he crossed the state line and contracted for land in Angelica, New York. Louise Welles Murray, in her *History of Old Tioga Point*, thought Ira kept moving north to escape the controversy surrounding the Connecticut claim to the land in Athens township.

Ira was killed in Angelica in 1803, age 43. The stories vary. He was killed by a desperado. He had a dispute with neighbors about a dog. He was involved in a poker game gone wrong. Or, most curiously, as Oscar J. Harvey diplomatically reported: "He was killed in a personal difficulty concerning the Pennsylvania and Connecticut titles."

Either way, it is said his opponent struck him on the head with an elm wood club (or Ira's own walking stick). The club was planted over Ira's grave (or in the grave), from which a large elm tree grew. It was said the bark of the tree turned blood red on the anniversary of his death.

Ira took part in the civic duties of his community and had the wherewithal to accumulate enough land to ensure his family's future--though he was caught short in Angelica. After his death, his widow Sybil, with her four-month-old daughter in her arms, got on her horse and drove a herd of young cattle up to Angelica to pay off the last installment.



Signature of Ira Stephens of Athens selling land in Kingston, 1794. Connecticut Patents, FamilySearch Roll 8576602, Image 142 of 773

Who is Richard Loomis?

Thanks to the remembrances of Deborah Woodworth Tracy, we know Richard Loomis was Robert McDowell's right-hand-man in the move from Kingston to Cayuga Lake.

Nicoll Halsey's remembrances as reported in *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins and Schuyler Counties*:

Halsey mistakenly dated this event 1787, but it was in July of 1788 that Robert McDowell, Nehemiah and Charles Woodworth (sons of Jonathan Woodworth), Abram Smith (and/or David Smith), Joseph Smith and Richard Loomis came from Chemung to the head of Cayuga Lake. They cut, dried and stacked 60 tons of marsh hay to feed their cattle during the coming winter. Then they returned to Chemung.

Deborah Woodworth Tracy, daughter of Jonathan Woodworth:

Deborah described Richard Loomis as "a hired man of Esq. McDoles." She tells that in the fall of 1788, her brothers and Richard Loomis, with the help of others, drove the cattle to Cayuga Lake.

Nehemiah Woodworth picks up the story in which Richard's last name is spelled Lumas:

In October 1788, driving their 70 head of cattle and horses, the party returned to Cayuga Lake where they built a log cabin at Puff's. They fashioned a canoe from a large pine log and had a few adventures on the lake. One involved the dangerous undertaking of killing a bear in the water. The party returned to Chemung leaving Abram Smith with the cattle.



The episode of killing the bear in Cayuga Lake, with "Stevens" delivering the fatal blow, has been immortalized by the imagination of artist W. Glenn Norris.

A description of the watercolor: *Mouth of Salm-on Creek on East Side of Cayuga Lake Looking South. McDowell, Woodworths and Loomis, first of Ithaca's settlers start on an exploring trip down the lake in a dug-out. They see a huge bear swimming in the lake and give battle. 1957. DeWitt Historical Society Museum, gift of Mrs. Norris.*

See a photo of the entire painting here:

<https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15085coll6/id/1/rec/8>

Continuing on with Nehemiah Woodworth's remembrances:

In December of 1788, Nehemiah Woodworth and Richard Lumas returned to Ithaca Flats, bringing with them four pack horses loaded with provisions. They quietly approached the cabin to see what Abram Smith was up to. As a joke Richard shot off his

gun which frightened Abram half senseless. In the latter part of December 1788, they moved down to the lower flat and constructed a cabin near where the Court House now stands.

In February 1789, Nehemiah Woodworth, Richard Lumas and their dog set out for Chemung to get supplies. They took an unfamiliar route and the two-day trip stretched to five. They travelled through snow storms (on snowshoes made by Peter Hinepaugh) and intense cold. Richard fell over a log and the compass broke. At one point they discovered they had been going around in circles. They had to wade creeks and climb steep ridges. They ran out of food and contemplated eating the dog. At last they made it to the house of Nehemiah's father, Jonathan Woodworth.

Dr. Oliver C. Comstock, son-in-law of Euphius and Nicoll Halsey:

In 1881 Dr. Comstock's reminiscences, based on stores told to him by Euphius and Nicoll Halsey, were published in the 4-4-1881 *Ithaca Daily Journal*.

In 1789...Robert and Margaret McDowell removed to the head of Cayuga Lake now called Ithaca. At this point there were but three white man, to wit: Robert McDowell, David Smith and Richard Loomis. Mr. McDowell was the only one married.

* * * * *

There is only one Richard Loomis who fits the bill. Richard Loomis born July 4, 1766 in Tolland County, Connecticut, died January 27, 1856 in Machias, Cattaraugus County, New York. Richard married Phebe Ives September 10, 1795 in Plymouth Township, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. Their children were Amon, Alanson, Elizabeth and William.

It is said Richard Loomis was the son of Nathaniel Loomis, born 1740 in Connecticut. Nathaniel Loomis is an interesting genealogical problem and it is unknown how his son Richard crossed paths with Robert McDowell.

To accomplish the move from the Wyoming Valley to Cayuga Lake in 1788, Jonathan Woodworth had the help of his two oldest boys, Nehemiah age 20 and Charles age 18. Robert McDowell's off-spring were under eight years in age and Margaret had just given birth. He surely could use the help of a strong young man. Richard Loomis was 22 and probably up for whatever happened.

After the adventures at Cayuga Lake, which I am sure he remembered for the rest of his life, Richard Loomis is next found in the Wyoming Valley. On January 23, 1790, Richard Loomis and Benjamin Carpenter witnessed the deed of Peleg Comstock to Laban Blanchard. The deed transferred Lot 16 of the second division in Kingston. (Luzerne Co. Deed 1/222) There are interesting connections in this deed.

Laban Blanchard is the second husband of Robert McDowell's sister Jane. Her first husband, Elijah Shoemaker, was killed during the Battle of Wyoming in 1778, cruelly slain by an acquaintance offering help with one hand and a tomahawk with the other.

Benjamin Carpenter 1750-1823 came to the Wyoming Valley in the early 1770s with his brother Gilbert 1746-1819 and set up the first mills. During the Wyoming Massacre, Benjamin Carpenter and Anning Owen escaped death by hiding in bushes by the river. From this vantage point they were eyewitnesses to the death of Elijah Shoemaker. Either Benjamin or Gilbert Carpenter must surely be the Esq. Carpenter, millwright, mentioned in the story told by Nehemiah Woodworth. During the initial exploration of Cayuga Lake in June of 1788 "one Squire Carpenter, a millright, belonging to the company went up the ravine and discovered Goodwin's Falls, fixing on that as a site for mills, but he did not return to occupy it."

In the Wyoming Valley, Richard Loomis married Phebe Ives in 1795. Her father, Josiah Ives 1738-1829, had come to the Wyoming Valley from Bristol, Connecticut, where he was living when he purchased a house lot and a meadow lot in Plymouth Township in 1788. He continued buying property in Plymouth and Kingston over the next dozen years.

On May 12, 1798, Richard Loomis and Almon Church, both of Plymouth, purchased part of Lot 6 in Bedford Township (next to Plymouth) for \$200. (Luzerne Co. Deed 6/7) Likely, this land added to their farming operation.

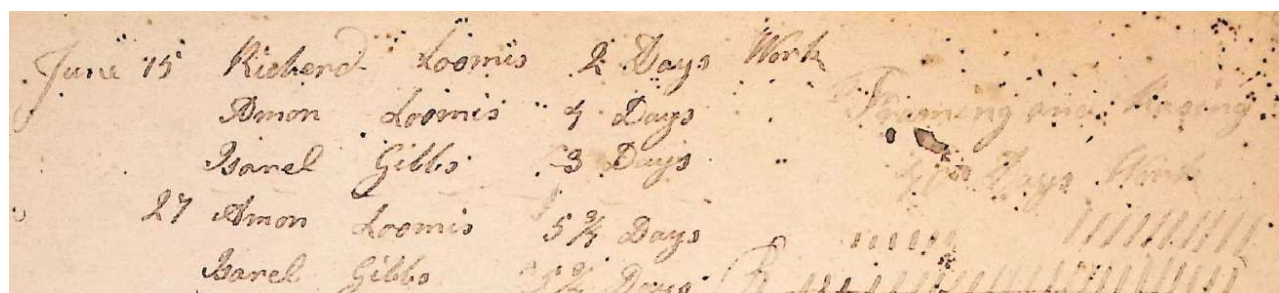
In 1806, Richard Loomis sold his share of the land in Bedford and Josiah Ives purchased 100 acres on Lot 88 in Genoa/Lansing, Cayuga County, New York. By 1810, the Ives father and sons and Richard Loomis and wife Phebe Ives had moved to the east side of Cayuga Lake, just above Ithaca. The progression of the name for the township they lived in was Milton, then Genoa and finally Lansing

Nehemiah Woodworth lived across Cayuga Lake in Covert. Did the two meet up and talk about old times? The widow Margaret McDowell lived just below Nehemiah in Halseyville with her daughter and son-in-law, Euphius and Nicoll Halsey. Did Richard stop in to pay his respects?

Richard Loomis purchased land on Lot 88 in 1812 and 1813, but by 1817 he had sold out.

Abraham Bloom 1763-1839 was the local blacksmith in Genoa/Lansing. He lived on Lot 91 which was proximate to Lot 88 where the Loomis and Ives families lived. Bloom's lasting legacy is an account book he kept covering the period 1788 to 1810. His clients form a veritable who's who of the first settlers around Cayuga Lake.

In Bloom's account book is a loose piece of paper which includes the names Richard and Amon Loomis. It looks like a bill submitted to Mr. Bloom for work on his barn.



June 15 Richard Loomis 2 Days Work
 Amon Loomis 4 Days
 Samuel Gibbs 3 Days
 27 Amon Loomis 5 1/2 Days
 Samuel Gibbs 3 1/2 Days
 Total 16 1/2 Days
 Samuel Gibbs

Richard Loomis worked roughly 23 days, Amon 15. Isarel Gibbs put in 11 days, James Gibbs three-quarters of a day and James Erway 13 days.

[illegible]

A group of Dutch investors, known as the Holland Land Company, acquired over three million acres in western New York in 1793. By 1800 the land was surveyed and subdivided. Via a local land agent, lots were purchased on credit. A deed was not given until the account was paid in full. By the 1830s, the Dutch were selling off the debts and remaining land to American investors who radically changed the terms. You had to pay up or you lose the land.

Map of Cattaraugus County 1856
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3803c.la000477a/?r=0.647,0.312,0.142,0.065,0>

Richard Loomis lived to the venerable age of 89. He and Phebe are buried in the Brewer Cemetery in Machias.

Robert McDowell and the Slave Named “Richard Loomis”

There is a persistent repetition of the “fact” that Robert McDowell brought the first slave to Ithaca and his name was Richard Loomis. A Richard Loomis accompanied Robert McDowell to Cayuga Lake, but he was a white adult. So how did the slave/Richard Loomis story start?

The family story told by Nicoll Halsey 1782-1865 used in Peirce and Hurd’s *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins and Schuyler Counties, New York*, 1879, is this:

First it is related how Robert McDowell, the Woodworth siblings, two men named Smith and Richard Loomis went up to Cayuga Lake to cut hay. Then:

In the spring of 1788 [sic: 1789]...Mr. McDowell, accompanied by Jane, his eldest daughter, then about seven years of age, and two boys,--one a negro,--returned to the rude farm at the head of the lake, where Ithaca now stands, and planted a quantity of corn and sowed some spring wheat, and followed up this enterprise in the fall of the same year by bringing in his entire family.

At some point, the slave/Richard Loomis story took on a life of its own. One instance is in *Ithaca’s Neighborhoods: the Rhine, the Hill and the Goose Pasture*, published in 1988:

The first recorded African living in Ithaca was one Richard Loomis, a slave who was the property of a Robert McDowell in 1788.

I’m not 100% sure that the Richard Loomis of the previous chapter is the Richard Loomis of the McDowell/Woodworth family stories. So far, I have found nothing besides circumstantial evidence to support this idea. But even if I have latched on to the wrong guy, one gets the impression that Richard Loomis, “a hired hand of Esq. McDoles” as reported by Deborah Woodworth Tracy, was an adult. Dr. Comstock’s remembrances confirm this: Richard Loomis was one of three white men in Ithaca in 1789 and he was not married.

Gretchen Sachse, Tompkins County Historian in the late 1990s, wrote about the slave/Richard Loomis issue in her “Then and Now” column in the February 20, 1999 *Ithaca Journal*. She cited two publications that named Richard Loomis as the black boy/slave. She concluded that *all we really know of him is that he was an African-American boy, slave, bond servant or free, attached to the McDowell household in 1788...and there was no apparent reason to equate Richard Loomis with the black child.*

Sachse went on to say “... it is not surprising to find a boy with no name given as a member of the McDowell party. In fact, the other boy, who presumably was white, was not named either. While it would be nice to know both of their names, it is not necessary to secure their place in local history. And it seems preferable to preserve the black boy’s anonymity instead of labelling him with someone else’s name.

How did the leap from an unnamed boy to a slave named Richard Loomis come about? Here’s one possibility.

If you look back to 1780, you'll find that Robert McDowell "owned" a ten year old enslaved boy named Dick.

Register of Negroes or Slaves in the County of Northampton in Pursuance of the Act of Assembly entitled an Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery passed the Third Day of March 1780.

<i>Register of Negroes or Slaves Continued</i>							
<i>Names of Owners of Negroes or Slaves</i>	<i>Occupation or Profession of such Owners</i>	<i>Place where such Owners reside</i>	<i>Names of Slaves for Life</i>	<i>Names of Slaves for Time</i>	<i>Age Years</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<i>Peter Kuchelkopf</i>	<i>Miller</i>	<i>Laston</i>	<i>Joe</i>		<i>11</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>Int. Oct. 24. 1780</i>
<i>Lenny Barnes</i>	<i>Tanner</i>	<i>Laston</i>	<i>Japh</i>		<i>12</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>Oct. 24. 1780</i>
<i>Robert McDowell</i>	<i>Farmer</i>	<i>Hamilton</i>	<i>Dick</i>		<i>10</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>Oct. 31. 1780</i>
<i>Jane Shoemaker</i>		<i>Hamilton</i>	<i>James</i>		<i>8</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>Oct. 31. 1780</i>
<i>Nich. Dupui Esq</i>	<i>Farmer</i>	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Abraham</i>		<i>28</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>Oct. 31. 1780</i>
		<i>Smithfield</i>	<i>Thomas</i>		<i>30</i>	<i>male</i>	
<i>Jacob Stroud</i>	<i>Lavener, keeper</i>	<i>Lower Smithfield</i>	<i>Jack</i>		<i>35</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>application made for the Emancipation on the 2^d November 1780</i>
			<i>Bris</i>		<i>32</i>	<i>male</i>	
			<i>Robin</i>		<i>26</i>	<i>male</i>	
			<i>Isaac</i>		<i>6</i>	<i>male</i>	

After the Wyoming Massacre in 1778, Robert McDowell (3rd on the list) and his sister Jane Shoemaker (4th on the list) retreated to the family home in the Cherry Valley by the Delaware Water Gap in Northampton County until it was safe to return to the Wyoming Valley.

The next entry is Nicholas Dupui, Esq. I don't know exactly who he is. Robert McDowell's mother was a Dupui so Nicholas was probably some kind of a relation.

Last on this clip of the register is Jacob Stroud, Robert McDowell's brother-in-law, married to his sister Elizabeth.

So, in the year 1780, Robert McDowell "owned" 10 year old Dick.

Data from this 1780 slave schedule was included in at least two publications.

One is *History of Wayne, Pike, and Monroe Counties, Pennsylvania* by Alfred Mathews, published in 1886. On page 104 is a list of slaves in Northampton County (copied from the 1780 schedule) which includes the names and ages of the people enslaved by the McDowell siblings, Mr. Dupui and Jacob Stroud.

The other publication is *Asbury Church and Its Minisink Influence* written by Charles C. Cafferty and published in 1943. Mr. Cafferty writes that Robert McDowell owned a 10 year old slave named Dick. Mr. Cafferty could well have consulted the preceding history, as much of what Cafferty wrote about the McDowell family is included in Mathews' work.

Now it's back to the problematic Woodworth/McDowell plaque that was installed in DeWitt Park in 1933. Many signs and plaques were erected during this time period. The Cayuga Chapter of the DAR put together a pamphlet of the Historic Sites Located in Tompkins County. Nellie Smelzer (Mrs. John B. Smelzer), descendant of Jonathan Woodworth, genealogist, member of the DAR and curator of the DeWitt Historical Society, is given credit as the researcher for the pamphlet. The entry in the 1933 pamphlet for the Woodworth/McDowell plaque reads:

First White Settlers Boulder--Route 34, Cayuga St., DeWitt Park. Cabin Sites of Jonathan Woodworth, surveyor, and Robert McDowell. They were Revolutionary Soldiers.

In 1956, the pamphlet was revised and reissued. Revisions were attributed to Shirley Jacobs 1915-1968. She and her mother Esther Jacobs 1889-1969 were members of the Cayuga Chapter of the DAR. The description of the Woodworth/McDowell plaque was revised:

First White Settlers' Boulder, in DeWitt Park, on N. Cayuga St. Cabin sites of Jonathan Woodworth, surveyor, and Robert McDowell, Revolutionary soldiers; came in 1788 bringing first Negro into county, a youth, probably named Richard Loomis.

How did Shirley Jacobs come up with this?

- From the 1780 slave census we know that Robert McDowell enslaved a 10 year old boy named Dick.
- A family story tells us that in 1789 a Negro boy accompanied Robert McDowell to the head of Cayuga Lake. Other remembrances tell us a person named Richard Loomis, a white adult, came to Cayuga Lake with Robert McDowell.
- Did someone make a huge leap from the name Dick to the name Richard Loomis? Or was Shirley Jacobs motivated by some other piece of information?

A good rummage through the archives at The History Center in Tompkins County might shed some light on this issue. There may be a whole other scenario. And please don't go off the other deep end and write that 19 year old Dick was the first slave brought to Ithaca!

As Gretchen Sachse wrote: *...it seems preferable to preserve the black boy's anonymity instead of labelling him with someone else's name.*

Sydney H. Gallwey, in his 1962 *Early Slaves and Freemen of Tompkins County*, simply wrote:

The first such instance on record of the entrance of Negroes into this county was in the spring of 1788, when a Revolutionary War soldier, Robert McDowell, accompanied by his eldest daughter Jane, then about seven years old, and two boys, one a Negro, returned to their rude farm at the head of Cayuga Lake, where Ithaca now stands.

End Notes

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The History of Tronado Hook and Ladder Co. Number 3 of Ithaca, New York, 1931
https://www.tcpl.org/sites/default/files/content/archive/History_TornadoHL.pdf

Cafferty, Charles C., *Asbury Church and Its Minisink Influence*, 1943
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433086369497&seq=7>
Robert McDowell's parents, siblings, and children.

Kammen, Carol, *The Peopling of Tompkins County : A Social History*, 1985
<https://archive.org/details/peoplingoftompki00kamm/page/n1/mode/2up>

Kammen, Carol, *Ithaca: A Brief History*, 2008

1817 Map of Pennsylvania and New York

You can follow the routes the pioneers took on their way to Cayuga Lake. McDowell and Woodworth came from Kingston, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. The Yapple, Dumond and Hinepaw families came from Kingston (Esopus), Ulster County, New York.

<https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~3690~340004:Map-of-the-State-of-New-York-with-p>

Family Stories

Nicoll Halsey 1782-1865

The History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins and Schuyler Counties, New York, published 1879, uses material from an account of the McDowell family and their arrival at Cayuga Lake written by Nicoll Halsey, who I assume is this Halsey. If this document exists, I don't know where it is.

Nicoll Halsey 1845-1921 - *Story of the McDowell Family*

Grandson of above. I found this document mixed in with my own family memorabilia. A document that is virtually the same (and dated 1915) is located in The History Center in Tompkins County, Ithaca, NY. Some of the information in the document is probably based on the account written by his grandfather.

Nehemiah Woodworth

Early Settlement of Ithaca as Related by Nehemiah Woodworth January 30, 1845, to Orlo Horton, of Covert, Seneca County, NY. This can be found at the Tompkins County Public Library's digital book *Ithaca New York Historic Scrapbook*, part 2.
https://www.tcpl.org/sites/default/files/content/archive/Scrapbook_pt02.pdf

Nehemiah Woodworth story, as told to Harvey Denison (differs little from above)
Woodworth Family Newsletter, Vol. 1, 1984, pgs 17 to end
<https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~woodworth/genealogy/jwb-newsletter/Newsletter-vol-1-nr-1.pdf>

Deborah Woodworth Tracy

Yesteryears, Volume 17, #65, #66, #67 (1973/1974)
<https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/catalog/94781>
(or search for "Deborah Woodworth Tracy" in FamilySearch Books)

Dr. Oliver C. Comstock Remembers Robert McDowell

Dr. Comstock married one of Robert McDowell's granddaughters. In 1881, he sent a letter to the *Ithaca Daily Journal* recounting stories told to him by his in-laws Euphios and Nicoll Halsey. Here is a transcription of the letter printed in the 4-4-1881 *Ithaca Daily Journal*, Page 4.

Marshall, Michigan, April 2, 1881

To the Editor of the Journal: Sir—

About forty years ago I was a resident of Tompkins county and a subscriber of your paper. I mention these circumstances to introduce myself to your readers to whom I desire to relate a little of the pioneer history of the family to whom I am related by marriage.

An early and well remembered pioneer of your county was "Hon. Nicoll Halsey" who died at my house in the city of Marshall, Michigan, March 3d 1865. He was the fifth son of Judge Elias Halsey and born at South Hampton L.I. on the 8th of March 1782. At the age of eleven years the family of Judge Silas Halsey moved into the then wilderness country, now known as Ovid, Seneca county, then in the county of Herkimer. In 1796 [sic: 1806] Nicoll Halsey was married at Ithaca to Miss Euphios McDowell. Nicoll Halsey was a man of mark in your county, having acceptably filled every office in the gift of the people of the good old town of Ulysses, and of the 26th congressional district. He was a conscientious and enlightened Mason to which fraternity he adhered through evil and through good report, and the purity of his life attests the soundness of its moral precepts.

Euphias McDowell Halsey was the third daughter of Robert and Margaret McDowell and was born at Wyoming, Penn., May 22d 1784. In 1789 her parents removed to the "head of Cayuga Lake" now called Ithaca. At this point there were but three white men, to wit: Robert McDowell, David Smith and Richard Loomis. Mr. McDowell was the only one married. The fruits of the first summer's labor was a small crop of corn, which was prepared for culinary purposes, by pounding it upon a stump with a stick fastened to a spring sweep.

In the fall of 1779 [sic: 1789] five men moved into the new settlement from Esopus, namely: Isaac and John Dumun, Peter and John Yapple and Peter Hinepaugh. All of these persons lived upon and occupied for farming purposes the present site of your beautiful village. About this time Simeon DeWitt surveyed all that region of the country, and by the great shrewdness, which was his characteristic, purchased a large amount of land about the head of Cayuga Lake.

The first white child born at the head of Cayuga Lake was the daughter of Mrs. Peter Hinepaugh, who was named Nelly. Mr. DeWitt offered to give to this child 100 acres of land wherever its parents might select for and on her account, if they would name the child Cayuga. Her too fastidious parents rejected this princely offer because a dog in the settlement answered to that beautiful name.

The Indians who occupied the hill, now called Michigan hill, then called Indian town, supplied the new settlement with venison and other game. One of this number at least was a participant in the bloody massacre of Wyoming. He was recognized as the Indian who shot Mr. McDowell's horse upon which he was fleeing, at the same time shooting him in the leg.

Mr. McDowell's first purchase of land at Ithaca, was 600 acres including the water power latterly occupied by the Messrs. Halsey, also by Mr. Wallbridge. The price paid for this land was 18 pence per acre. He also bought the Fall Creek property and other contiguous lands, at about the same price. The 600 acre lot lying between the Inlet and the Gosman farm, Mr. McD. sold for \$500.00. How great has been not only the appreciation of real estate, but also the growth and civilization of the county within the past eighty years!

The first grist mill called a tub mill was erected by McD. and Hinepaugh on the Cascadilla in 1789 or '90. Dr. Beers, of Danby, and Dr. Holbrook of Elmira were the reliance of the sick, when the skill of Granny Davenport proved abortive. The Baptists in 1794 commenced preaching at this place followed soon by the itinerants of the Methodist church. The first Presbyterian minister was Dr. Beers. The first justice of the peace Robert McDowell. The first frame house erected in Ithaca was by the late Judge Greer for the residence of one of the Dewitt family. This house was located near the present cemetery, and was for years the only public house in the place. The Methodists erected the first church edifice. Isaacs and Quigg were the first merchants.

Allow me to add the foregoing statements were given to me some years ago by Mr. and Mrs. Halsey. Being very much interested in the same, I committed them to paper at the same time, and send them to you in the belief that they will still interest the survivors of the heroic men and women who braved the hardships of a settlement among the Indians more than three-quarters of a century ago. If any errors are discovered now is the latest moment to correct them. Time, in his rapid flight, is obscuring all reliable landmarks, and soon, very soon, all will be wiped away.

*Respectfully &c.
O.C. Comstock*

Yapple, Dumond and Hinepaw families and the world they lived in.

Charles Yapple, "Jacob's Land" Revolutionary War Soldiers, Schemers, Scoundrels and the Settling of New York's Frontier, 2017

Stroud Record, Elizabeth Stroud Colbert writes about the McDowell family, FamilySearch Book

Information collected by Elizabeth Stroud Colbert regarding the McDowell family
Washington, United States, Genealogy

<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-L9JS-P6KH?lang=en&i=979>

Humphrey Interview in the Humphrey Family Genealogy

From the collection of Gertrude Conant 1924-2007

Family Histories from the Caroline Historical Association, NY Heritage Digital Collections

<https://nyheritage.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/search/collection/p16694coll200>

The Humphrey and Leet families were among the first families from Caroline who settled on Connecticut Hill in the southern part of Caroline. Several others from Connecticut. thus gave it that name. Old Deacon Humphrey was the father of the family. (Bk5, pg 62)

Ithaca NY Sept 27, 1900 Interview with the venerable William Ross Humphrey, aged about 81. (William Ross Humphrey 1820-1901)

The Robert McDowell family who were among the earliest pioneers, about the fourth family to settle at Ithaca first lived at or near the north-west corner of Buffalo and Cayuga Sts. On the Morgan St. John lot, formerly the Bryn place. There used to be a large spring of water once called the McDowell spring. Mr. Humphrey remembers the spring well. It made a little rivulet which run north to Cascadilla and passed thru the backyards of the residences on the west side of the street, among them the Wm. Halsey Stowell and Mrs. H. Grant's premises.

James Humphrey, the grandfather of WRH, who passed through Ithaca in the nineties of the last century on his way to Phelps, Ontario Co. NY, stopped at the McDowell's when they were living there.

The MacDowels did not live there long but built a frame house on South Hill where the Andrus-Whiton mansion now is, and lived and died there. (BK 7 pp 147-8)

In 1792, James Humphrey 1755-1834 travelled through Pennsylvania, along Cayuga Lake, and up to Phelps to look at land. On the return journey, he stopped at the McDowell's. Humphrey's dairy entry for Thursday, September 20, 1792, reads "Left McDowl's about 7 o'clock, rode on considerable snow that fell the night before." This is curious. What was Mr. Humphrey doing at McDowell's at 7 AM? Who is the kind but not very cleanly landlady Mrs. Doops?

Wednesday 19 - Left Esquire Paynes about 6 o'clock and rode to DuPuy's. In the evening came to Patchens but all sick. Rode a mile further and put up at Mrs. Doops. Benton and me went to the funeral of Esquire Englishes child. Went to our lodgings. A kind landlady but not very cleanly. Hard rains all night and snow. Wind S.W.

Thursday 20 - Left McDowl's about 7 o'clock, rode on considerable snow that fell the night before. Got to Awego at 5 o'clock and put up at William Bates. Clears off about 12. Was very disagreeable riding in the forenoon but some better in the afternoon. Wind N.W.

Humphrey, Jacqueline Baker, *Humphrey Family: John of New Windsor, Orange County, New York, 1724 and Oliver, of Phelps, Ontario County, NY, 1791*

McDowell Genealogy

Robert McDowell's parents, John McDowell 1714-1779 and Hannah DePui 1719-after 1785 (Dupui, DePuy, etc.), had eleven recorded children. The family lived in Northampton (now Monroe) County, Pennsylvania, near the Delaware River.

- Wyntje 1740-1808 +Abraham Miller
- Elizabeth 1743-1811 +Jacob Stroud
- Robert 1746, died early
- Sarah 1748-1809 +Jesse Lee +Philip Jackson
- Jane 1750-1815 +Elijah Shoemaker +Laban Blanchard
- John 1751-177?
- Hannah 1752-1812 +John Shaw
- Mary 1758-before 1830 +Richard Shaw
- Anna 1760-1824 +Daniel Shoemaker
- Robert 1761-1802 +Margaret McCormick
- Daniel 1763-1806 +Ruth Drake

The family can be found in these publications:

It All Started Here: The McDowell Family by Norma Jean Coon, 2001, Page 16
(FamilySearch Books)

Asbury Church and Its Minisink Influence by Charles C. Cafferty, 1943 (HathiTrust.org)

McDowells in America: A Genealogy by Dorothy Kelly MacDonald, 1981
(FamilySearch Book)

In 1779, the father John McDowell died intestate. Around 1786/1787, the surviving nine children sold their shares of his real estate and are cited in the deeds. This is the best proof for the children of John McDowell and Hannah DePui.

Northampton County, PA Deeds, G1/242, image 132 of 720

Daniel McDowell, younger son of John McDowell deceased.

Northampton County, PA Deeds, G1/417, image 225 of 720

Robert McDowell, eldest living son of the deceased John McDowell.

Other children of John McDowell: Winnifred Miller, Elizabeth Stroud, Sarah Lee, Jane Shoemaker, Hannah Shaw, Mary Shaw, Anna Shoemaker.

Baptismal records for Robert McDowell and some of his siblings are recorded in the *Records of the Dutch Reformed Church, Smithfield, Pennsylvania 1741-1813* (FamilySearch Books).

There are hundreds of trees at Ancestry.com that present a bewildering and inaccurate array of children for John and Hannah McDowell.

Newspaper Articles

Ithaca Daily Journal can be viewed at New York State Historic Newspapers
<https://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/>

4-4-1881 *Ithaca Daily Journal*, Page 4

Dr. Oliver C. Comstock married one of Robert McDowell's granddaughters. Dr. Comstock writes in about Ithaca's Earlier Days. See my transcription.

2-11-1896 *Ithaca Daily Journal*, Page 6

"Pioneer McDowell. He Owned all South Hill and Part of the Flat. His Family the First that Permanently Settled Here. Himself and Wife were Sturdy Scotch People." Author not stated.

6-16-1903 *Ithaca Daily Journal*, Page 3

"Bronze Tablet at City Hall" - the Yapple/Dumond/Hinepaw tablet

Charles F. Mulks - local historian, letters/columns in the *Ithaca Daily News*, view at FultonHistory
<https://www.fultonhistory.com/>

6-18-1903 - "An Early Ithacan" - Robert McDowell should be commemorated as well as the Three Pioneers.

[Ithaca NY Daily News 1903 Grayscale - 1145.pdf](#)

8-25-1906 - Letter to the Editor - corrects spelling of Hinepaw to Himpough and puts in another plug for recognizing Robert McDowell.

[Ithaca NY Daily News 1906 Grayscale - 1726.pdf](#)

1-9-1900 - "Masonic History" - Robert McDowell lived on land presently occupied by the Andrus and Whiton mansions.

[Ithaca NY Daily News 1899-1900 Grayscale - 1614.pdf](#)

6-9-1901 - Gives Other Facts Regarding the Peltons - Robert McDowell lived on NW corner of Aurora and Prospect.

[Ithaca NY Daily News 1902 Grayscale - 0271.pdf](#)

Historic plaques installed in Ithaca. The *Ithaca Journal* is available only at Newspapers.com (\$)

10-21-1933 *Ithaca Journal*, page 5

"18 Historic Sites are Proposed for Markers by Cayuga DAR Chapter"

McDowell/Woodworth tablet installed in DeWitt Park.

8-14-1933 *Ithaca Journal*, page 3

"DeWitt Park Tablet Pays Tribute to Two Early White Settlers"

McDowell/Woodworth tablet removed from DeWitt Park.

10-7-2020 *The Cornell Daily Sun*

<https://www.cornellsun.com/article/2020/10/ithaca-common-council-to-decide-final-fate-of-first-white-settlers-monument>

Dr. Luzerne Coville, six-part series about Robert McDowell and two-part series about Dumond Families, published in the *Ithaca Journal*, available only at Newspapers.com

Robert McDowell: First Settler and Proprietor of Ithaca

Part 1 - The Pioneers, 8-12-1935, Page 3

Part 2 - Indians and Whites, 8-13-1935, Page 3

Part 3 - Military Lands, 8-14-1935, Page 5

Part 4 - The Old Mine Road, 8-15-1935, Page 5

Part 5 - The De Puy Family, 8-16-1935, Page 5

Part 6 - The McDowell Saga, 8-17-1935, Page 3

The Dumond Families - Ithaca's Reputed First Settlers Were Peter Hinepaugh and Isaac Dumond, Settling Here in 1788

Part 1 - 3-2-1935, Page 3

Part 2 - 3-4-1935, Page 4

The Problematic Plaque

In 1985, Historian Carol Kammen wrote a series of articles, published in the *Ithaca Journal*, about the historical markers in the area. This led to the rescue of the Yaple/Dumond/Hinepaw plaque from the boiler room in the county jail: *Ithaca Journal* March 9 and 23; April 6, 13, 20. Years later, Kammen addressed the issue of the McDowell/Woodworth plaque: 9-27-2014 and 9-9-2017 *Ithaca Journal*.

City of Ithaca decision to remove plaque and public comments

<https://www.cityofithaca.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/09232020-2173>

More public comments

<https://lfweb.tompkins-co.org/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=1071572&dbid=13&repo=CityOfIthaca>

Ulysses Lot No. 94

The Balloting Book, and Other Documents Relating to Military Bounty Lands, in the State of New York, 1825

<https://nysl.ptfs.com/aw-server/rest/product/purl/NYSL/s/0e06de30-1e8a-4eeb-b77c-f7d99029f318>

Calendar of N. Y. Colonial Manuscripts, Indorsed Land Papers: In the Office of the Secretary of State of New York. 1643-1803, 1864

<https://books.google.com/books?id=pCQ2AQAAMAAJ&newbk>

Deeds not cited in the narrative:

- McDowell to Himpough, Cayuga Co., Onondaga Deeds C/57, 1-12-1794, \$115, 150 A, Lot 94
- Himepaugh to Markle, Cayuga Co., Onondaga Deeds C/54, 12-23-1795, £325, 150 A, Lot 94
- McDowell to Myers, Cayuga Co., Onondaga Deeds E/141, 11-4-1794, £275, 170 A, Lot 94

- King to McDowl and Hympough, Cayuga Co., Onondaga Deeds D/97, 9-30-1795, £80, 100 A, Lot 92
- McDowel to Himepough, Cayuga Co., Onondaga Deeds C/62, 12-24-1795, £60, 100 A, Lot 92
- McDowell to DeWitt, Cayuga Co., Onondaga Deeds G/84, 3-29-1797, \$725, 90 A, Lot 94
- McDowell to Congle, Seneca Co. Deeds D/161, 6-6-1799, \$150, 150 A, Lot 61
- McDowell to Messeker, Cayuga Co. Deeds C/541, 9-2-1801, \$125, 50 A, Lot 47

Life on South Hill

Ulysses, Cayuga County, New York Tax Assessments

Ancestry.com: New York, U.S., Tax Assessment Rolls of Real and Personal Estates, 1799-1804

Ulysses Town Meeting Records

1795-1803: Transcribed: <https://tompkins.nygenweb.net/twn09.htm>

1795-1823: Log into Laserfiche from here, then look in Indexes

<https://history.nycourts.gov/county-court-records/tompkins/>

New York Military Records 1783-1821, Vol 1, 1901

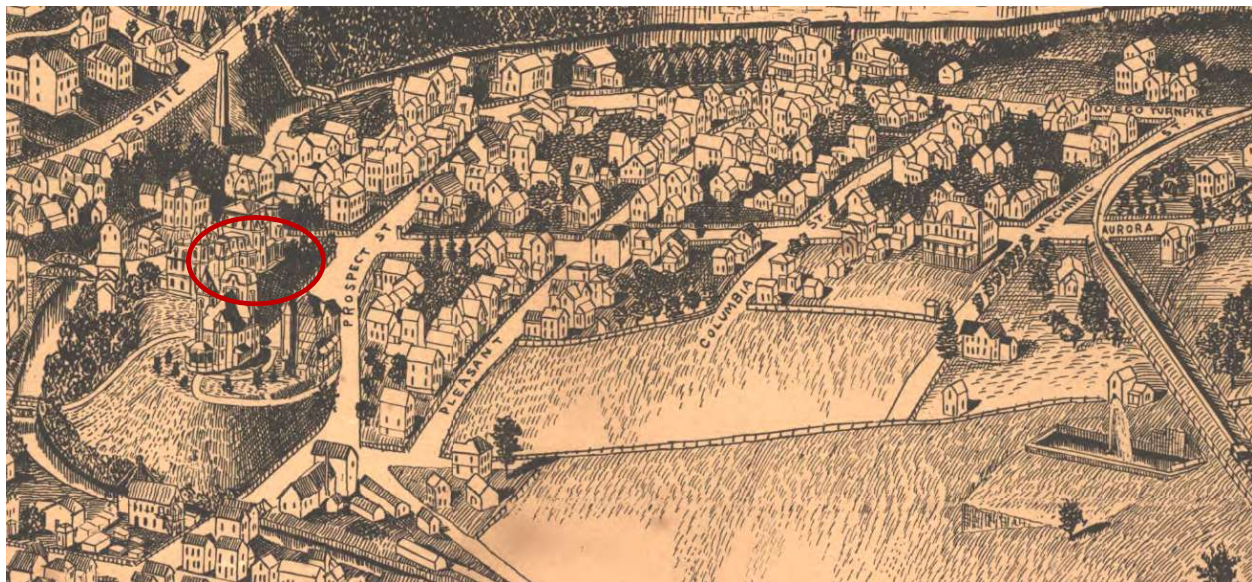
<https://archive.org/details/militaryminuteso00coun/page/n3/mode/2up>

Margaret McDowell, Administrator of Robert McDowell's Estate

FamilySearch: New York, Cayuga County, Probate Records, Letters Testamentary and Administration, Vol. B1, 1802-1812, Pages 13-14

1882 Birdseye View of Ithaca

The McDowell home was located on the bluff above Six Mile Creek. McDowell's heirs leased the area from Prospect to Mechanic for development.



<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3804i.pm005744/?r=0.66,0.223,0.219,0.101,0>

Paintings of Ithaca

References to the Norris painting which includes McDowell's cabin:

3-20-1954 *The Ithaca Journal*, Page 2 - "Painting Depicts Old-Time Scene"

3-9-1957 *The Ithaca Journal*, Page 10 - "Glenn Norris, County's Unique Historian Painter"

Follow this link to see some of W. Glenn Norris's paintings of Ithaca. See Peter Hinebaugh's log cabin! New York Heritage Digital Collection

<https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15085coll6/search/searchterm/Norris%20C%20W.%20Glenn/field/creato/mode/exact/conn/and>

5-23-1978 *The Ithaca Journal* - "A Greek bears gifts from one Ithaca to the other." At a meeting in Ithaca, the mayor of Ithaca, New York, gave the mayor of Ithaca, Greece, a painting by Edna J. Norris of a panorama of the city and lake from the top of South Hill. [Edna was the wife of Glenn Norris.]

Ithaca City Cemetery

Robert McDowell's new headstone at Ithaca City Cemetery. Photos of the ceremony.

<https://www.facebook.com/SAR.Binghamton/posts/10-new-revolutionary-war-grave-markers-dedicated-in-ithacaa-threatening-forecast/1259850580846675/>

Centennial Poem by Julia Beers Jackson

The poem was directed to Ithaca Pioneers Jacob Yaple, Isaac Dumond and Peter Hinepaw, but a stanza was devoted to the McDowell family.

4-29-1889 *Ithaca Daily Journal*, Page 3, view at <https://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/>

Julia A. Beers Jackson 1811-1892, wife of Rev. William P. Jackson, is the daughter of David Booth Beers 1780-1819 who had the misfortune of being the first person to die of injuries from fighting a fire in Ithaca.

Charles C. Cafferty in his *Asbury Church and Its Minisink Influence* has a good round-up of Robert McDowell's parents and siblings. He has these birth/death dates for the children of Robert and Margaret McDowell.

Robert McDowell	bp. 5-17-1761	6-1-1802
Margaret McCormick	1760	4-28-1835
Jane	11-22-1780	2-26-1856
Hannah	5-1782	9-1801
Euphous	5-26-1784	7-7-1870
John	4-1786	11-1812
Daniel	5-3-1788	3-18-1799
Robert, Jr.	3-10-1790	2-14-1807
Henry	5-15-1792	8-1792

Margaret McCormick McDowell

Euphius McCormick/McNeil, Margaret's aunt:

Northampton County, PA – Land Records
Grantor Index – FamilySearch Film 8085593, image 560 (page 830/8)
Land transactions of Hector McNeil (McNeal) and his wife Euphius

Census - Upper Mount Bethel Township - Hector McNeil
1790 - 2 M over 16, 1 M under 16, 1 female
1800 - 1 M over 45, 1 F over 45

Findagrave - Ithaca City Cemetery, New York
Euphius McNiel 1822-1806
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/45772760/euphius-mcneil/photo>

Tompkins County Gravestones
https://www.tcpl.org/sites/default/files/content/archive/g_ithaca-p72-96.pdf
Euphius is listed with the McDowell family in the Ithaca City Cemetery
Euphius McNeil, d. July 5, 1806, aged 84 yrs.

A great family story: When Euphius McCormick came to America, one son, John McCormick 1748-1844, was left in Ireland to be educated. In time, the young lad ran away, hid himself on a ship and arrived in America without a cent. He earned enough money in Philadelphia to travel to Chester County. When he knocked on the door, his mother Euphius did not recognize him. There was much back and forth until he revealed a scar on his head.

It was a loan from John McCormick to Hector McNeil that provided the clue to identify Euphius McNeil. In 1788, John McCormick of Bald Eagle, Northumberland, PA loaned money to Hector McNeal of Upper Mount Bethel, Northampton Co, PA. (Northampton Co., PA Deeds F1/453) This clue led to finding deeds including Hector's wife, Euphius McNeil.

Ancestry Tree by Charles McCormick who recognized that Euphius McNeil was Margaret McDowell's aunt.

Username: cmcwmumb
Ehringer Laird Group 030208-2019_12-11-01
<https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/tree/183771326/family?cfpid=102388944169>

Robert McDowell's house burned
David McCormick's pension application - Affidavit
United States Government Pensions, FamilySearch Film 7584752, images 344-347
Also available at Ancestry.com.

William Colbert's Journal (transcribed)
<https://umarch.lycoming.edu/chronicles/2014/contents.pdf>

Church Helper, Vol. 12, June and July 1901
Newsletter of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Ithaca, NY.
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924069704652&seq=1>
July 1901: Mrs. Charlotte Mathews Copeland, 88 years old, wrote in with her remembrance of Margaret McDowell.

The Yankee-Pennamite War

Jessica Van Orden provides an overview of the Yankee-Pennamite War

<https://wuarchives.home.blog/2023/06/20/a-conflict-forgotten-a-history-unexplored-processing-the-susquehanna-claim-1770-1801-subseries-of-the-gilbert-stuart-mcclintock-collection/>

One family's experience of the Yankee-Pennamite War

Myers, Charles E., *A Connecticut Yankee in Penn's Woods: The Life and Times of Thomas Bennet*, 1993 <https://archive.org/details/connecticutyanke0000char>

Connecticut patents (applications, deeds, etc.) for land in the seventeen townships of Luzerne County, Pa., 1785-1810

Connecticut Patents: Kingston Township. Patent Records 1785–1810, Image Group No. 8576601. Robert McDowell's deed and signature are on image 884 of 903.

(H) Harvey, Oscar J., *A History of Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania*

Vol 1 - <https://archive.org/details/historyofwilkesb01harv/page/n7/mode/2up>

Vol 2 - https://archive.org/details/historyofwilkesb02harv_0/page/n5/mode/2up

Vol 3 - <https://archive.org/details/historyofwilkesb03harv/page/n8/mode/1up>

(S) *The Susquehannah Company Papers*, edited by Robert J. Taylor, 1969-1970

Vol 7 - <https://archive.org/details/susquehannahcomp0000susq/page/n7/mode/2up>

Vol 8 - limited view

Vol 9 - https://archive.org/details/susquehannahcomp0000susq_w5f4/page/n7/mode/2up

Brewster, William, *History of the Certified Township of Kingston, Pennsylvania, 1769 to 1929, Together With a Short Account of the Fourteenth Commonwealth*, 1930

<https://archive.org/details/historyofcertifi00brew/page/n7/mode/2up>

Land Titles, page 505. John McDowell's properties in Kingston Township.

First Division, town lots, small house lots: Lot 11, 4 A

Second Division or meadow lots, fertile bottom land by the river: Lot 3, 45 A

Third Division or back lots, large acreage for farms: Lot 31, 209 A

Fourth Division, back lots going up the mountain: Lot 25, 218 A

Miner, Charles, *History of Wyoming, in a Series of Letters, from Charles Miner, to his Son William Penn Miner*, 1845

<https://archive.org/details/historyofwyoming01mine/page/n1/mode/2up>

Hollister, Horace, *History of the Lackawanna Valley*, 1885

https://books.google.com/books?id=jtrAX0xAgE4C&source=gbs_navlinks_s

Smith, S.R., *The Story of the Wyoming Valley*, 1906

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/gdcmassbookdig.storyofwyomingva00smith/?st=pdf&pdfPage=1>

Blair, Williams T., *The Michael Shoemaker Book (Schumacher)*, 1924

<https://archive.org/details/michaelshoemaker00blai/page/n5/mode/2up>

Rangers on the Frontier, Northampton County, PA
Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, Volume 23, pages 295, 300, 302

Westmoreland CT Tax Lists

<https://archive.org/details/proceedingscolle56wyom/page/n229/mode/2up?view=theater>

Athens Township, Bradford, PA (Tioga Point)

https://ahgp.org/pa/bradford/athens_township_bradford_county_pennsylvania.html

John McDowell's Tippling House Indictment

This sort of thing is what you can find when you use the new text search at FamilySearch. Miscellaneous Manuscript Records of Northampton, PA, 1778-1797, Image Group No. 4035644, image 25 of 692.

Daniel McDowell in Chemung

Albertson, Capt. Charles L., *History of Waverly, NY*, 1943

<https://archive.org/details/historyofwaverly00albe/mode/2up>



Wyoming Battle and Massacre
Centennial 1878

Medal designed by George Morgan, engraver at the US Mint.

Jonathan Woodworth

Jonathan Woodworth's resurvey of Kingston was not without some controversy--he got off course on one line. FamilySearch, Connecticut Patents: Kingston Township. Patent Records 1785–1810, Image Group Number 8576602, image 741 of 733 (13 pages)

Here is the last version of the Kingston Township Warrantee Map

<https://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r17-522WarranteeTwpMaps/r017Map2891LuzerneKingston.pdf>

Ira Stephens

Profile of Ira Stephens

Shear, Hazel M., *Tales from Allegany County*, 1962, p. 59

<https://archive.org/details/talesfromallegan00shea/page/n3/mode/2up>

Murray, Louise W., *History of Old Tioga Point and Early Athens, PA*, 1908, p. 308

<https://books.google.com/books?id=PkgVAAAAYAAJ>

Until the Day Dawns Cemetery – Ira Stephens

<https://allegany.nygenweb.net/angelicacolls.html>

Richard Loomis

The owner of this tree suspected Richard Loomis was associated with Robert McDowell.

tree name: Welton Version 7h

username: Echo92

<https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/114232155/person/190129829752/facts>

Richard Loomis and his father Nathaniel Loomis are mentioned in this genealogy:

Loomis, Elisha Scott, *Descendants of Joseph Loomis in America*, 1909. See pages 177 and 327.

Tompkins County Deeds - Richard Loomis

4-10-1812, Abijah Miller of Genoa, Cayuga Co. to Richard Loomis, same place, \$40
40 A on Lot 88 Genoa, except 9.5 A sold to James Gibbs, B/256

4-22-1813, Josiah Ives of Genoa, Cayuga Co. to Richard Loomis, same place, \$600
Land on Lot 88 Genoa which Ives bought of Caleb Atwater in 1808, B/255

3-13-1816, Richard Loomis and Phebe of Genoa, Cayuga Co. to Phineas Underwood,
\$800, 40 A, part of Lot 88 Genoa, K/198

2-13-1817, Richard Loomis and Phebe of Genoa, Cayuga Co. to William Underwood,
\$400, 20 A, part of Lot 88 Genoa, G/40

The Slave Named “Richard Loomis”

The earliest publication I can find using the name Richard Loomis for the Negro boy who came to Ithaca with Robert McDowell is in the article “Tompkins County: An Underground Railroad Transit in Central New York” written by Tendai Mutunhu and published in 1979 (available from ProQuest).

The first African-Americans to settle in the county were Richard Loomis, Prince de Ples-sis, and Peter Wheeler. Loomis came into the county in 1788 as a slave of Robert McDowell, a native of Kingston, Ulster County, New York. He and his master settled and started a farm at the southern head of the Cayuga Lake, where the town of Ithaca now stands.

Robert McDowell came from Kingston, Pennsylvania. The Hinepaw/Yaple/Dumond contingent came from Kingston, Ulster County, New York.

1780 Slave Schedule

FamilySearch, Miscellaneous Manuscript Records of Northampton Co, PA 1727-1851
Northampton Co. MS 1778-1797, Image Group No. 4035644
One page of the 1780 Slave Schedule, image 70 of 692

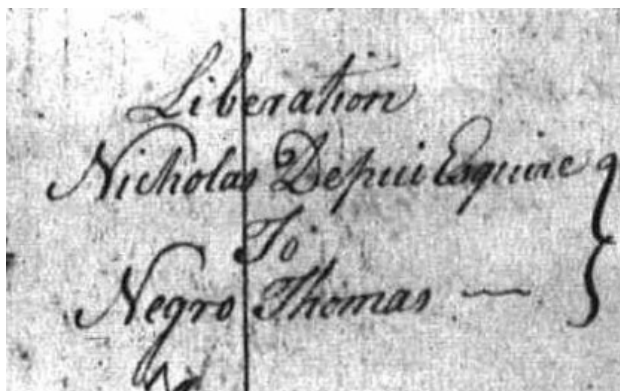
1933 Historic Sites pamphlet

Oddly, four pages (cover, 2, 5, 6) of the pamphlet are interleaved in this book:
Zoology Reprints and Separata, Etc., Volume 170, 1926
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924003389842&seq=839>

1956 Historic Sites pamphlet

Southworth Library Association <https://southworth.advantage-preservation.com/>
“Dryden Village 1884 to Lincoln”, page 556 of 727

(It is likely that the History Center in Tompkins County has these pamphlets)



On September 1, 1781, one year after 30-year-old Thomas was recorded on the 1780 Slave Schedule, Nicholas Dupui liberated him.

The document is recorded in Northampton Deed Book D1, Page 50.

Odds and Ends

Robert McDowell's Daughters



Euphios McDowell Halsey

This portrait of Euphios has been floating around the internet for a while. The photograph was posted in 2014 when the painting was auctioned.

The portrait was said to have been found, circa 1960, in a barn in Trumansburg, NY, wrapped in burlap. The names of Euphios and the artist were on a label attached to the back of the painting.

The artist, Sheldon Peck 1797-1868, was born in Vermont. He lived in New York state between 1828 and 1836.

<https://bamaplanter.blogspot.com/2016/03/euphios-mcdowell-halsey-1784-1870.html>

7-12-1870 *Ithaca Journal and Advertiser*

DIED.

HALSEY—This morning, (July 7th) Mrs. EUPHOS HALSEY, relict of the Hon. Nicoll Halsey, in the 87th year of her age.

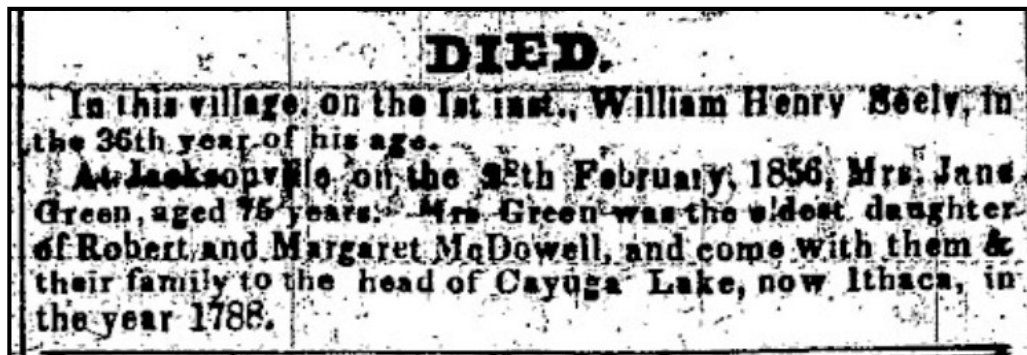
This has passed away the last child, as we believe, of that band of men and women who in the year 1790, left the Valley of Wyoming, Pa., and the plains of Kingston, N. Y., meeting and settling in an unbroken wilderness where Ithaca now is.

This morning (July 7th) Mrs. Euphios Halsey, relict of the Hon. Nicoll Halsey, in the 87th year of her age.

Thus has passed away the last child, as we believe, of that band of men and women who in the year 1790, left the Valley of Wyoming, Pa., and the plains of Kingston, N. Y., meeting and settling in an unbroken wilderness where Ithaca now is.

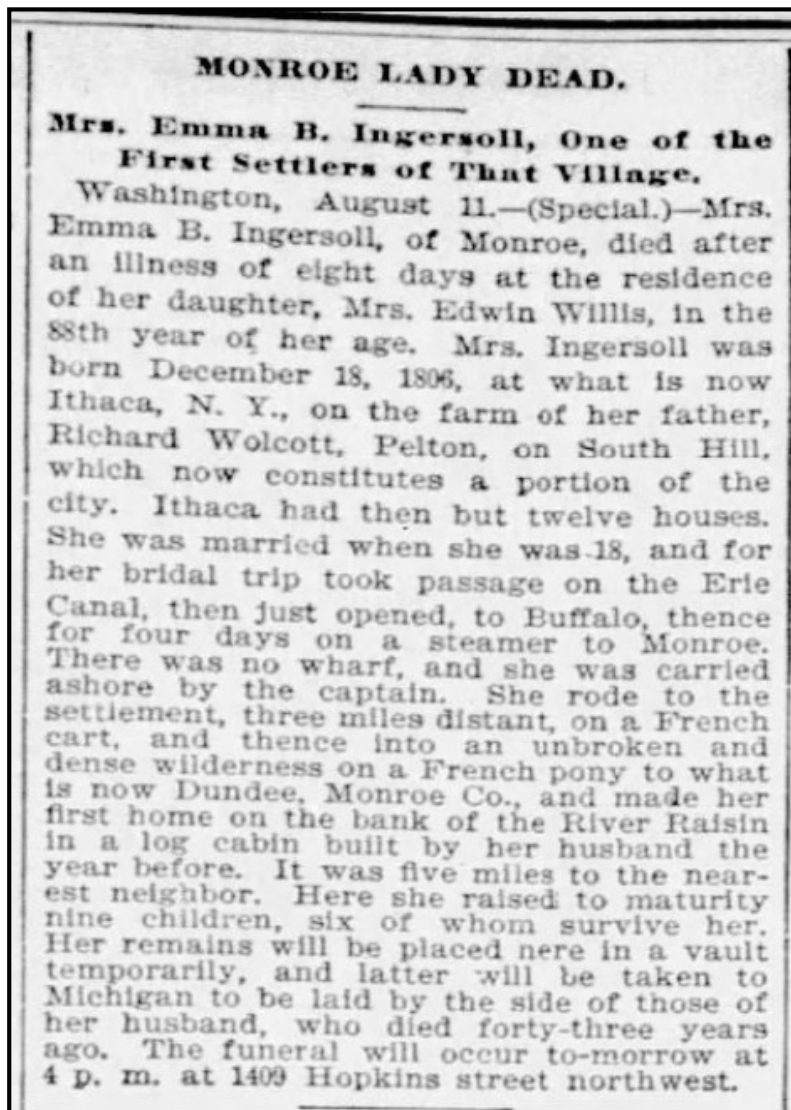
Jane McDowell Pelton/Green

3-5-1856 *Ithaca Journal and Advertiser*



At Jacksonville, on the 28th February 1856, Mrs. Jane Green, aged 75 years. Mrs. Green was the oldest daughter of Robert and Margaret McDowell, and come with them & their family to the head of Cayuga Lake, now Ithaca, in the year 1788.

8-12-1894 *Detroit Free Press*



The 1850 census found Jane Green living with her daughter Emma B. Pelton Ingersoll 1806-1894 in London, Monroe County, Michigan.

Seven-year-old Jane came to the wilds of Ithaca on horseback with her father. Her daughter Emma started her married life with an adventure in the wilderness. Here is Emma's story.

John McDowell's Cherry Valley Farm

This is where Robert McDowell grew up.

Advertisement in the 2-16-1785 *Pennsylvania Gazette*

To Be Sold

The pleasant situated and well improved FARM, late the property of John M'Dowell, deceased, in Hamilton Township, Northampton county, state of Pennsylvania, lying on a large creek, 7 miles from where it lets into Delaware river, on the main road leading from Bethlehem, Easton and the Minisinks, 3 miles from Jacob Brinker's saw, merchant and country grist mill, about 5 miles from Colonel Stroud's saw and grist mills, and 2 miles from a German Meeting-house, very convenient to English and German Schools.

It is an excellent stand for any kind of business or trade, contains 372 acres of deeded LAND, with the allowance thereto belonging, on which there is 50 acres of good plough-land, completely cleared and in good fence, about 40 acres pasture, 100 acres good watered meadow, in the neatest order, and about 500 bearing apple-trees, a number of which are the best kind of grafted fruit, 50 large bearing cherry-trees, a number of peach and plumb-trees. The remainder of the farm is good timber land of the best soil for meadow, of which there is not an acre untillable.

There are on the premises two good dwelling houses, a Black-smith's shop, a barn 40 by 70 feet, a stable 26 by 36 feet, the barn and stable have good plank floors, six barracks, besides a number of out-houses. The whole in good order and well fenced, as it has been let out two years for the repairing and clearing.

There is a good spring-house, very convenient to the dwelling-houses, also four never-failing springs, very convenient for the Tanner's business, which has been carried on several years past; there is also a good cyder-mill and press; the said farm joins a lime-stone mountain, and each field, meadow and pasture is well furnished with never failing springs.

The pleasantness of the situation and good quality of the land is too well known to need any further commendation; the whole will be sold together at any time between this day and the fifth of April, next. Any person inclining to purchase may, for further particulars, enquire of the subscriber, living in Lower Smithfield township, and county aforesaid, who will give an indisputable title for the same.

Hannah M'Dowell, Administratrix

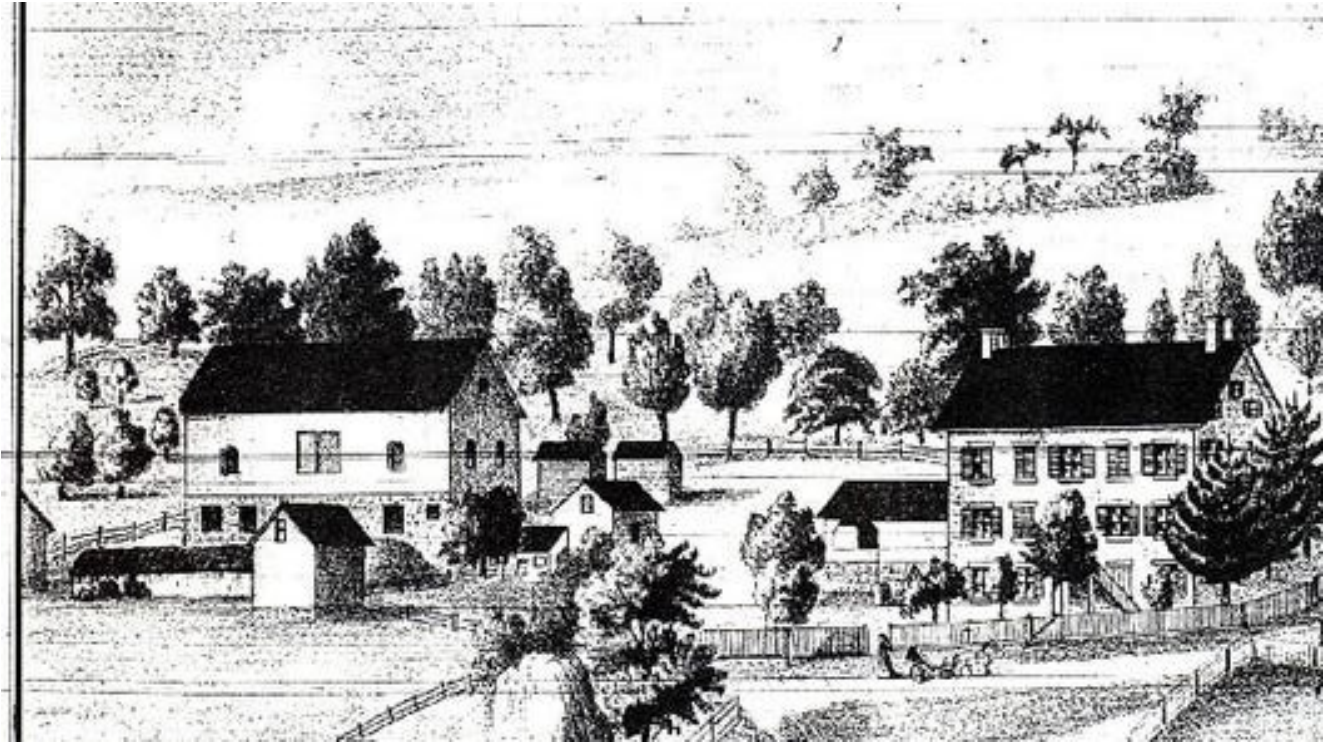
N.B. The terms of sale may also be known by applying to John Shaw, living on the premises.

* * * * *

In 1786/1787, John McDowell's children sold their shares of the farm to John Shaw, husband of John McDowell's daughter Hannah.

In 1824, John and Hannah Shaw's son Peter Shaw 1788-1866 built a new stone house, close to where the old one stood. This house stands today.

Peter Shaw's daughter Sally married Jacob H. Fetherman 1825-1899. This illustration of the Cherry Valley farm is dated circa 1875.



Residence of Jacob H. Fetherman, Cherry Valley, Hamilton, Monroe Co, PA

In 1907 Elizabeth Stroud Colbert visited her ancestors' home when it was owned by Jacob Fetherman's son Horace Fetherman 1864-1909. She was told: *The old log house was midway between the present stone house and barn. I was told that it was a long house with two doors facing the road so that had likely at one time been enlarged. Mr. Feathermen said that in the old log house was a large fire place and a horse would be driven right into the house drawing after him a log which would be put into the fireplace.*

After Horace Fetherman's death, the property was sold out of the family.



The barn, originally built in 1796, was restored not too long ago.

<https://stablehollowconstruction.com/stories/preservation-of-a-dream/>