

Lawyers Giving Back: Revolutionary War Memorial

by Mary Denney, retired bookkeeper of Smith, Shay, Farmer & Wetta, LLC

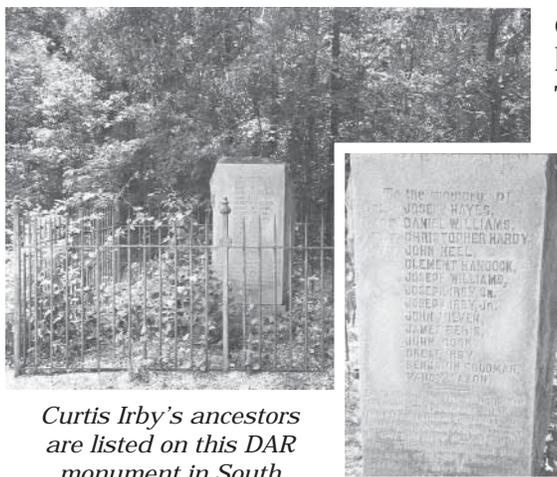
“Who Do You Think You Are?” is the name of a popular television series that watches the experts trace a celebrity’s family tree. Doing genealogy has become a more popular endeavor since the advent of the computer, especially with program applications such as Ancestry.com and Ellisland.org. Many people are discovering they have an American Revolutionary Patriot in their family tree and qualify for the Sons of the American Revolution or Daughters of the Revolution.

To join the SAR or DAR, one must trace their family tree back to a Patriot of the American Revolution and show through documentation that they are a direct descendant. This is no small task!

The SAR and the DAR have made that process easier by keeping records of the known Patriots and those people who have already been assigned a number to authenticate their relationship. Each chapter has a Registrar that can help with the process, and who sometimes even provides more information than expected. (A word of caution, there is the risk of finding a few scoundrels mixed in with the heroes.)

Wichita has a large population of the descendants of those Patriots. What do a retired judge, a practicing attorney, a retired law firm bookkeeper have in common? Judge Paul Buchanan, Curtis Irby and Mary Denney have ancestors that fought in the American Revolution and are looking forward with eager anticipation to seeing the newest addition to Veterans Memorial Park. The SAR and the DAR have joined forces to build just such a memorial in honor of their colonial ancestors that helped give America its freedom from England.

Judge Buchanan writes, “I had at least two ancestors who were in the Revolutionary War. Daniel Houston was from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and was Captain of Captain Houston’s Company, a part of the Pennsylvania forces serving in the Continental Army. He and his wife, Hannah Johnston, had several children. One son moved to Virginia where he was an inspector of militia. Another son, Sam, served in the army during the



Curtis Irby’s ancestors are listed on this DAR monument in South Carolina.

War of 1812, and later was governor of Tennessee and later became a commander in the Texas army during the Texas Revolution. He later became the first President of the independent nation of Texas. After Texas became a state, he was a United States Senator and served as Governor of Texas when the state succeeded from the Union at the start of the Civil War. Secession broke his heart. Sam was a first cousin of my great grandfather, Daniel Houston Buchanan. Another Revolutionary war ancestor is Hugh Porter from South Carolina who died during the war.”

Paul’s wife, Phyllis, has at least six ancestors that served during the American Revolution.

Curtis Irby’s ancestors, Joseph Irby,

Sr., Joseph Irby, Jr. and Greafe Irby are all named on the DAR monument pictured. Curtis and his wife, Sue, visited the site and took several photographs.

“The story told of the attack on Hayes Station is as follows: Joseph Irby, Sr., Joseph Irby, Jr., William Irby and a nephew of Joseph Sr., Greafe Irby, along with a company of men were encamped at the Stage Coach station called Hayes Station when attacked by ‘Bloody Bill’ Cunningham and a company of men. This station was a log house constructed like a fortress. The men in the station held out until they were out of ammunition and then surrendered when promised they would be treated as Prisoners of War. ‘Bloody Bill’ did not keep his promise and told his men to kill the prisoners. Cunningham himself cut the leaders to pieces with his sword. William Irby escaped murder because he had gone for water and had not returned when the station was attacked. Joseph Sr., Joseph Jr., and Greafe were killed in this massacre.”

Mary Denney has five known ancestors that fought. Thomas Bell, Col. Joseph Hayes (included in Curtis Irby’s account of the Hayes Station Massacre above), Col. Daniel Smith, Jacob Stickley and Benjamin Castor.

DAR Chapter Vice Regent, Ruth Wilcox writes,

“In the fall of 1776, John Knight (my ancestor) and John Cook, after guiding a raft of ship masts down the Delaware to Philadelphia, were approached on the street by the commander in chief of the Continental Army, General George Washington. Impressed by Knight’s six foot three and Cook’s six foot four inches in height, General Washington sought

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