

Stories

of Some Interesting People
Buried in the Churchyard

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Basking Ridge, NJ

JOHN MCCOLLUM – Grave Number 2

John was born in 1658 and died in the 103rd year of his age in 1760. He was an elder in 1733 when John Ayers deeded the land on which the present sanctuary stands. Here is the epitaph on his tombstone:

Here lies ye body of John McCollum who
departed this life April ye 18 A.D.1760 in the 103rd year of
his age.

You Old, you Young, you Middle Ag'd
Great and Small, Take my advice
Be ready for Death's call.

I once was Young and many Days did See,
I Dy'd when Old, no Age from Death being Free,
I am now entomb'd in Earth's Dark Cavern Lye,
Conquered by Death, make ready All to Dye.

SAMUEL BROWN – Grave Number 85

Samuel's gravestone is only one of four flat stones in the yard. He died in 1763 and was the first member who left a bequest to the church upon his death. The amount was 200 British pounds which in today's money is \$39,000.00. Samuel was married to Mary Whitaker, who became Widow Brown when Samuel died. When Mary remarried, she retained the "Widow" title and became Widow White. Mary owned a tavern on Finley Avenue in which General Lee of the Revolutionary Army was captured by the British in December 1776. This event kept General Lee out of the Battle of Trenton which George Washington might not have won if Lee had been present because Lee resented Washington's position as General of the Army.

Here is the epitaph on Samuel's tombstone.
Is Brown deceased? Yes, he is fled
We trust he's risen above the sky,
Tho' mouldring here among the dead
His sleeping dust interrred doth lie,
A pious man and Husband kind,
An useful Elder in this Church.
A friend sincere of generous mind
Who for the Publick has done much.

HENRY SOUTHARD – Grave Number 351

Henry Southard had a big family, all over achievers. His grave was moved here from where Westminster Hall now stands.

Henry was born in Hempstead, N.Y., October 7, 1747. He was a member of New Jersey state legislature, 1797-99, 1811; and a U.S. Representative from New Jersey, 1801-11, 1815-21. In 1821, his son Samuel was a U. S. Senator. This made them the only father-son serving in the congress of the U.S. at the same time in our history.

His son Samuel Lewis Southard, (1787-1842) was born in Basking Ridge, N.J., June 9, 1787. He was a member of the New Jersey state assembly, 1815; justice of the New Jersey state supreme court, 1815-20; a U.S. Senator from New Jersey, 1821-23, 1833-42; the U.S. Secretary of the Navy, 1823-29 under Presidents Monroe and John Quincy Adams; New Jersey state attorney general, 1829-33; Governor of New Jersey, 1832-33. He died in Fredericksburg, Va., June 26, 1842 with interment at Congressional Cemetery, Washington, D.C.

Another son, Isaac Southard, (1783-1850) was a State court judge and U.S. Representative from New Jersey, 1831-33. His Interment is at the Old Cemetery, Somerville, N.J.

Henry lived in the house on North Maple Ave., the third after the driveway to Southard Park. He later moved to the house that was the 2006 Mansion in May which is located further up on North Maple.

His Epitaph reads:

In memory of Hon. Henry Southard who departed this life in the hope of a glorious immortality May 22, 1842 in the 95th year of his age. For 70 years he was a professed disciple of Christ and filled the office of ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church at Basking Ridge for upwards of 50 years with wisdom. He served his country during the war of the Revolution and in a civil capacity as Justice of the Peace, Judge of the Court and in the Legislative Councils of the State and Nation until beyond the age of three score and ten when he voluntarily retired from public life and maintained a good profession in Holy conversation and Godliness. On such Thy second death hath no power.

CAESAR HAND – Grave Number 328

The grave of a Negro slave, Caesar Hand, 1825-1883, is marked with this tribute from a grateful master: "Faithful and beloved." The epitaph was lost when this stone was restored. A survey taken in 1954 before Westminster Hall was built showed this epitaph.

DANIEL COOPER – Grave Number 250

Daniel is famous for living 100 years and 2 days and out-living 6 wives! His story is one of true love. When he was a young man, he fell in love with a young lady named Barbara Margaret Trimmer. They decided to elope but her father caught them as they attempted to leave town and threatened to shoot Daniel if he caught him near his daughter again. Barbara married another gentleman and Daniel

married Grace who bore him 10 children and is buried next to Daniel in our churchyard. After Grace died, Daniel checked to see if Barbara might be available, but she was still married. This occurred after each of the next three wives died. After the fourth wife died, when Daniel checked, lo and behold, Barbara's husband had passed away. Apparently, Barbara had never stopped loving Daniel and so they married. She was 77 years old. Alas, she also died as did his next wife before Daniel entered the church triumphant. Here is his epitaph:

In memory of Daniel Cooper, Esq. who died May 2nd 1795
aged 100 years & 2 days.

Our age to seventy years is set
How short the time, how frail the state
And if to eighty we arrive
We'd rather sigh and grown and live.

JOEL AND RUTH DAYTON – Graves 623 and 624

Joel and Ruth Dayton are the parents of William Lewis Dayton, (1807-1864).

William Lewis Dayton was another Basking Ridge boy who had a most unusual career in the public service of his state and nation. He was graduated from Princeton in 1825, and in 1836 he was elected a member of the New Jersey Senate. Before his term was ended he was in 1838 appointed a Judge in the New Jersey Supreme Court. In 1848 he became a United States Senator, serving until 1851. He was Attorney General of New Jersey from 1857 to 1861, and was then appointed by President Lincoln as United States Minister to France.

He ran for Vice President of the United States in 1856 with John C. Fremont on the Republican ticket against Demo-

crats James Buchanan and John C. Breckenridge. William was a favorite of Abraham Lincoln who wanted William as his vice president in the election of 1864 but because a Southerner was thought to be a better candidate to heal the wounds of the Civil War, Andrew Johnson was chosen by the Republican Convention instead. Since Lincoln was assassinated in 1865, William Dayton would have been President. While Ambassador to France, he died in office in 1864. At his death the President wrote: "There is no man in public life for whose character I have a higher admiration."

THE DRUMMOND FAMILY- Grave Number 563

Buried here are the five children of James & Margaret Drummond who died under the age of 2 years between 1835 and 1850:

James R. who died Nov. 3, 1835 Aged 1 year 11 months;

Delphine who died Aug. 27, 1841 Aged 1 year;

Ellithea who died June 10, 1843 aged 9 months 10 days.

Daniel C. who died Aug 20 1849 Aged 13 months & 8 days;

and Sarah L. who died Sep 23, 1850.

There were many epidemics in Northeast United States in those years which affected many families in Basking Ridge, but none as severely as the Drummond family.

MARY LEWIS KINNAN – Grave Number 528

Mary Lewis was born in Basking Ridge in 1763. When she was 15, she married Joseph Kinnan and together they moved west to farm in the western part of Virginia in a place called Tygart's Valley. Living with the Kinnans was Margaret Ward and her son. Margaret was the widow of a Revolutionary War Veteran and since Joseph had served with her husband in the war, they invited her to live on the farm with them. In 1791, three renegade Shawnee braves

attacked the farm, killed Joseph and their daughter. Escaping were her two sons, her brother Jacob Lewis, and Margaret and her son. Mary was taken captive to Ohio, then to the Detroit area where she remained a captive. After three years, she managed to get a message out to an Army courier to bring back to her brother in Basking Ridge. On the way back East the courier died of yellow fever and was buried. Because he was carrying important documents, his body was exhumed, Mary's message was found and delivered to her brother who went to Detroit, rescued her and returned her to Basking Ridge where she lived to the ripe old age of 85. Her grave is a simple stone with Mary in large letters.

JONATHAN AND WARREN DUNHAM – Grave Number 403

Brothers Jonathan P. & Warren N. Dunham

Jonathan P. Dunham fought in the battle of Salem Heights, VA and died of typhoid on June 24, 1863 Aged 24 years 11 months & 27 days.

Warren N. Dunham was killed and died on the battlefield near Salem Heights, VA on May 3, 1863 Aged 21 years 10 months & 13 days.

The epitaph reads:

For a Civil War Soldier:

Calmly they sleep who sink to rest

By all their countries wishes blest

If you have enjoyed this tour of our historic old churchyard, and found this booklet helpful and interesting, a donation would be greatly appreciated. These donations will be used to further improve the churchyard by the addition of plaques on those graves that have stones that are difficult to read due to age and weather.

Thank you, from the Cemetery Heritage Committee



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