

Story of the McDowell Family to which my paternal grandmother  
belonged. Compiled from various  
records by N.H. ---

Among the fugitives who fled from France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685, was one Nicholas Depui. He was educated as a Catholic priest, and is said to have been a man of such prominence that he was offered a Cardinal's hat if he would recant his Protestantism and return to the bosom of the "Most Holy Church." Doubtless this fact made it all the more urgent for him to leave the country when Louis XIV broke the faith pledged to the Huguenots by Henry IV, and lost to France many thousands of her best citizens. In Holland, where Depui found refuge, he married Winifred Rose. After a lapse of some twenty years he emigrated to America with his family, which included a son and daughter of marriageable age.

At the same time, in the eighties of the 17th century, there dwelt in the North of Ireland a sturdy and successful man of Scotch descent named Robert McDowell, with his wife Jane and their son John and daughter Jane. Jane McDowell died and Robert married again. Domestic trouble ensued and the young people yielded to the persuasions of an uncle in America and accepted his offer of a home. But the preparations and voyage took many months. On their arrival they found their uncle married and the situation altogether different. They had come over in the same vessel with the Depui family and with them had made a mutually agreeable acquaintance. So they decided to form one family, and settled first at Esopus, N.Y., and afterward in Northampton County, Pa. Here a double marriage took place,



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Jane McDowell wedding the son of Depui, while John Macdowell ( for so he always wrote his name ) took to wife Hannah Depui. The records are short of information as to their age or weight but give their "standing," the height of John being 6 feet 4 inches and that of Hannah 5 feet 9 inches.

John Macdowell in 1764 purchased a farm known as the Macdowell Meadows, in Cherry Valley, Hamilton Township, Monroe County, Pa., about four miles from Stroudsburg, a town founded by Jacob Stroud of Shawnee, who married John Macdowell's daughter Elizabeth. But John, though he lived and died there, seems to have been no very earnest partisan, inasmuch as, in the "Pennarite" War, (a struggle to decide whether the Wyoming Valley should belong to Pennsylvania or Connecticut,) he took the side of the latter and his youngest son, John, was killed in that Wyoming Valley.

John Macdowell was a genial, kindly tempered man. He is spoken of as a wealthy "Cameronian Scotchman", who became a true friend to the "Yankees", and whose granaries and purse were ever tendered to the sufferers with a "Highland Welcome." In February 1773 the provisions at the Wilkesbarre settlement were so nearly exhausted that five persons were selected to visit the "friendly Scotchman." After much suffering they arrived at Macdowell Meadows and sent in a man to make their errand known. Mr Macdowell came out, rubbing his hands in glee, and bade them welcome: but, in his Scotch dialect, broad as his benevolence, he told them that he had a house thronged with company,



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on the occasion of the marriage of one of his daughters, and that, among the guests, were "magistrates and others whose enmity was to be dreaded." He therefore gave directions that they should "warn themselves noiselessly" at an out house and then take refuge in the barn, where "blankets were spread on the snow and a royal supper" was sent them. Their sacks were filled with flour and welcome was their return to their half famished friends at Wilkesbarre.

John McDowell and Hannah, his wife, had seven daughters and three sons, of whom we are concerned but with the second son, ROBERT, who resumed the original orthography of his name, writing it McDOWELL. He married Margaret McCormack, whose father, John McCormack, emigrated with his family from Scotland and settled at Kingston, Pa, but moved thence to Chemung in 1786. Robert McDowell needed just such a helpmate, sprung from stock as sturdy and as brave as his own, to second him in the pioneer work which he undertook. For "in September 1786, Robert McDowell, Ira Stephens and Charles Woodworth, moved with their families- from Kingston, near Wilkesbarre, Pa, to Tioga Point and Chemung, N.

In the summer of 1787 Robert McDowell and five others "came from Chemung by the way of Catherine to the head of Cayuga Lake", and cut and put up marsh hay. They returned to Chemung but sent back three of their party -in the fall- with cattle to winter there. In the spring of 1788 Robert McDowell "with his daughter Jane, who was then about seven years old, and a negro boy and a white boy" came and "planted corn and sowed some spring wheat," and in the fall of the same year he brought his family over. In 1790 he built a log house



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in what is now the City of Ithaca, at "the Southwest Corner of DeWitt Park," the location where now stands the home of H.A. StJohn. This was not the first house built in Ithaca, for -in 1789- the Yapple, Duzond, and Hinepaw families arrived and built log cabins in the valley, East of Tioga street. It was however probably the largest of those early structures, for when the Rev. Wm. Colvert, who had been sent on a tour of evangelistic exploration, reached the settlement in June 1793, he was received with courtesy by Mr McDowell, and preached in his house the first Methodist sermon ever heard in Ithaca.

Soon a number of families came into the little settlement or into the nearby neighborhood. Among others, we read that "In the spring of 1792 Dr Silas Halsey came from the East end of Long Island and located in the town of Ovid, at what is now called Lodi," and built a house there in the spring of 1793 and brought his family to occupy it. Dr Silas Halsey was twice married, each marriage bearing fruitage in three sons and four daughters. In a new country, where anybody within twentyfive miles is a neighbor, it was quite feasible for young Nicoll Halsey, eldest son of the second marriage, to make the acquaintance of the McDowell family. He married the youngest daughter, Euphias.

Robert McDowell, born in 1760, died in 1802. Margaret, his wife, born in 1750, died in 1835 at the home of her daughter Euphias, where she had lived for twenty seven years. Their children were seven, as follows:

|         |                                                            |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jane    | born 1781, married 1st Richard V. Pelton, 2nd Asher Green. |
| Euphias | born 1784, married Nicoll Halsey, Aug 10, 1806.            |



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John      born 1786, died 1812, killed by <sup>the</sup> enemy at battle of  
the  
Queenstown, on Niagara frontier.

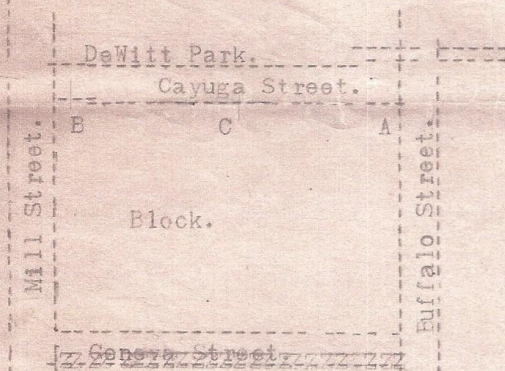
Hannah    (second daughter) born 1782, died aged 7 years.

Daniel    Born 1788, died aged 10 years.

Robert    born 1790, died in 1807.

Henry    born 1792, died in the same year.

A tradition, which cannot be authenticated, relates that the original Robert McDowell, of the 17th century in Ireland, was driven out of Scotland because his family, a branch of the Campbell Clan, took the opposite side in the Stuart troubles from the Duke of Argyle, the McDowells being royalists, and that the chief of the family (or Clan M'Doual) - the father (or grandfather) of Robert, was "hung drawn and quartered" at Stirling, and his head affixed to a spike above the North gate of that City.



- 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.

N. Halsey.