

# Bob's Genealogy Filing Cabinet

Southern and Colonial Genealogies

## Richardson Rountree (c1735? – March 1819)

Note: There is a good deal of research left to be done on this man, though I believe his children are adequately identified.

Richardson Rountree was probably born sometime in the late 1730s while his father was still living in New Kent County, Virginia. He is not mentioned, so far as I can determine, in any record until his father's will, dated 1 October 1765 and proven 16 September 1766 in Goochland County.<sup>1</sup> The will left him 200 acres, one slave and five cattle. He must have left Virginia almost immediately after his father's death, for he was of South Carolina on 25 September 1768 when he sold to his brother Randall Rountree the 200 acres in Goochland County which was "...part of the tract on which William Rountree, deceased, lived and devised by his last will and testament to the said Richardson Rountree."<sup>2</sup> This deed appears to have been a mortgage, for on 27 November 1770, Richardson Rountree, still "of the Province of South Carolina", made a completed sale to his brother Randall to facilitate Randall's sale of the land.<sup>3</sup>

What land he was occupying in South Carolina is unknown, for few records exist for that time period. He is probably the "Richard" Rountree for whom at least two surveys were made just north of Fairforest Creek in 1771 and 1773 in the predecessor counties of Union District.<sup>4</sup> By the time the Ninety-Six District was formed, he was living there. Richardson Rountree's name appears on both the grand jury list and the petit jury list for the "Spartan" Division (later Union District) of Ninety-six District in February 1779.<sup>5</sup> His brother Turner Rountree, who was still in Virginia in 1771, had joined him in South Carolina in time to appear consecutively on both jury lists.

He is an accepted DAR patriot, based on a record that he engaged in "militia duty in Brandons Regt., before & since the fall of Charlestown."<sup>6</sup> A grandson, Andrew Jackson Rountree (who was born in 1818, the son of Richardson's youngest child, Daniel Rountree) gave an account in the 1890s of this service:<sup>7</sup>

*"...He is of South Carolina Stock, his grandfather and father having lived in Edgefield District. Richard (sic) Rountree, his grandfather, was living there during the revolutionary war, and was a very wealthy planter. He joined the patriot army, serving as a captain, and on one occasion while at home an incident occurred which showed his great nerve and courage. He was known as a man of wealth, and believed to be possessed of no small amount of money. This was a tempting bait to the tories, who, learning of his presence at home, surprised and captured him, and attempted to force him to divulge its hiding place. With determined courage he held out against them, although they went to the desperate extreme of tying and leaving him in the swamp. After the tories left, a faithful negro re-*

*leased him after he had been in the swamp two days and saved his life, and he lived to raise a large family. This remarkable man had a family of eighteen children. Three daughters remained in South Carolina. One of these married Wiley Barry; another Samuel Stalnaker, and a third Thomas Goldsmith. Five of the daughters settled in Jasper County, Ga., one marrying Jefferson Smith, another Cary Cox, another Asa Cox, another Stevens and the fifth Wilborn. James Rountree made York District, S.C., his home. Thomas went to reside near Huntsville, Ala., and William somewhere in Tennessee. The subject of this sketch is unable to mention the residence of the remaining six children..."*

Mr. Rountree's information on his uncles and aunts is accurate, and it provides a measure of proof that our William Rountree was indeed a son of Richardson Rountree. It is apparent, however, that he mixed up Thomas Rountree (who died in Tennessee) and William Rountree (who settled near Huntsville).

We also have a second, lengthier account of the same story from a great-grandson, William T. Goldsmith, writing about 1900.<sup>8</sup> This document named his great-grandfather "Daniel" rather than Richardson, (an error I have corrected in the following) but the story is essentially similar:

*"Richardson Rountree was the father of Elizabeth, wife of William Goldsmith, our grandfather. Richardson Rountree was a captain in the American Army...During the war and while on a furlough home, Richardson Rountree's premises were raided by a roving band of Tories...Captain Rountree refused to tell them where his valuables were hidden, whereupon they tied him and threatened to hang him in the presence of his family. My grandmother was a witness to this and related it to my father. Finding they could not gain their object, they tied his hands behind his back, and disregarding the entreaties of his wife and daughters, they marched him away from his home asserting that they would kill any member of his family who dared to follow. Some distance from his home, in a deep forest, he was made to embrace a small tree (you see he was a round tree then), while his hands were made fast with hickory withes, and he was left to perish. After a painful struggle of many hours he at last succeeded in liberating himself by biting away the withes with his teeth. He returned to his command at Charleston, S. C., and was in the service until mustered out at the close of the war."*

Following the war, on 3 April 1786 Richardson was granted 316 acres on Buffalo Creek, a branch of the Fairforest. He sold part of this grant on 21 December 1790 to Ephraim Wilborn with Richard Powell and his son James Rowntree as witnesses.<sup>9</sup> A few earlier plats for Richardson Rountree exist in the South Carolina archives for lands in the same vicinity, but I have not obtained them.

Richardson Roundtree was in the 1790 census (actually conducted a year or two later) of Union County, in Col. Thomas Brandon's Regiment, with two males under sixteen, seven females, and six slaves. His son James Roundtree was listed separately in Union County, as was William Goldsmith, husband of Elizabeth Rountree, and his presumed son William was likely the "William Rouentree" listed in Laurens County. This accounts for all the known children, but suggests one additional younger son who may not have outlived his

father.

The 1790 household should have included eight females, counting his wife, unless one of the daughters married earlier than is thought. Thus we must consider the possibility that Mildred might have been a second wife. Richardson Rountree's wife is first mentioned on 15 March 1793, when Richardson and his wife Mildred sold 125 acres to Thomas Wilbourn.<sup>10</sup> Then on 1 January 1794 "Richardson Rountree, planter, and Mildred his wife", of Union County, sold the remaining 100 acres of the 1786 grant.<sup>11</sup>

It appears that following this sale, Richardson and Mildred, along with several minor children, moved southward into the northern part of Edgefield District. Several grown and married children were left behind in the Union County area. (I have not examined the Edgefield District records at all thoroughly.) Richardson is enumerated in both the 1800 and 1810 censuses of Edgefield District, as head of a household of seven whites and five blacks in 1800 and of five whites and seven blacks in 1810.<sup>12</sup> Both censuses suggest (as does the 1790 census) that there might have been one additional son who predeceased his father. His wife Mildred was still living on 3 February 1814 when she and Richardson made a deed of gift to their son Daniel Rountree.<sup>13</sup> She evidently died sometime in the next five years, for Richardson's estate records do not mention her.

Richardson Rountree died intestate in Edgefield District sometime in or just before March 1819. On 26 March 1819 his sons James Rountree and Daniel Rountree applied for letters of administration, and were appointed co-administrators on 20 April 1819. James and Daniel were the only surviving sons left in South Carolina by this time. Daniel, the younger son by about 30 years, performed the bulk of the administrator duties, apparently because James was living in Union County. Richardson Rountree's estate sale on 18 and 19 May 1819 included purchases by several of the children, and the settlements with the twelve legatees identify them.<sup>14</sup> These records make it clear that the wife Mildred had died before Richardson. Thomas Rountree and William Rountree, who had long since left the state, were each paid \$725 in 1821 – Thomas while living in Tennessee and William in Alabama. Several of the daughters were living in Georgia.

Note: One wife or two? Richardson Rountree's children appear to have been born over a span of more than 30 years, suggesting the possibility that he had at least two wives. In the period he most likely married, about 1760, women typically married in their early 20s, and had a childbearing span of roughly 20 or so years. The first mention of any wife is the identification of Mildred as his wife in 1793 deed, and the last mention of her is the 1814 deed. Thus it is not clear how many of the children were born to Mildred, though it seems safe to assume that the last two children, Mildred and Daniel, were hers. It is interesting that three of the six oldest children named daughters "Mildred", though that honor doesn't prove that was their mother's name.

Mildred Rountree was identified as "Mildred Hart" in an unverified genealogy published in 1937, without supporting evidence.<sup>15</sup> However, none of the earlier published records of this family (see above) identify her as a Hart. An old theory that she was the daughter of John Hart, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, has long been disproved.

Analysis of Richardson's estate records identify twelve legatees, the same twelve children named by Andrew J. Rountree.<sup>16</sup> If, as Andrew said, there were six more, they must have died before their father and without heirs of their own. And all but one must have died before 1790, for the censuses of 1790, 1800, and 1810 fit the known family with the exception of one son. One of the two males under 16 in 1790, 10-16 in 1800 and 16-26 in 1810 is not accounted for in the estate records and probably died between 1810 and 1820.

1. **James Rountree** (c1760 – 8 November 1848) James was a revolutionary soldier, also serving in Brandon's regiment.<sup>17</sup> He was married by 1783, as a family Bible records that his son William H. Rountree was born on 13 February 1784, but the name of his wife is unknown. The 1790 census shows him with one male under 16 and two females. James lived in Union District, having purchased land there in 1791.<sup>18</sup> He died on 8 November 1848 in Union County. His will, dated 24 June 1848 and proved on 27 November 1848, names seven children, and a grandson: William H. Rountree, Richardson Rountree, Mary "Polly" Vaughn, John H. Rountree, Turner Rountree, Matilda Rountree (unmarried in 1848), and Jesse H. Rountree. [Interestingly enough, some of his descendants ended up in Titus County, Texas along with the descendants of his brother William Rountree, although they may not have realized they were cousins.]
2. **William Rountree** (c1765 – 1836) was a resident of Alabama when he was paid his legacy from his father's estate. See separate page.
3. **Elizabeth Rountree** (c1766 – aft 1834) Although Andrew J. Rountree wrote that she married Thomas Goldsmith, their grandson wrote that he was William Goldsmith. And William Goldsmith was indeed one of the twelve legatees. He and Elizabeth probably married about 1783, for he is in the 1790 Union County census as head of a household of two males under 16 and three females. In 1800 and 1810 they are in Greenville District.<sup>19</sup> A grandson of William Goldsmith and Elizabeth Rountree, writing about 1902, said that they were cousins, and that William Goldsmith was the son of a Richard Goldsmith.<sup>20</sup> How he is related to the William Goldsmith who married her aunt Isabella Rountree is unknown. They lived in Union District, then later in Greenville. William Goldsmith died intestate before March 1834, and the estate records show that the heirs were Elizabeth, sons Thomas, William Jr., and Turner, and daughters Lucy Daugherty, Sally Willingham, Milly Greer, and the eight children of a deceased daughter Polly Howard. A son named John predeceased his father.
4. **Rebecca Rountree** (c1770 – c1858) who married Samuel Stalnaker, according to Andrew J. Rountree's statement, apparently in Edgefield District about 1800. Samuel Stalnaker was paid the legacy by Richardson Rountree's administrators on behalf of his wife in 1820. Samuel is said to have died there in 1826, leaving several daughters and a son Seaborn. Rebecca evidently did not remarry. She seems to be the Rebecca Stalnaker, aged 70-80 in the 1840 Edgefield census.
5. **Mary Rountree** (1772 – 1851?) married Elijah Wilborn, probably after the 1790 census (where only Epraim Willburn is enumerated). He is in the 1800 Union District census with one male and four females under 10. He evidently died before Richardson Rountree, as "Mrs. M. Wilbourne" was a buyer at the estate sale in 1819 and Mary and William R. Wilbourne were paid the legacy. Mary is said to have died in Panola County, Mississippi in 1851. They had at least three children – Mary, Jane, and William Rountree Wilbourn.
6. **Maria (Mary?) Rountree** (c1776 – 1854?) married Asa Cox, brother of Cary Cox, Jr., probably a few years after the 1790 census. They are said to have almost immediately moved to Warren then Jones County, Georgia. Asa Cox was a buyer at Richardson Rountree's estate sale in 1819 and was in Putnam County when the estate was settled in 1820. They appear in Jones County, Georgia in the 1830 census. The 1850 census of Harris County, Georgia shows Thomas (age 75) and Mary (age 72), her age perhaps understated, given her brother's birthdate in 1778. Asa died in Harris County, Georgia where his will names sons Cary Cox, James Cox, Jesse Cox, William Cox, and Thomas Cox, and daughters Isabella Hill, Matilda Griffin, Elizabeth Maynor, Mariah Dorman, and Mary Barnes. A DAR application gives her birth and death dates as 8 March 1788 – 15 November 1854, which is inconsis-

tent with the birth date on the gravestone of Thomas Rountree, her brother. [As an interesting coincidence, one of their children in Jones County, Thomas Cox, later purchased the "Ararat" plantation of Samuel Cook, father of Asa B. Cook who married Sarah Gray Rountree.]

7. **Thomas Rountree** (27 March 1778 – 15 June 1828). He moved from Greenville County to Lincoln County, Tennessee by 1815 when he appears as a buyer in an estate sale.<sup>21</sup> He is in the 1820 Lincoln County census as head of a household of ten whites and four blacks, and is mentioned in several secondary sources there.<sup>22</sup> He was living in Tennessee when paid his legacy from his father's estate. He apparently lived on the site of Lynchburg, now in Moore County, for his name appears on a petition to establish the town "on the land of Thomas Rountree Esq."<sup>23</sup> He married Mary Gilbreath and after her death in 1815 married Sarah Price, and had children by both wives.<sup>24</sup> He was one of the founders of Lynchburg, Tennessee. His will in Lincoln County was dated 9 April 1828 and probated three months later.<sup>25</sup> His will names his wife Sarah, sons James L Rountree (c1805), and William George Rountree (c1818), and daughters Ann Rountree, Mary Rountree, Katherine Shaw (c1803), Elizabeth Landess, and Nancy Smith (c1812). Some descendants suggest a deceased child Mildred as well. Thomas Rountree is buried in Bethel Cemetery in Lynchburg. The widow Sally was head of a household of four in 1830, appears in Lincoln County in the censuses of 1840 and 1850, and was still alive in 1860 when the Travis County, Texas census shows her (age 70) living with her son William G. Rountree.
8. **Martha Rountree** (6 October 1783 – 30 June 1868). She married Cary Cox, Jr., brother of Asa Cox, for Cary Cox (residing in Putnam County, Georgia) received her legacy from her father's estate in 1821. Descendants think they must have married in 1799, though they place the location as North Carolina (sic!). They also are said to have moved to Warren then Jones County, Georgia but were in Putnam County, Georgia at the settlement of Richardson's estate in 1820. The 1850 Putnam County census shows Cary (age 73) and Martha (age 67). Her birth and death dates are apparently from family records.<sup>26</sup>
9. **Sarah Clara Rountree** (c1784 – 1877) married James Smith about 1806 according to DAR applications.<sup>27</sup> (Andrew J. Rountree's recollection was that her husband was named "Jefferson Smith".) There is a James Smith in the Edgefield 1810 census, he and his wife both 16-26, with one male under 10. And a James Smith was a purchaser at the 1819 estate sale. They evidently moved to Georgia.
10. **Isabella Rountree** (c1785 – ?) married William Stephens, for he received the legacy due his wife in 1821. According to Andrew J. Rountree's statement, they must have lived in Putnam County, Georgia.
11. **Mildred Rountree** (c1787 – aft 1838) married Wiley H. Berry, probably before 1810 although they were not found in the 1810 census. He received the legacy for his wife ("Milly") in 1820, when he was living in Edgefield District. He seems to have died intestate in 1838, leaving Milly and a child named Jefferson A. Berry. The 1830 and 1840 censuses suggest a total of perhaps six sons and two daughters.
12. **Daniel Rountree** (c1793 – aft 1850) The statement by Andrew J. Rountree mentioned above speaks more of his father, stating that he married Fannie Nelson and produced eight children. The deed of gift to Daniel Rountree from his father in 1814 may have occurred near his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, for he gave his age as 57 in 1850. He married Fannie Nelson, then Elizabeth Dorothy (?). Evidently there were eight children by the first marriage and one by the second.

1. Goochland County Deed Book 9, p38-39. [↔]

2. Goochland County Deed Book 9, p207. [[↔](#)]
3. Goochland County Deed Book 10, p123. [[↔](#)]
4. Reference not noted. Land indices at the SC archives show plats in what was then Craven and Granville counties to a Richard Rountree on the waters of the Pacolet River just north of Fairforest Creek in 1771 and 1773. [[↔](#)]
5. [The Jury Lists of South Carolina 1778-1779](#), Hendrix & Lindsay, ed., (1975) p80, p102. Turner and Richardson Rountree appear consecutively on both the grand jury list and the petit jury list, both dated sometime after February 1779, for the Spartan Division of 96 District (which included what was later Union County). [[↔](#)]
6. South Carolina Stub Entries to Indents, Vol. X, p178. [[↔](#)]
7. [The Memoirs of Georgia](#), (1895), Vol. 1, pp377-78. [[↔](#)]
8. [Historical Collections of the Joseph Habersham Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution](#), Vol. II (Atlanta, 1902) pp30, 148. [[↔](#)]
9. [Historical Collections of the Joseph Habersham Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution](#), Vol. II (Atlanta, 1902) pp30, 148 [[↔](#)]
10. Union County Deed Book C, p364. [[↔](#)]
11. Union County Deed Book C, p351. [[↔](#)]
12. Edgefield District 1800 census, p165: Richardson Roundtree 02001-12001-5. 1810 census, p42: Richardson Rountree 10201-00001-7. [[↔](#)]
13. Edgefield Deed Book JJ, p?. [[↔](#)]
14. Edgefield District probate records, box 25, piece 891. [[↔](#)]
15. [The Compendium of American Genealogy](#), Frederick A. Virkus, Vol. 6 (1937), p106. These genealogies were contributed by correspondents and published without verification. [[↔](#)]
16. Box 25, Item 891, in loose fibreboard boxes of probate records, Edgefield County. [[↔](#)]
17. SC Revolutionary Indents, "for service in Brandon's Regiment". [[↔](#)]
18. Union District Deed Book B, p34. [[↔](#)]
19. Greenville District, 1800 census p276: William Goldsmith 31010-30020-4. 1810 census p102: Wm. Goldsmith 11111-21210-4. [[↔](#)]
20. [Historical Collections of the Joseph Habersham Chapter, D.A.R.](#), (Blosser Printing Co., 1902), Vol. 2, p148-153. William T. Goldsmith, the informant, called his grandfather "Daniel" rather than Richardson Rountree. However, he seemed certain that his great-grandfather Goldsmith's name was Richard and that he lived in or near Richmond, Virginia. [[↔](#)]
21. [Lincoln County, Tennessee, Wills and Inventories 1810-1824](#), p281. [[↔](#)]
22. See for instance, [Tennessee Cousins](#), Worth S. Ray (1950), p586-7. [[↔](#)]
23. [Lincoln County, Tennessee, Pioneers](#), Vol. III, pp27-8. [[↔](#)]
24. "Memoirs of William Floyd", [Ansearchin' News](#) (Summer 1974), p64, . [[↔](#)]
25. Lincoln County Will Book 1, p9. [[↔](#)]
26. [Head-Cox and Allied Families](#), Mary Barrett Head Burton (1942), pp110. [[↔](#)]
27. Nat. ID #151511, #159691, #101692, and #165290. [[↔](#)]

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