

Biography

The genealogy of John Scott's ancestors is deeply rooted in Scotch-Irish heritage on both his paternal and maternal sides. His mother was the first of his maternal lineage to immigrate into America. Scott's great-great-paternal-grandfather, also named John Scott, who initiated the family's journey to America and marked the beginning of the Scott family's American legacy.

Although there is conflicting information regarding his father's lineage, the masses suggest that they are embedded with English origins. Going back to his great-great-great-grandfather, John Scott's ancestry can be traced back to the region of Yorkshire, England. While there, his ancestors would embrace the Quaker movement by joining the Marsden Monthly Meeting, one of the many Quaker church units in Yorkshire.¹ As the Quaker movement gained momentum, John Scott's ancestors' connection with it deepened. In 1699, a Quaker-sponsored ship named the *Britannia* departed from England and ventured across the Atlantic to visit the newly-formed Quaker colony in Philadelphia.² Though John Scott's great-great-great-grandfather eventually succumbed to the ship's yellow fever epidemic, he secured his family's future by purchasing 100 acres of land in Bristol Township in Bucks County.

Evidence of the early paternal Scott family points to an original Protestant affiliation. Records of the great-great grandfather's father's baptism report that he was baptized into Protestantism in 1654 at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Gisburn.³ Records also exist for four out of five of his children's (excluding Thomas Scott) Protestant baptisms in England.⁴ However, it is likely that the family converted to the Quaker movement in the late 1600s, before their boarding of the Quaker-sponsored *Britannia* to America. The ship was composed of a homogenous group of Quaker emigrants moving from England to America, along with several servants from Cork, Ireland.⁵

In his own written family history, Scott claims his Scotch-Irish heritage. According to Scott, his paternal lineage traces back to the province of Ulster in Northern Ireland, where his family resided in the Protestant-dominated city of Londonderry (also known as Derry) (Document AE). During the late 1680s, Ireland and Scotland were involved in the Williamite War, a conflict between the Protestant Williamites, who supported William of Orange, and the Catholic Jacobites, loyal to King James II.⁶ One of the major conflicts of this war was the Siege of Derry in Londonderry, where Catholics loyal to King James II raided the city.⁷ The siege and

¹ John Scott Jr., "July 21, 2020, Find a Grave, www.findagrave.com/memorial/213313304/john-scott.

² Don Hayworth, "Reconstructed Passenger List of the *Britannia*," Review by Don Hayworth, Hayworth Association, November 2012, haworthassociation.com/George/Voyage/Passenger-list.html.

³ John Scott Jr., "July 21, 2020, Find a Grave, www.findagrave.com/memorial/213313304/john-scott.

⁴ England, Lancashire Non-Conformist Church Records, 1647-1996," FamilySearch, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:6X8D-7PDM>.

⁵ Don Hayworth, "Reconstructed Passenger List of the *Britannia*," Review by Don Hayworth, Hayworth Association, November 2012, haworthassociation.com/George/Voyage/Passenger-list.html.

⁶ Bill Potter, "The Siege of Derry Begins, 1689," Landmark Events History Highlights, April 19, 2022, landmarkevents.org/the-siege-of-derry-begins-1689/.

⁷ Bill Potter, "The Siege of Derry Begins, 1689," Landmark Events History Highlights, April 19, 2022, landmarkevents.org/the-siege-of-derry-begins-1689/.

related conflicts disrupted Londonderry's economy, causing hardship for its inhabitants. While evidence about the Scott family's economic situation before the war is scarce, it is plausible they belonged to the lower class of Ireland. Before the conflict erupted, Ireland faced periodic famines and food shortages, exacerbating poverty and vulnerability among rural communities. After the Siege of Derry, the early Scott family endured extreme hunger and according to family legend, paid "a guinea [British coin] for a rat to eat" (Document AE). The conclusion of the Williamite War was marked by Irish surrender to the Scottish in 1691, deepening the economic shortcomings prevalent in Ireland. This was devastating for the early Scott family. As Scott claims, his family immigrated from Londonderry to Marsh Creek, now part of Adams County, in Pennsylvania to escape this state of Ireland.

Although in most cases a family's origin can be traced by the history of their last name, the ancestral origins of John Scott cannot be conclusively determined based on the surname. The surname 'Scott' has English, Scottish, and Irish origins.⁸ While it's uncertain if the surname historically referred to Gaelic-speaking Irishmen or people from the Gaelic-speaking region of Scotland, there's no evidence supporting these associations. Moreover, as a rare Middle English personal name primarily found in northern England, 'Scott' lacks the clarity needed to distinguish between John Scott's potential Scotch-Irish or English ancestry.

Regardless of which theory is true, John Scott's paternal ancestors would find themselves in Pennsylvania. Scott's paternal great-grandfather John M. Scott settled down and had eight children (David, John, Alexander, Joseph, James, Thomas, William, and Nancy) across two different wives (Document AE). John Scott can only recall the first wife's last name, Miller, and states that the second wife's name remains unknown, although few sources point to the name of his second wife being "Hannah Merrick." He also posits that discerning the children of the first and second wife is not feasible. While John Scott's family history sheds light on the life of David Scott, his grandfather, it's important to note the challenges posed by the existence of other individuals with the same name. Given the amount of records for David Scott after his death, John Scott expressed uncertainty and suggests there may have been more than one David Scott during that period. There are, however, confirmed records of David Scott purchasing 113 acres, which he named "Bellisle" in Barree Township in Huntingdon County on May 25th, 1797. Later that year, David Scott would sell deeds for lots in Bellisle. Even so, the exact date when David Scott moved to Huntingdon County from Adams County has been lost (Document AE).

Despite the uncertainty surrounding the roles of David Scott, information regarding his children and his spouses is concrete. David Scott married Sarah McCreary, daughter of a wagon master in the Army during Braddock's Expedition, and would have three children (John (father), Deborah, and William). Deborah would go on to marry James Maguire and have nine children. With David Scott's second marriage with Jane Ramesey in 1773, he would father three more children (David R., Alexander, and Margaret) (Document AE).

There is another major discrepancy noted about the history of the Scott family's immigration. Congressional records do not list the great-great grandfather John Scott as the

⁸ "Scott Family History." Ancestry.com, www.ancestry.com/name-origin?surname=scott. Accessed 26 Feb. 2024.

earliest immigrant, but instead relay him as Hugh Scott.⁹ Hugh Scott is another Scotch-Irish immigrant who immigrated into the United States in 1670. Although congressional records indicate a direct lineage between John and prospective ancestor Hugh Scott, there is little evidence to suggest a correlation between the two. In his own writing, John Scott states that there was likely a mistake made in the denoting of the Scott family in the mid 1700s, most probably linked to the habilitation of three different land-owning individuals with the surname 'Scott,' and attending the same Presbyterian Church at Marsh Creek. Scott also claims that his grandfather, David, must have moved out of Adams county between 1793 and 1803, there still remained another David Scott in Adams County after 1803 that was likely linked to the descendant's Hugh Scott's family (Document AE). Another possible cause of the confusion is the book, *Hugh Scott, an immigrant of 1670, and his descendants*, a family history written by an alleged descendant, also by the name of John Scott. Congressional records indicate that this history was written by John Scott (the focus), however the actual book was penned by a different John Scott born in the same year, but in Jefferson County, Ohio.

John Scott's father (David's son) was also named John Scott. He was born on December 25th, 1784 to David Scott in Marsh County. Early in his life, he got engaged in shoemaking, a trade that would support his family for the rest of his life. After moving to Huntingdon County, John Scott's father established a shoe making shop and would add to it a business of tanning leather.¹⁰ As his business grew, having 20+ people, including "journeyman" shoemakers, working in his shop became a common sight. As John Scott's father's leather, boots, and shoes became quite popular, he would trade with other businesses, especially local forges, on trips often accompanied by his son John Scott (Document AE)

Outside of his entrepreneurial expeditions, John Scott's father was also involved in the nation's military and politics. In the war of 1812, he was a member of the Company of State Militia and was ordered to rendezvous at Meadville, Pennsylvania. When a new regiment was formed, he was made its Major.¹¹ His dedication to public service also extended to politics, where he was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1819 and was re-elected in 1820. He would soon take his political career to the national stage and was elected as a member of the House of Representatives during the 21st Congress, which ran from March 4, 1829 to March 4, 1831 (Document V).

John Scott's father first married Sarah Davis on October 16, 1806. With Sarah, he would have six children (*unnamed*, Sarah, Oliver G., Nancy, Eliza, and Rebecca). Unfortunately, his wife Sarah would die on July 17, 1820. In pursuit of companionship, John Scott's father would soon enter into a second marriage. John Scott's father and Agnes Irvine were married October 29, 1821. With Agnes, he would father seven more children (Susan, John, James Irvine, George Washington, William, Mary Irvine, and Alfred McIlvaine).

⁹ Scott, John. *Hugh Scott, an Immigrant of 1670: And His Descendants*. Nevada, IA: J.M. Scott, 1895. (Published by Congressional Records)

¹⁰ Noble, Scott, and Betty Pope. "The Story of Agnes Irvine Scott, 1799-1877." 1999, Agnes Scott College, dspace.agnesscott.edu/bitstream/123456789/1205/1/storyofagnesirvi00bett.pdf. Accessed 25 Feb. 2024.

¹¹ Noble, Scott, and Betty Pope. "The Story of Agnes Irvine Scott, 1799-1877." 1999, Agnes Scott College, dspace.agnesscott.edu/bitstream/123456789/1205/1/storyofagnesirvi00bett.pdf. Accessed 25 Feb. 2024.

John Scott's maternal lineage is far less complex than that of his father's. His mother was a first-generation Scotch-Irish immigrant who arrived in Alexandria, Pennsylvania at the age of seventeen, accompanied by her mother.¹² Agnes's most defining attribute was her deep connection to the Presbyterian church, rooted in her ancestry. Her early ancestors migrated from Scotland to Ulster, Ireland, seeking refuge from the religious persecution of Covenants in the 1640s¹³. Born 150 years later on June 13, 1799, to Mary Stitt Irvine and William Irvine, Agnes grew up in a cottage with her sisters, Susanna and Mary. Tragedy struck early in her life with her father's passing when she was only two and a half months old, followed by her sister Mary's death two years later, leaving the family in turmoil.

Following her father's death, Agnes's mother, Mary, found solace in her marriage to Edward Stitt in 1805, who was allegedly a relative of Mary, and she welcomed a son named Jonathan. However, Jonathan's untimely demise the following year and Edward's death nine years into their marriage in 1814 brought profound sorrow to the family. After Edward's passing, Agnes's uncle, James Irvine, and his wife invited the family to stay with them in Newy, near Ballykeel.¹⁴ Recognizing the opportunity for her daughters, Mary accepted, hoping for a brighter future.

Two years later, Mary envisioned a new beginning for her daughters and decided to emigrate to the United States. With Susanna's husband of eight months, they embarked on a ship from Carlington Bay to Pennsylvania. Tragically, Susanna fell ill and passed away at sea, and after thirty-six days, the family arrived in Alexandria, where they were welcomed by Mary's brother, Robert. Despite enduring profound grief, Agnes married John Scott at the age of twenty, drawn to his business acumen, service in the War of 1812, and strong Presbyterian roots. Amidst divisions over loyalty to Britain following the War of 1812, Agnes remained loyal, attending the White Church while John switched to the Brick Church, leading to their children attending both congregations.

One of Agnes and John Scott's most accomplished sons was George Washington Scott born on February 22, 1829. Only twelve days after the death of his father, George grew sick and left his family in Pennsylvania to traverse the South in an attempt to improve his health in the warmer climate, but also to seek fortune.¹⁵ He began his journey by selling jewelry throughout the South, eventually buying 1408 acres of land across a ten year period, where he developed his own plantation.¹⁶ The social and political atmosphere of the South influenced George, eventually leading to his enrollment in the Civil War fighting alongside the Confederacy. George soon became a Colonel in the war and purchased ten slaves to work his plantation while he was

¹² Noble, Scott, and Betty Pope. "The Story of Agnes Irvine Scott, 1799-1877." 1999, Agnes Scott College, dspace.agnesscott.edu/bitstream/123456789/1205/1/storyofagnesirvi00bett.pdf. Accessed 25 Feb. 2024.

¹³ Noble, Scott, and Betty Pope. "The Story of Agnes Irvine Scott, 1799-1877." 1999, Agnes Scott College, dspace.agnesscott.edu/bitstream/123456789/1205/1/storyofagnesirvi00bett.pdf. Accessed 25 Feb. 2024.

¹⁴ Noble, Scott, and Betty Pope. "The Story of Agnes Irvine Scott, 1799-1877." 1999, Agnes Scott College, dspace.agnesscott.edu/bitstream/123456789/1205/1/storyofagnesirvi00bett.pdf. Accessed 25 Feb. 2024.

¹⁵ The Story of George Washington Scott, 1829-1903: A Family Memoir," Agnes Scott College, 2022, archive.org/details/storyofgeorgewas00bett/page/3/mode/2up.

¹⁶ The Story of George Washington Scott, 1829-1903: A Family Memoir," Agnes Scott College, 2022, archive.org/details/storyofgeorgewas00bett/page/3/mode/2up.

away.¹⁷ He led the Confederacy in several decisive battles, such as the battle of Olustee in Baker County, Florida. After the Confederates lost in the war, George was elected as governor of Florida during the Reconstruction Era, but soon after relieved of his power. As plantation life died out, George moved to Georgia, where he later opened the *Agnes Scott College*, a private institution for women, in 1889 in memory of his mother after her death in 1877.

On July 14, 1824, John Scott (father) and his second wife Agnes Irvine Scott gave birth to their second child, John Scott. Scott was born in Alexandria, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania. At the age of fourteen, Scott was supporting his father in running his business: he kept books, made sales, and distributed the products of tannery and shoe shops through a large portion of the country (Document AG). His dad placed Scott in the town common schools, along with his six siblings: Susan, George, James Irvine, William, Mary Irvine, and Alfred. Since James and Williams died at a young age, Scott developed a stronger relationship with George. There is little information available about Scott's education's primary and secondary education, however it is known that he received private instruction in Greek and Latin in his secondary education.

At the age of seventeen, John Scott discovered a passion for public speaking, which led him to engage in social movements and develop his public voice. He gained local recognition through his involvement in the Washington Temperance Movement's public meetings in the early 1840s.¹⁸ These experiences sparked his interest in the legal profession, prompting him to commence his formal legal education in November 1842 at Marshall College (now Franklin and Marshall College) in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in the office of Alexander Thompson, father of Frank Thompson of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

One of John Scott's first official legal endeavors occurred following the death of his half-brother, Dr. Oliver Scott, in August 1843. Dr. Scott appointed John as the executor of his will, entrusting him with the task of distributing his estate among their family members (Document AG). This responsibility temporarily interrupted John Scott's legal studies for six months at the onset of his second year. Nonetheless, he successfully graduated from Marshall College in 1845 and returned to his home county, where he was immediately admitted into the Huntingdon Bar on January 23, 1846. Scott's years as a prosecuting attorney were much accomplished but short lived. Within months of admittance to the bar, Scott opened up his own office under the firm name *Scott & Brown* with lawyer Samuel T. Brown.¹⁹ John M. Bailey became a name partner of the firm once admitted to the bar. Scott later withdrew from the firm in 1870. Subsequently, John M. Bailey joined the firm as a name partner upon his admission to the bar. Scott later departed from the firm in 1870. Shortly thereafter, he was appointed as the deputy attorney-general for the county, a position he held for several years, during which he demonstrated remarkable dedication and competence in fulfilling his responsibilities. Regarded by his peers as "one of the most learned, able, and accomplished members of the fraternity" (Document AG), Scott was recognized as the leader of the Huntingdon Bar and ranked with the

¹⁷ The Story of George Washington Scott, 1829-1903: A Family Memoir," Agnes Scott College, 2022, archive.org/details/storyofgeorgewas00bett/page/3/mode/2up.

¹⁸ The Progressive Men of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by Col. Charles Blanchard, vol. 1, A. W. Bowen & Company, 1900, p. 482.

¹⁹ Carol Eddleman, "Scott, John," PA-Roots, June 21, 2020, www.pa-roots.org/data/read.php?130,1003677.

ablest lawyers in the interior of the State. Scott continued practicing law for twenty additional years following his tenure as a prosecuting attorney, and as deputy attorney-general, which concluded in 1849.

Scott's satisfactory work as prosecuting attorney did not go unrecognized in his future endeavors. In 1851, two years after the conclusion of attorney career, Scott was appointed as a member of the board of revenue commissioners. He served as a member for one year, quickly gaining celebrity as the youngest and most active board member.²⁰ The following year, Scott became a member of the Democratic State Convention. This signifies Scott's official entry into the political world, where he publicly spoke against the presidential nomination of James Buchanan from the democratic party.²¹ This will be touched upon later in his political career.

Shortly after the Democratic Convention, Scott visited Ireland on account of his health "failing."²² Although there is no nuance as to the definition of "failing" health, it likely entails that Scott was temporarily left in an unstable condition. Details regarding his trip to Ireland remain unclear. He visited with the company of elder William Dorris. Upon his return to the United States in 1854, Scott was immediately nominated by the citizen's convention for the Pennsylvania senate under the "know-nothing" party. He quickly declined his nomination, refusing to affiliate with this political party.²³

Moving out of his political career, Scott was called in 1857 as a special counsel for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in Cambria County (Document AG). He worked alongside the resident counsel Cyrus Pershing, who later became the Schuylkill County judge in 1876.²⁴ Although the details regarding the contents of the case remain relatively obscure, the known antagonists of the Railroad Company were six men: Thomas White; Henry D. Foster; Robert L. Johnston; S. Steel Blaire; and John Fenion (Document AG). One important thing to note about this case is that Cambria County is a very small county with an adult population of roughly 5,293 in the 1850s (Document B). News of this case became quickly popularized among the county, spiking a large degree of public interest. After two protracted trials and an affirmation by the Supreme Court, the case ended with a verdict in the company's favor (Document AG). This was a big win for Scott's law career, securing him an official position as special counsel for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company district comprising Cambria, Blair, and Huntingdon counties. Scott's time as special counsel was severed by his election to the United States senate.

John Scott's first foray into public legislature was on Tuesday, February 2, 1858, when he served as an intermediary filling in after the death of James B. Backhouse— a Representative from Allegheny County, elected as a Republican to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to

²⁰ The Progressive Men of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by Col. Charles Blanchard, vol. 1, A. W. Bowen & Company, 1900, p. 482.

²¹ The Progressive Men of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by Col. Charles Blanchard, vol. 1, A. W. Bowen & Company, 1900, p. 482.

²² Carol Eddleman, "Scott, John," PA-Roots, June 21, 2020, www.pa-roots.org/data/read.php?130,1003677.

²³ The Progressive Men of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by Col. Charles Blanchard, vol. 1, A. W. Bowen & Company, 1900, p. 482.

²⁴ James M. Swank, "Cambria County Pioneers," Hon. Cyrus L. Pershing, files.usgwarchives.net/pa/cambria/bios/swank/15-pershing.txt.

serve the 1857 and 1858 terms.²⁵ He died while in office, prior to taking the oath, November 4, 1857 in Ohio Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (Document C).

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives is the lower house of the bicameral Pennsylvania General Assembly, the legislature of the U.S. state of Pennsylvania. Representatives are elected for two-year terms from single member districts, making it the largest full-time state legislature in the country.²⁶ However, at the time, Pennsylvania state law did not allow for replacement candidates after ballots had started printing, which was the case in this election. Therefore, a special election was conducted to fill his seat, per a specialized write issued by then Speaker of the House, A. Brower Longaker, on January 21st, 1858.²⁷ In a narrow election, John Scott, from his residence in Allegheny county, took the seat over Democrat Sallsbury by a margin of 619 votes— 4,417 for Scott and 3,798 for Sallsbury²⁸ (Document C). Once elected, he served the remainder of Backhouse's term and provided aid on various cases in the age of antebellum policies.

Interestingly enough, Scott was elected as a Republican, when he later ran his unsuccessful 1860 campaign for Pennsylvania State Senate as a Union Democrat. It is worth mentioning that he likely surmised the political affiliation of the late J. B. Backhouse— the representative who's seat he was filling in Allegany for the Pennsylvania House. This is juxtaposed with the political affiliation of Pennsylvania as a whole at the time, which was an integral state for Democratic presidential candidate and influential Pennsylvanian James Buchanan— one of only five free states to be won by the Democrat.²⁹ As historians have emphasized, the crucial breakthrough for the Republicans occurred in 1858, when the state went dramatically against the Democrats. Echoing this sentiment, in October of 1858, President Buchanan wrote: "We have met the enemy in Pennsylvania and we are theirs. This I have anticipated for three months, and was not taken by surprise except as to the extent of our defeat. (...) It is so great that it is almost absurd" (Document AM).³⁰

Scott was a vocal adversary of many of Buchanan's policies, strenuously opposing the Kansas policy in particular —which urged the admission of the territory as a slave state—, and constantly endeavoring to thwart and nullify its measures³¹ (Document AK). Buchanan's actions further angered the Republicans, and served to alienate members of his own party— a prime example of this being John Scott himself. As a result of the party divide during the 1860

²⁵ The Brookville Jeffersonian (Brookville, Pennsylvania), January 28, 1855, Thursday. <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/302762334/>. Accessed February 21, 2024

²⁶ "History of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives." Pennsylvania House Archives. <https://archives.house.state.pa.us/institution/history-of-the-house>. Accessed February 5, 2024.

²⁷ The Perry County Democrat (Bloomfield, Pennsylvania), 21 January 1858, Thursday. <https://www.newspapers.com/paper/the-jeffersonian-democrat/5330/?locale=en-US>. Accessed 8 February 2024.

²⁸ The Public Ledger (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 01 Feb 1858, Monday. <https://www.newspapers.com/article/public-ledger-public-ledger-philadelphia>. Accessed 10 February 2024.

²⁹ Bruce Collins, "The Democrats' Loss of Pennsylvania in 1858," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 109.4 (1985): 499–536, JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20091962> (accessed February 21, 2024).

³⁰ Pflug, Oliver L., "Pennsylvania Politics 1854-1860" (2002). Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers. 5226. <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/5226>. Accessed 118 February 2024.

³¹ *The Progressive Men of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* by Col. Charles Blanchard, vol. 1, A. W. Bowen & Company, 1900, p. 482.

Democratic bid in the presidential election, he unsuccessfully was nominated as a Douglass democrat for the state senate in 1860.

Nevertheless, in 1861, John Scott was elected as a Union Democrat to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for the 1862 term. Although a Democrat, he was elected to the State Legislature without opposition, even accepting the nomination of both political parties— despite the county being Republican³² (Document AJ). Having been concordantly elected, he worked to effect a non-partisan organization of the Pennsylvania House, and strongly supported the government in its determined measures to suppress the ‘Rebellion’— Southern insurrection. He was a war Democrat, and aligned with many Republican policies, including those concerning the future of slavery. The democratic caucus having declined to act in union with him, he and other war democrats switched affiliation and took sides with the Republicans. With this transition, he was appointed chairman of the judiciary committee for the remainder of his expiring session. Although gaining the respect of many of his fellow representatives and district-men, serving as a significant force in the legislative effort of the union, he was neglected to become a candidate for reelection to the House for the 1863 term.

The next five years, and the reason for his neglecting of reelection, mark a less well documented period in Scott’s life. This is likely due to his involvement in the preservation of his family and raising of his two new children, Joseph Irvine Scott and Alison (Joseph) Scott (both born in 1863 and 1865 respectively). These two add onto a growing total of nine children at the time, with Scott becoming more involved in their youth during this time. However, he did not stray far from the realm of politics, and his new republican affiliation, as in 1863 he advocated the re-election of Governor Curtin, and the reelection of President Lincoln in 1864, playing a role in Pennsylvania’s support of the Union cause and preservation of the Union (Document AJ).³³

In the canvas of 1868 he took an active part in the support of the Republican ticket, and his able arguments before the masses of the people attracted public attention towards him as a suitable successor to Mr. Buckalew in the United States Senate. He was elected a delegate to the National Republican Convention in 1868, but was at this time engaged in an argument before the supreme court, leading to his position being filled not long after being elected. Nonetheless, having taken a very active part in the political canvas of that year, not only in his time in the convention but also in other judiciary mediums, he was prominently named for the United States Senate, to succeed Hon. C. R. Buckalew. He was elected to this important position in the wake of Reconstruction, and took his seat on the 4th of March 1869, serving till the end of his term of six years on the 3rd of March, 1875 (Document AG).³⁴

During his term, he served on many of the most important committees, proving himself to be a diligent, fearless, and able senator. He was chairman of the select committee appointed to investigate the alleged outrages in Southern States; and was chairman of the forty-third

³² The Progressive Men of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by Col. Charles Blanchard, vol. 1, A. W. Bowen & Company, 1900, p. 483.

³³ Africa, J. Simpson. History of Huntingdon and Blair Counties, Pennsylvania. 1883. Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/historyofhunting00afri/page/n117/mode/1up>. Accessed 17 February 2024.

³⁴ "The Philadelphia Times (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 1 December 1896, Tuesday, p. 7. Newspapers.com, <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/40307105/>. Accessed 19 February 2024.

congress's committee of claims, an instrumental meeting of the legislative branch of the United States federal government, consisting of the United States Senate and the United States House of Representatives.³⁵ It met in Washington, D.C. from March 4, 1873, to March 4, 1875, during the fifth and sixth years of Ulysses S. In addition, his previous role as special counsel for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, conducted at the same time as his roles in the State House of Representatives, allowed him to be an industrious and effective member of the committees on finance and railroads. It was not until his election that his connection with the railroad company was severed until after his term.

One of the first examples of his service is his convening of the inquiry into the atrocities of the Ku Klux Klan. On the 18th of May in 1872, Scott delivered a pivotal address to the United States Senate during a crucial debate concerning the potential extension of presidential authority to suspend habeas corpus in specific circumstances, particularly in cases of armed, organized resistance against the U.S. government or violent breaches of its laws.³⁶ Commencing his speech by directing the Senate's Chief Clerk to recite the relevant provisions, Scott proceeded to assert the well-documented existence of the Ku Klux Klan, attributing its inception to General N.B. Forrest and General John B. Gordon. Despite Forrest's claim of disbandment in 1868, Scott contested this assertion, highlighting the Klan's continued operations across states such as North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi. Providing compelling evidence of the Klan's well-organized and menacing activities, Scott detailed instances of their audacious and widespread criminal acts, including a disturbing incident in Unionville, South Carolina, where a sizable group allegedly broke into a jail and executed eight prisoners. Drawing upon witness testimonies like that of Kirkland L. Gunn, a Klan member who attested to their heavily armed nature and clandestine violent actions across multiple states, Scott underscored the urgent need to address the Klan's pervasive threat.³⁷

In the aftermath of the Civil War, the Ku Klux Klan emerged as a dominant and formidable terrorist entity in the American South. With an estimated membership exceeding 550,000 by 1868 according to Nathan Bedford Forrest's own assessment, the Klan distinguished itself through its extensive use of disguises that not only concealed members' identities but also contributed to their enigmatic and intimidating persona. Scott's work in the enactment of the Ku Klux Klan Act in 1871 empowered President Grant with broad authority to combat the organization as local authorities proved inadequate or unwilling to apprehend its members. Grant's suspension of habeas corpus in nine counties in October 1871 facilitated mass arrests within Klan ranks; however, convicting numerous Klansmen necessitated establishing irrefutable evidence of the Klan's cohesive criminal structure.³⁸ Against this tumultuous backdrop, Senator Scott delivered his impassioned speech early in 1872, shedding light on the urgent need to address and dismantle this dangerous organization.

³⁵ "John Scott." Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. Accessed 17 February 2024. <https://bioguide.congress.gov/search/bio/S000177>.

³⁶ "KU-KLUX; Speech of Hon. John Scott." *Huntingdon Journal* (Huntingdon, PA), May 29, 1872.

³⁷ Ku-Klux-Klan. The Ku-Klux Reign of Terror. Synopsis of a Portion of the Testimony Taken by the Congressional Investigating Committee. No. 5. 1872. PDF, Page 1 Retrieved from the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/unk83057951/. Accessed 17 February 2024

³⁸ Ku-Klux-Klan. The Ku-Klux Reign of Terror. Synopsis of a Portion of the Testimony Taken by the Congressional Investigating Committee. No. 5. 1872. PDF, Page 2 Retrieved from the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/unk83057951/. Accessed 18 February 2024

He continued his congressional service by spearheading the Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Late Insurrectionary States, a committee established by the U.S. Congress in 1871. The committee was tasked with investigating the condition of the states that had been part of the Confederacy during the American Civil War. Specifically, the committee requested information on the debts, rates, amounts of taxation, election laws, and other official documents from these states. As the Chairman of the Joint Select Committee tasked with investigating the condition of the late insurrectionary states, corresponded with Governor Rufus B. Bullock of Georgia in 1871.³⁹ In a letter to Governor Bullock, Scott requested information regarding the debts, taxation rates, election laws, and other official documents of Georgia. Governor Bullock, in his response to Senator Scott, expressed his reluctance to comply fully with the request, citing concerns about congressional interference in state matters. This exchange sheds light on the tensions between federal and state authorities during the Reconstruction era, highlighting the complexities and challenges faced in rebuilding the Southern states after the Civil War. Moreover, it highlights Scott's role in yet another case of defining jurisdictional boundaries between state and federal authority.

With Scott's significant involvement with the prosecution of both the Ku Klux Klan and the insurrectionary states, it is worth considering the perceptions of his brother, George Washington Scott, both a Confederate soldier and candidate for governor of Florida during the Reconstruction era. George Washington Scott, being a Confederate soldier and a candidate for governor during this tumultuous period, likely held views that aligned with the sentiments prevalent among many Confederates at the time.⁴⁰ His perception of his brother's work may have been influenced by his Confederate background and political aspirations, potentially leading to a complex mix of pride in his brother's accomplishments and reservations about his actions against former Confederates and Southern sympathizers.

In addition to several more cases ranging from Reconstruction legislation to alleged outrages in Southern States, Scott's tenure in the senate came to a close. Throughout his time, his voice was heard upon all momentous occasions when important questions came before the senate; and, in his speeches, or addresses, there was a laudable avoidance of all straining for oratorical display, while his remarks were lucid, concise, and pointed. One of the most observant writers of contemporary political history, James G. Blaine, in his "Twenty Years in Congress," says: "John Scott, whose father had been a Representative in Congress, succeeded Mr. Buckalew was a Senator from Pennsylvania. Mr. Scott had taken little part in politics and had been altogether devoted to his profession as a lawyer, but his services in the Senate were distinguished by intelligence and fidelity."⁴¹

³⁹ Georgia. Governor (1868-1871 : Bullock), John Scott, YA Pamphlet Collection (Library of Congress), and United States. Congress. Joint Committee on Reconstruction. Letter From His Excellency Governor Bullock, of Georgia, In Reply to the Honorable John Scott, United States Senator, Chairman of the Joint Select Committee to Inquire Into the Condition of the Late Insurrectionary States. Atlanta, Ga., 1871.

⁴⁰ Betty Pope Scott Noble. *The Story of George Washington Scott 1829-1903: A Family Memoir*. Atlanta, GA: Noble Family in cooperation with Agnes Scott College, 2002. Accessed 20 February 2024

⁴¹ James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress: From Lincoln to Garfield. With a Review of the Events Which Led to the Political Revolution of 1860*. 1 January 1884.

During his tenure of the Senatorial office, his ability attracted the attention of the leaders of his party, and at the expiration of his term President Grant tendered him the post of Secretary of the Interior in his Cabinet.⁴² Mr. Scott considered the Senatorship one of the highest honors his State could confer upon him, and being anxious to return to the chosen work of his life, he declined the position of a Cabinet officer, and returned the service of the Pennsylvania Railroad as legal adviser to Colonel Thomas A. Scott, the then president.

In 1875, he removed from Huntingdon to Pittsburgh and took charge of the legal business pertaining to the lines west of Pittsburgh for the Pennsylvania Company. He organized the legal department at Pittsburgh for those lines in June, 1875, and after that time reports of all legal proceedings were made to his office.⁴³ Upon the resignation of William J. Howard, in November, 1877, Mr. Scott was called to take charge of the legal department of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and became general counsel of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and its allied lines. His first major role was in the quelling of the Pittsburgh insurrection and railroad strike which began on June 27, 1877. Allegations surfaced that agents and officials of the company were involved in burning cars as a response to replace aging equipment at the expense of those supporting the strike. Efforts were made to disrupt the unity of the working class through various tactics like invoking religion or appealing to sympathies; however, the workers remained steadfast in their solidarity. The strike led to significant destruction, including fires spreading near vital locations like the union depot. A deputation from the Trainmen's Union presented their demands to Pittsburgh officials of the PRR system and requested passes to see President Thomas A. Scott. However, the PRR denied this request and began firing members of the committee and around 300 others.⁴⁴

In an effort to address the crisis, Scott advocated for deploying the Pittsburgh militia to handle the striking railroad workers.⁴⁵ The decision, one supported by John Scott but ultimately made by other executives, to call the militia during the strike of 1877 was a complex one, influenced by various factors. The historical analysis reveals nuances that need to be considered. The situation involved escalating tensions between the strikers and the railroad companies, with demands from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers for wage increases and other concessions. As the strike grew in size and intensity, violence became a real concern, prompting the authorities to act. Despite the challenging circumstances and the inevitability of violence, historians view the decision to call in the militia as one that resulted in the least number of casualties. Collaborating with other officials, a difficult choice was made to use troops to suppress the strike, which had intensified with active involvement from workers and their families of various backgrounds. The involvement of the militia was deemed necessary to maintain order and prevent further violence. In Pittsburgh, for example, General Pearson faced a significant imbalance in numbers, with only 230 men against 4,000 to 5,000 strikers and sympathizers. Furthermore, the meetings between railroad officials and union representatives,

⁴² The Philadelphia Times (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 1 December 1896, Tuesday, p. 11. Newspapers.com, <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/40307105/>. Accessed 19 February 2024.

⁴³ "The Philadelphia Times (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 1 December 1896, Tuesday, p. 12. Newspapers.com, <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/40307105/>. Accessed 19 February 2024.

⁴⁴ "Pittsburgh Insurrection and Railroad Strike of 1877: A Progressive Labor Party Pamphlet." Archive.org, <https://archive.org/details/pittsburgh-insurrection-and-railroad-strike-of-1877-1977>. Accessed January 18, 2024.

⁴⁵ PRR Chronology. Hagley. 1877. Page 36.

http://www.prrths.com/newprrr_files/Hagley/PRR1877%20Jun%2006.pdf. Accessed 17 February 2024

where demands were discussed but ultimately rejected, set the stage for escalating tensions that necessitated a strong response.

In hindsight, although his judgment led to casualties, it was considered the decision that aimed to minimize the overall number of casualties for a conflict. Scott's proactive approach demonstrated his leadership and problem-solving skills during a critical time. His involvement in resolving the strike and working towards solutions showcased his capabilities, which likely contributed to his subsequent promotion on October 24, 1877 to General Solicitor. Shortly after, on November 17, 1877, he was transferred to Philadelphia, to head the PRR's Legal Department.⁴⁶ His former position was filled by Joshua Twing Brooks (1840-1901), who was named associate general counsel and placed in charge of the Lines West Legal Department office at Pittsburgh. In Philadelphia, Scott oversaw all civil and criminal appeals to ensure quality and consistency and became personally involved in selected cases, including many of the Department's most complex and sensitive matters.

For instance, on April 9th, 1885, he stood before the judiciary (general) Committee of the State of Pennsylvania on the Anti-Discrimination Bill.⁴⁷ Now a prominent figure in the legal realm, Scott delivered a compelling address before the Committee. In his remarks, he focused on the bill under consideration, emphasizing the importance of understanding its legal implications and potential effects if enacted. Similar to the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887, it aimed to address issues such as railroad monopolies setting prices, discriminating in rates charged to passengers and shippers, and providing rebates. Scott highlighted how the bill aligns with constitutional sections, declaring general principles and duties for railroad companies, particularly regarding public highways, common carriers, and the rights of citizens to construct and operate railroads.

Delving deeper into the bill's content, Scott scrutinized the second section, which addresses equal rights for individuals, associations, and corporations in transporting persons and property over railroads and canals. He raised a critical question about the omission of passenger rate schedules in the bill's enforcement section, advocating for equal protection against discrimination in passenger transportation as in freight transportation. He questioned the omission of passenger rate schedules in the bill's enforcement section, stating, "Why do you omit in this sixth section the schedule of passenger rates, and fail to punish discrimination in favor of passengers as well as that made in carrying freight?" Scott's analysis underscored the need for consistency in addressing discriminatory practices within transportation services to ensure fair treatment for all customers.

Furthermore, John Scott delved into a detailed examination of the potential implications of the sixth section of the bill during his address to the committee of lawyers. He expressed concerns about vague language surrounding railroad crossings and highlighted potential conflicts

⁴⁶ PRR Chronology. Hagley. 1877. Page 67.

http://www.prrths.com/newprrr_files/Hagley/PRR1877%20Jun%2006.pdf. Accessed 17 February 2024

⁴⁷ Scott, John. "Remarks of Mr. John Scott General Solicitor Pennsylvania Railroad Company before the Judiciary (General) Committee of the Senate of Pennsylvania on the Anti-Discrimination Bill." Google Books, https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbooks.google.com%2Fbooks%2Fdownload%2FRemarks_of_John_Scott_General_Solicitor.pdf%3Fid%3D-cQOAQAAMAAJ%26output%3Dpdf%26sig%3DACfU3U2b_5S9P_Uzdx6Alum9gaFB9x9BVfw.

with existing contractual agreements with railroad companies. Scott emphasized the risk of unjust indictments and conflicts arising from enforcing provisions without clear definitions and circumstances, particularly in cases involving private railroad owners. His critique emphasized the importance of specificity and clarity in defining criminal offenses to prevent widespread indictments based on ambiguous legal grounds. Ultimately, this case served as the epitome of his legal career, a brilliant example of his lifelong commitment to meticulously upholding justice and the general wellbeing of his countrymen.

For the next eighteen years, he continued to work with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company until his health began to decline. During this time, he accepted a multitude of other vocations, most related to his faith. During his time in Pittsburgh, he was a manager of the Dixmont Hospital and a director in the Western Theological Seminary. Now that he moved to Philadelphia, he had become an elder of the Walnut Street Presbyterian Church.⁴⁸ It is here where great influence from his childhood faith can be observed, continuing to shape the latter portion of his life. In addition to the church, he served as a member of the Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, a member of the Board of Ministerial Relief, a director and trustee of the Princeton Theological Seminary, and quite significantly, a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania. The inner-workings of his relationship with the University are lesser known, but it was likely in the form of legal consultation and guidance—with Penn beginning to offer a full-time program in law not much earlier in 1850. In their collaboration, the University came to house a multitude of Scott's letters and correspondence, forming another testament to their connection.

John Scott died on November 29, 1896, a late Sunday evening at his residence, 3808 Chestnut street, after a brief illness, at the age of 74 years—in the Philadelphia residence he purchased nearly two decades ago (Document AI). The exact cause of death is obscure, however multiple accounts leading to his passing reference his declining health by virtue of unspecified illness(es). Beginning in the latter half of the 1880s, he had been in declining health, which forced him to resign from the office of chief solicitor of the law department of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1895. Since that time, however, in appreciation of his valuable services to the Company, he has remained the consulting counsel (Document AG). In addition, he also served as a source of valuable legal information for the legal department of the University of Pennsylvania and the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company—where his son, Alison, held position. Mr. Scott left behind a widow and six sons, all of whom had established and venerable careers. Willam W. Scott and Walter Scott, prominent lawyers in Pittsburgh; John Scot, Jr., a well-known lawyer in this city; George Scott, a coal merchant in this city; Irvine Scott and Dr. Alison Scott, the latter assistant medical director of the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company.

Scott had a decadent funeral procession at the West Walnut Street Presbyterian Church (Philadelphia, Pa, Walnut Street and Thirty-ninth) with a variety of honored speakers and members of both his vocational and avocational tenures paying reverence. Many regarded the services as both simple and impressive. Those who had known Mr. Scott in life, and his friends were almost countless, were largely represented. Gracing the platform were esteemed individuals in both religious and professional regards, such as Rev. Dr. Henry C. McCook, Rev. George D. Baker, Rev. Edward W. Hitchcock, Rev. Joseph H. Dulles, Rev. James Stuart Dickson, Rev.

⁴⁸ The Philadelphia Times (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 1 December 1896, Tuesday, p. 13. Newspapers.com, <https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/40307105/>. Accessed 19 February 2024.

William C. Cattell, Rev. Dr. Paxton and Rev. Dr. H. Clay Trumbull (Document AI). Their venerable presence gave an added air of solemnity and sacredness to the unostentatious service which preceded the final private service, with close friends and family, at the Woodland Cemetery.

Cattle read selected portions of Scripture, and was followed by Dr. McCook, who closed the services with prayer and the benediction. The funeral processions then left the church, while the organist played Chopin's Trauer Marsch, and the immediate family drove to Woodland Cemetery, where the final services were read by Dr. McCook (Document AI). The choice of music was not only poignant but also emphatic, effectively capturing the solemnity and significance of the moment and the passing of such a revered and honored individual.

The first rows of the church pews were occupied by members of the family. Back of the relatives sat almost a complete body of the principal officers and directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad. It is noted that there were only two absentees, George B. Roberts and Henry D. Welsh, prevented only by sickness (Document AI). Behind the ranks of the representatives of the Pennsylvania Railroad sat delegations from the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company, the University of Pennsylvania Board of Trustees, and the Presbyterian Board of Ministerial Belief. Many members of the staff of the Jefferson Medical College and of the Theological Seminary of Princeton showed their respect for their dead friend by their presence. The wide influence of Scott and the steady quality of his friendships could have been evidenced in no better way than by the presence of these many friends. It was regarded as an "imposing gathering," where even the flag at the nearby University of Pennsylvania flew at half-mast, underscoring his significant role as a trustee and the depth of his influence.⁴⁹

The most recent notable descendants of the Scott family would be his great grandniece, Betty Pope Scott Noble. Although her direct lineage traces her back to John Scott's brother, George Washington Scott as her great-grandfather, her persistent research into the family provided valuable insight into the early life of John. Her work was completed predominantly in conjugation with *Agnes Scott College*, founded by her great-grandfather and named after his—and John's—mother. Betty, affectionately known as Popesey to many, died on Thursday, August 7, 2012 after a lengthy illness.⁵⁰ She left behind a multitude of sources and analyses into the Scott family and lineage.

Despite all that physically remains of John Scott today being a name carved into a tombstone, his legacy endures eternally, characterized by a life abounding in successes, failures, and friendships, leaving behind a profound impact on society and civil service. Beginning with his youth in Alexandria, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, Scott's journey encompassed various roles and responsibilities in both his family, vocational, and avocational life. From his early days attending Marshall College to his successful career as a lawyer and deputy Attorney general of Huntingdon County, he demonstrated a keen intellect and dedication to justice and civil service.

⁴⁹ "The Philadelphia Times." *The Times* (Philadelphia, Pa.) 1875-1902, 3 December 1896. <https://newspaperarchive.com/obituary-clipping-dec-03-1896-3939257/>.

⁵⁰ Betty Pope Scott Noble Obituary, A. S. Turner & Sons Funeral Home & Crematory. <https://www.asturner.com/obituaries/Betty-Pope-Scott-Noble?obId=1733832>. Accessed 17 February 2024

After years of public and collegiate pressure, he made his foray into the legislative landscape through terms in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and eventually the United States Senate. Notably, Scott played a pivotal role in leading important investigations against the Ku Klux Klan, providing guidance during the tumultuous period of Reconstruction, and handling cases of insurrection state and Southern state outrage, while on the Committee on Claims in the Forty-Third Congress. His tenure as a Union Democrat in the predominantly Republican Pennsylvania House of Representatives and later as a United States Senator showcased his unwavering commitment to upholding democratic values and advocating for the rights of all citizens. Scott's legacy extends beyond his political endeavors; as a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania and through his role as solicitor for the Pennsylvania Railroad, he left an indelible mark on both legal and educational spheres.

Behind all of his accreditation, he was most importantly a loving son, brother, husband, father, and friend. His passing on November 29, 1896, in Philadelphia marked the end of an era for those who knew him, but his contributions continue to resonate in the annals of not only Pennsylvania's, but the United States's history. John Scott was laid to rest at Woodlands Cemetery in Philadelphia, where his memory lives on, alongside many others, as a beacon of integrity and service. Through the corridors of legislation, the halls of justice, the bowels of infrastructure, and the sanctuaries of faith, John Scott's presence resonated like a melody lingering long after its final note had faded.

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