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Document Title: James Gheen, Revolutionary Soldier from North Carolina, d 1796 (REVISED NOVEMBER 2005)



Shown above are two views of a desk made by James Gheen which is now in the Rowan County Museum, Salisbury, North Carolina. (Photo: Patsy West, 1997)

REVOLUTIONARY WAR SERVICE

James Gheen served in the North Carolina militia, from the Salisbury district. On 8 Feb 1782, Gheen was appointed constable, with James Fitzgerrell [sic], in Capt. Craige's Company.

ROWAN CO. RECORDS

James Gheen first appears in Rowan Co. records in 1778 on the tax list for Capt. Craige's district. He bought 270 acres of land on the north side of the Yadkin River in 1780. In 1792, he bought 500 acres on Second Creek from David Woodson, silversmith. The latter land is only 10 miles from Salisbury, NC. He also bought four lots and two acres in Salisbury. His will was probated in Rowan Co. in 1796 (Book G:71). He names his wife, children and some grandchildren (see below).

CABINETMAKER

Antiques magazine (May 1973) suggests that James Gheen probably moved to Rowan Co. from Pennsylvania. The "stylistic similarities between the furniture of his shop and that of Chester Co., Pennsylvania, support this theory." A desk-bookcase made by James Gheen is on display in the Rowan Co. Museum in Salisbury (see photo). The Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts in Winston-Salem, NC has a desk and a linen press or cupboard made by James Gheen on exhibit. The museum's archives contain photos and data sheets for 20 other pieces made by Gheen and in private collections.

Gheen's clients included the Rev. Samuel E. McCorkle, pastor of Thyatira Presbyterian Church and a founder of the University of North Carolina. Gheen made a desk-and-bookcase for McCorkle in 1794. A handwritten bill from Gheen was kept with the piece, which was passed down in the McCorkle family.

GHEEN FAMILY

James Gheen was married to Elizabeth _____. Elizabeth was alive in 1827 when her son Thomas's will was probated. An obituary in Western Carolinian on 5 Nov 1832 notes that Mrs. Elizabeth Gheen, aged about 93, died 25 Oct. 1832 in Rowan Co. Nine children are named in his will.

1. **Thomas Gheen** b ca 1768 & m Mary McBride in 1788. He d 1827 in Rowan Co. and his will mentions his mother, Elizabeth Gheen.
2. **Mary "Polly" Gheen**, b ca 1770 & m Silas Dunn in 1788. Silas Dunn d by 1808, leaving at least two sons, Silas Dunn Jr. b 1793 and William Dunn.
3. **James Gheen Jr.**, b ca 1771 and m Mary Pinxton in 1788. He d 1829 in Rowan Co.
4. **Joseph Gheen**, b ca 1774. He is mentioned as the youngest son in his father's will. He d 1829 in Rowan Co. He married Ann Todd in 1797 and married Mary Steward/Stewart in 1804. Thomas Gheen signed both marriage bonds.

****5. Sarah Gheen**, b 16 Jun 1777 and married John M. Roberts in 1795 in Rowan Co., North Carolina. They moved to Town Creek, Lawrence Co., AL by about 1818. She died there on 11 Nov 1838. Their son, Matthew, married Susan/Susannah (Wells) Roberts, and he was the 6th sheriff of Lawrence County, Alabama.

6. **Hannah Gheen**, alive at time of father's will
7. **Rachel Gheen**, b ca 1780 & married Richard Pinkston in 1810 in Rowan Co.
8. **Elizabeth Gheen** married Wentworth Watson in 1805. (corrected 10/05)
9. **Eleanor "Nellie" Gheen**, b ca 1784 & married James Dunn in 1818. Her marriage bond was signed by Thomas Gheen.

**** My line**

A granddaughter, Elizabeth Gheen, daughter of Thomas, was born about 1782, and married James Dunn in 1818. Her marriage bond was signed by her father, Thomas Gheen.

****Thanks to Betty Pace for clarifying the two Elizabeth Gheen marriages and parentages. Betty is a Watson descendant.**

REFERENCES

1. "James Gheen, Piedmont North Carolina Cabinetmaker," Antiques magazine, May 1973, pp. 940-945.
2. Will of James Gheen, Rowan County Wills G:71, 1796.