Colonel Ellis Cook

Cookie Crumbs Ancestry

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Colonel Ellis Cook

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Pedigree

Charts <u>Ancestors of Edward Ambrose Cooke</u>

<u>Descendants of Ellis Cook-6 Generations</u>

Ellis Cooke to Edward Ambrose Cooke

Colonel Ellis Cook, son of <u>Ellis Cook</u> and <u>Mary Williams</u>, was born at <u>Southampton</u>, <u>Suffolk Co., New York</u>, 1732. He died at <u>Hanover, Morris Co., New Jersey</u>, 17 April 1797, and was buried at the <u>First Presbyterian Church of Hanover Cemetery</u>, <u>Hanover, Morris Co., New Jersey</u>. 2,3

Ellis married (1) Margaret Griswold Cocker, daughter of Emanuel Cocker and Sarah Buckingham, at Hanover, 12 July 1753; he married (2), as her 2nd husband, Lucy Ely, daughter of William Ely and Elizabeth Perkins, in 1778. 2,5

Until the dawn of the revolution, Ellis Cook was a quiet tavern owner and farmer, maintaining a bridge over the Passaic River. His home was known as the Halfway House, roughly half-way between Newark and Sussex Co. Farmers could get free passage over the bridge if they spent the night in the tavern. His name appears in the lists of Tavern License Applicants for the years 1749-1761, 1763-1765, & 1778. On a tax list for Morris Co., he is reported owning 77 acres @ 17-10-00; 10 horses or cattle & 8 sheep @ 00-27-04; owing poor tax of 00-11-04, county tax of 00-06-09.5 and Sinking Fund Tax of 00-06-09.5.

Beginning in 1775, we see a fairly dramatic transformation. Without any legal or military training or experience (that we know of) he was elected a member of the Committee of Observation for Morris Co. 9 Jan 1775, and on 1 May he was elected one of the delegates for said county, they being vested with power of legislation, and to raise men, money, and arms for the common defense. He must have proven himself capable for he returned to the Provincial Congress in June, August, and October (1775).

He was a member of the Committee of Safety which sat at New Brunswick from 10 Jan to 2 Mar 1776. This committee applied 13 Jan 1776 to have him commissioned a Lieutenant Colonel in the Morris Co., New Jersey militia, Eastern Battalion and the commission was issued. The Provincial Congress at New Brunswick ordered that £1 6s. 8d. be paid to Ellis Cook, Esquire, in full of his account for removing the records of the Surveyor-General's office at Perth Amboy to New Brunswick. He was a member of the Provincial Congress meeting at Burlington 10 Jun 1776 and which adopted the Constitution of New Jersey, 2 Jul 1776. On 18 Jul 1776 he was appointed Lieutenant Colonel in Colonel Thomas's battalion of "detached militia"

from Morris county. Ellis was commissioned as a Colonel 1 Feb 1777 in the Morris Co., New Jersey militia, Eastern Battalion, replacing Colonel Jacob Ford who had died of pneumonia. Washington used Ford's house in Morristown as his headquarters, and it is now part of the Morristown battlefield historic site. $\frac{9}{2}$

Colonel Ford receives most of the credit for leading the militia covering Washington's retreat through New Jersey, but we now know that Ellis Cook was also very active in this effort. William Parrot served under Ellis and survived to apply for a pension in 1832. In his application he declared:

- "1. He . . . was called out and served one month commencing about he 1st of October 1776-Colonel Jacob Ford was his Commandant this month."

 "2nd. Soon after the Company was called out enmasse-he went with it and served three months under Capt Kitchel Colonel Ellis Cook Commanded. This term extended into 1777."
- "3. He served one month in the latter part of the winter of 1776-7 under Capt. Kitchel (Colonel Cook Commanding) in the neighborhood of Plainfield in the county of Essex. The Enemy were there in and about New Brunswick. had a skirmish with a party of them at Lamptown and another at Quibble Town."

In a separate deposition Parrot elaborated on some of his (and presumably some of Col Cook's) activities:

"His second tour of Militia service began early in Nov 1776 & whilst he and his company were stationed at Elizabethtown & the landing places in that neighbourhood performing guard duty, Genl Washington with his main army passed through New Jersey march commonly called the Mudhounds retreating before the enemy who pursued as far as N. Brunswick. Genl Washington continuing through N. Jersey into Pennsylvania. This Depont with his company fell in the rear of Washington's army as far as Plainfield where the company was stationed for the residue of the 3 months having at first

been called out for one month, but owing to the urgency of the times was detained until in February, then having served three months he was dismissed."

"His 3rd tour under Capt Kitchell near Plainfield, embraced a part of the month of January & of February, guarding the [frontier], the enemy lying in N. Brunswick."

Parrot had other service in 1777 as well as through the end of the war, but these two instances were the only ones where Col Cook is mentioned. $\frac{10}{10}$

Later, Ellis chose to resign his commission in order to remain in the assembly: $\frac{11}{11}$

Princeton Nov. 6, 1777

Ellis Cook Esq. Colonel of the Eastern Regiment of Militia in the county of Morris, having desired leave to resign his commission as being incompatible with his being a member of assembly.

Ordered that the said resignation be accepted.

I've found no other recorded military activity. It has been said that Ellis served on Washington's staff, was at the Battle of Monmouth, and may have been eligble for the Society of the Cincinnati. However, there is no evidence of any Continental service (required for Cincinnati eligibility), and we know he resigned well before Monmouth. There was a Col Cook at that battle, but he was in the Pennsylvania line. As the senior militia commander in the Morris Co. area, Ellis may have played a role in supplying or coordinating local support for the encampment, either in 1777, or as a civilian leader in 1779-80. He does not appear in the list of Society of the Cincinnati members or eligibles (this is the Society's official list made in 1788 and added to the 1911 edition of Stryker's *Register* by James Campbell. 12

He was elected a member of the Assembly for Morris for fourteen years (1776-77,

1779, & 1781-92); justice of the peace in 1793; and was a judges of Morris county court, 1793, 1795. 13

His name appears in numerous newspaper items between 1780 and 1795:

David Loree adv. for sale 74 acres, late the property of Mr. William Parrot, near Col. Cook's, in Hanover (New Jersey Journal, 11 Sep 1782)¹⁴

A school master who is willing to teach a day and night school four months from the first Monday in November next, may be heard of by applying to Col. Ellis Cook, Capt. Nathaniel Squier or Mr. Prudden Alling. (New Jersey Journal, 25 Sep 1782)¹⁵

Due to the hardness of the time and a lack of sufficient circulating money, a proposal is made for the formation of a company for the increase of sheep and cattle for wool and meat, for which New Jersey is well situated... .Subscriptions for shares are taken by . . . Col. Ellis Cook and Major Prudden Alling, N. Hanover. (New Jersey Journal, Elizabethtown, 21 Feb 1785) 16

...a stage with four horses shall be drove, and the business of post done, from Mount Hope instead of Rockaway. He purposes to drive a very neat and elegant stage hung on steel springs, which will convey at least eight passengers and baggage. It will start at sunrise every Wednesday morning, stop at David Baker's tavern in Rockaway at six o'clock. . . (listing seveal more stops) thence to Colonel Cook's and stop at Colonel Cummings's. . . . (New York Gazetteer, 6 May 1785)

At the close of the poll... last Saturday evening for members of the Legislature *c., the following gentlemen were declared duly elected... Morris County. Council—Col. Cook... (New Jersey Journal, Elizabethtown, 19 Oct 1791. 18

Agreeable to a petition from inhabitants of Essex and Morris Counties, a bill

will be presented to the Legislature to repeal so much of a law as affects the owners of lowlands and meadows along the Passaic River between the mill dam at Chatham and the bridge across said river near Col. Ellis Cook's. (Wood's Newark Gazette, Thursday, 13 Sep 1792)¹⁹

Yesterday being the day appointed in the constitution of this state for the annual meeting of the Legislature, a quorum of both houses met in this place and proceeded to business.... The following is a list of the gentlemen who are duly elected members of the legislature of this state at the present session... Morris: Council—Ellis Cook Esq...(New Jersey State Gazette, Trenton, Wednesday, 24 Oct 1792)²⁰

In an Act for organizing and training the militia of this State, passed November 30, 1792, the following persons were appointed commissioners to organize the remainder of the militia in the various counties:... Ellis Cook Esq. For Morris (The Guardian; or New Brunswick Advertiser, Wednesday, 12 Dec 1792)²¹

Ellis Cook and Thomas T. Eckley, administrators, will sell at public vendue on October 1st at the house of Thomas Eckley, deceased at Hanover, Morris County, about 100 acres of very good land, in one lot or in parcels, as well as cattle, sheep, horses, hogs, household furniture, farm utensils, a large quantity of bottled English cyder upwards of 30 years old, and a quantity of other items. (Wood's Newark Gazette, Wednesday, 25 Sep 1793)²²

Ellis Cook and Thomas T. Eckley will sell at public vendue on 11th July next at the house of the latter in Hanover, Morris County, a lot of 100 acres which will be sold altogether or in small lots. (Wood's Newark Gazette, Wednesday, 25 Jun 1794) $\frac{23}{}$

To Be Sold at Private Sale, a pleasant well situated farm of 328 acres lying in Hanover, Morris County, about one mile from Mr. White's meeting house on the road to Bottle Hill. There is on the premises a large dwelling house, large

barn, cyder house and mill, granary, out-houses, &c. Likewise a good orchard with about 300 apple trees together with a collection of Prince's best fruit such as peaches, pears, cherries, &c. For terms, apply to Thomas T. Eckley on the premises, or Col. Ellis Cook near the same. Hanover, December 1, 1794 (New Jersey Journal, Elizabethtown, 10 Dec 1794. Also in Wood's Newark Gazette, Wednesday, 10 Dec 1794)

On Monday the 9th inst. An election for a member of the Legislature to replace Aaron Kitchell Esq. commenced in Morrristown. The votes were: Col. Ellis Cook, 1373; and Dr. William Canfield Jr., 1003. (Wood's Newark Gazette, Wednesday, 18 Feb 1795)²⁶

His gravestone in the Hanover graveyard reads (or at least used to read):

In memory of Ellis Cook Esq'r who departed this life April 7th 1797 in the 66th Year of his Age.

The damaged and time-worn stone still stands, but a grass-level marker has been placed nearby. Although the date is correct on the new marker, Ellis is misrepresented as being a "Pvt New Jersey Continental Line" as well as a Colonel in the Morris County Militia and this is a conflated view of two different Ellis Cooks.

Colonel Ellis Cook left a will dated 6 April 1797, and proved 25 April 1797:

In the Name of God, Amen. I Ellis Cook, of the township of Hanover, County of Morris & State of New Jersey, being in perfect mind and memory, but weak and infirm in body, and calling to mind that is appointed for all men once to die, do ordain and make this my last Will and Testament, that is to say: Principally & first of all I give and recommend my soul into the hands of God

who gave it, and as to my body I recommend it unto the earth to be buried in a decent and christian like manner, at the discretion of my Executors hereafter named; and as touching such worldly Estate as it has pleased God to bless me with in this life, I give devise & dispose of the same in the following manner and form:

Imprimis, this is my will and and I do order in the first place that all my just debts and funeral charges be paid and fully satisfied by my Executors out of my moveable Estate, and if that should not be sufficient, the remainder to be paid out of my lands in such manner as said Executors shall think most proper & just.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my son Jabez that tract of land opposite my dwelling house, bounded by lands of Matthew Kitchel & Samuel Merry, Passaick river & the main road, excepting the meadow; also that tract of woodland in Essex County joining Aaron Beach, Isaac Winans, John Warren & others, all of which I give to him his heirs and asigns forever.

Item. I give and bequeath to my three other sons Zebulon, James, Ambrose, & their heirs and assigns forever, all the remainder of my real Estate in the Counties of Morris & Essex, to be equally divided between them in quantity and quality.

Item, I give to my three daughters Margaret Kitchel, Matilda Plumb & Rulatte Gregory, the sum of thirty pounds each, to be paid to them by my Executors in the same manner as my debts are ordered to be paid.

It is also my will that my son Ambrose shall take my son George Whitfield & bring him up and instruct him in the practice of Physic for which he shall be paid by my Executors in the manner above directed, the sum of twenty five pounds annually untill he arrives at the age of twenty one years; provided he remains with him so long, or in the same proportion for the time he may stay, and it is further my will, that my wife Lucy shall furnish my said son George Whitfield with necessary cloathing during the above time, out of the profits

arrising from her right of dower, and I do hereby make, constitute & ordain Aaron Kitchel, Prudden Alling & James Cook my Executors to this my last Will and Testament.

In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this sixth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred & ninety seven, Ellis Cook (S & S)

Dr. John Darcy & William Cook, two of the witnesses to the within Will, being duly sworn, depose and say, that they saw Ellis Cook the Testator therein named sign and seal the same, and heard him publish, pronounced and declare the within writing to be his last Will and Testament, and that at the doing thereof the said Testator was of sound and disposing mind and memory, as far as these deponents know and and as they verily believe; and that Epaphras Cook, the other witness was present at the same time & signed his name as a witness to the within will, together with these deponents, in the presence of the said Testator. Sworn at Morristown the 25th day of April, 1797, before me Jabez Campfield, Surrogate. The foregoing Will being proved, Probate was granted by his Excellency Richard Howell Esgr unto Aaron Kitchel Esquire, Col Prudden Alling, & Major James Cook, the Executors in the said Will named, they having been first duly sworn well and truly to perform the same, exhibit a true and perfect Inventory and render a just and true account when thereunto lawfully required--Given under the Prerogative seal the day and Year aforesaid. John Beatty Regr.

The "Inventory of Coll. Ellis Cook Esqr," 12 Apr 1797 totaled £602 14s. 04d. and was appraised by Enoch Beach and David Bedford. 27

Family 1

Margaret Griswold Cocker b. 15 Dec 1735, d. 15 Mar 1777

Children

- i. **Jabez Cook**+²⁷ b. say 1754
- ii. **Zebulon Cook**+²⁷,²⁸ b. 22 Mar 1755, d. 12 Dec 1810
- iii. <u>James Cook</u>+²⁷ b. 25 Mar 1760, d. 26 Mar 1836

- iv. Margaret Cook+27 b. say 1763
- v. Dr. Ambrose Ellis Cook, MD+27 b. 11 Jul 1772, d. 28 Jun 1828
- vi. Matilda Cook+²⁷ b. say 1774, d. 6 May 1853
- vii. Ruletta Cook+27 b. 10 Mar 1774, d. 16 May 1815

Family 2 <u>Lucy Ely</u> b. 7 Jul 1749, d. 29 Jan 1819

Children

- i. <u>Elizabeth Cook</u>² b. 21 May 1779, d. 30 Sep 1780
- ii. <u>Dr. George Whitfield Cook, MD</u>+²⁷ b. say 1781, d. 1812
- iii. <u>Lucy Cook</u>²⁹ b. Apr 1789, d. 19 Feb 1793

This person was last edited on 3 Jan 2021

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- 2. [S217] Wheeler and Halsey, Hanover Graves, 40.
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- 15. [S1056] Wilson, New Jersey Notices 1781, 145.
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