

Chapter 7

He Was a Good Kind of a Man

In the first little while after the conclusion of hostilities the weary farmers of the Western District returned to the tending of their fields, the rebuilding of their burned-out houses and barns and the restocking of their herds. Prices fell sharply and grain became scarce. Frosts in July and August 1816, brought on by an unnatural darkening of the sky, prevented the buckwheat and corn from fully ripening. Those who had served in the British militia were given reason to anticipate free grants of land and cash reimbursements for losses they had suffered. The British Parliament at its war-session of 1814 approved the payment of a £20 annual pension to widows and children of militiamen killed on active service. The inhabitants were uncertain, but hopeful.

But in general, Great Britain would treat her Canadian veterans less well than expected. In 1815 a Board of Commissioners was appointed to investigate war losses. It was decided that claims would be submitted in the form of petitions. On 27 September 1815, John Quick Senior put in a claim of £18.15 to cover the loss of the horse stolen in 1813 and the saddle and bridle taken in 1814. Cyrus Baldwin was a witness. Alexander put his mark on the paper that might be taken to imply that his father was too ill or infirm to make the journey to Sandwich. On the same day John Junior submitted a somewhat larger, more detailed petition. He applied for £74 to cover the loss of two mares, one side saddle, one piece of cloth, four blankets, one flowered cover-lid, two women's gowns, one teapot, four shawls, one vest, two shirts, four neck handkerchiefs, one saddle and two diaper towels taken in September 1814. Lt. Nicholas Lyttle, his company commander, signed the paper in support. These claims joined many others. Total monies applied for would exceed £200,000.

No action would be taken for a long time—in some cases long after the petitioners had died. Each petition was examined by the board, one by one, and a reimbursement recommended, usually in typical management-like fashion for a little over half the amount requested. (John Quick Senior was recommended for £15 and John Junior for £44.13.) The report made by the Board was deposited with the home government in London in July 1816 and then... allowed to languish.

But life went on. On 24 February 1818 Alexander Quick and Mary Baldwin were married by licence by the Rev. Richard Pollard.¹ John Quick Senior “father” and Mary Quick “mother” were present at the ceremony serving as witnesses. On 21 August John Quick Senior transferred 60 acres of land, the portion of the lot to the rear of the village reserve, to John Junior.² There are many indicators of good relations between parents and children.

In 1818 Alexander and David Quick were finally awarded pensions on account of their war wounds. In this year too Elizabeth Buchanan, now five years a widow, also began receiving her pension.³ On 21 April 1820 John Quick sold 26 acres in the east half of Lot 1 to Matthew McCormick for £25. On 8 August 1820 he sold the remainder of Lot 1 to McCormick for £175.⁴ These sales seem to indicate John's need to raise money or to create some kind of legacy for his children.

John Quick was probably feeling his age. We can suppose that in his quiet moments he would have reflected on his long and eventful life. He must have thought about Elizabeth, the mother of his children, and how he had courted and loved her. He would have replayed in his mind many

1 Mary was Alexander's stepsister. PAO, Hiram Walker Coll., HW20-203, St. John's Church Records, Sandwich, 1802-1827, 2, 84. Other witnesses were John Hands and “Thos. Lewis Innkeeper”.

2 Land Registry Office, Windsor, Ontario. “Old” Index Book, Colchester, Lot 8, Gore.

3 PAC, RG8, I (C Series), 1202, C703c, 13 and 15. PAC, RG9, I, B 4, 3, 36.

4 Land Registry Office, Windsor, Ontario. “Old” Index Book, Colchester, Lot 1, Gore.

incidents in his life—adventures to us—that we can never know. He would have remembered Elijah Rittenhouse his friend from long ago and how they had ridden together in the Virginia militia. But talk of these things with his neighbors, he evidently did not (with the possible exception of his neighbor, John McCormick, a man he clearly trusted). His reticence extended even to his grandchildren, who as a result would have few tales to pass down as family legends.

But there is evidence to suggest his advice was taken on one matter: on 20 February 1820, when his daughter-in-law, Susannah, gave birth to a boy in the homestead cabin, the family took his bidding and named him Cornelius *Redhouse*: Cornelius in memory of his own father and Redhouse (their pronunciation of *Rittenhouse*) after his old friend Elijah. I imagine he was pleased.

On 12 August 1820, four days after he sold his land to McCormick, he made his will. A little of his character can be gleaned from the men who served as witnesses. Angus McDonald was the local schoolteacher and Elias Patee, a Methodist ex-circuit rider:

In the name of God Amen. I John Quick of the Township of Colchester Western District of Upper Canada, being sick in Body but in my sound sense and mind. Do hereby Publish this as my Will and Testament. In the first Place my will is that Mary my well beloved wife shall possess all my household goods, two milch Cows and a riding horse, to be by her freely enjoyed and possessed during her natural lifetime, and at her decease the household furniture to remain with Mary her Daughter. Also I give and bequeath to my son Alexander Quick the north part of Lot Number Eight in the rear of a Village Reserve in the Township of Colchester aforesaid containing two hundred acres more or less, by him to be freely enjoyed and possessed; nevertheless he is to provide and furnish my beloved wife Mary a sufficiency of bread, meat, tea, sugar, such as she has been used to, during her lifetime. And whatever money or moveable property I may be possessed of I bequeath unto my loving Children Cornelius, John, Joseph, David, Alexander, Elijah, Sarah, Elizabeth, and Mary to be divided unto ten shares, Cornelius to have two shares and to be equally divided amongst them. And for the further Execution hereof I do hereby appoint my loving son Cornelius Quick to be the Executor of this my last will and Testament, with full Power and authority to do and Perform every thing herein Mentioned.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal in the Township of Colchester this twelfth day of August one thousand eight hundred and twenty

Signed sealed and Published in the presence of (signed) John Quick
(signed) John Elliott
A McDonald
Elias Patee⁵

He lingered on until 4 November and was then laid to rest beside Elizabeth in the family cemetery. On 23 January 1821 the will was probated before the surrogate, Richard Pollard.

In accordance with John's wishes, Mary continued to live with Alexander and her daughter Mary in their cabin on the north side of Lot 8. When she passed away more than twenty years later, in 1843, she was buried beside her husband. Her grave, too, was marked only with unlettered stones

5 PAO, RG22, Series 6-2, "Old", Essex Co. Will No. 189, John Quick, 1820. Unlike the wills of his father and grandfather, his does not give the married names of his daughters. The document was witnessed by John Elliott and Angus McDonald, apparently present at the same time. Judging from differences in pen and ink coloration Elias Patee signed sometime later. John Elliott was a resident of Gosfield. Both Elliott and McDonald had fought with the British militia in the War of 1812. The name Elias Patee appears as a circuit rider in a number of places in Carroll, *ibid*. In the 1823 assessment of Colchester Township, he is described as having a horse, three milch cows and two horned cattle, but no land. His name does not appear in the 1824 assessment, implying he moved away. PAO, Ms390, Municipal Records of the Western District.

that the family had pulled up over the years from the land. Thus in the absence of actual evidence we can suppose that John Quick lies somewhere in the present Quick family cemetery with Elizabeth on the one side of him and Mary on the other.

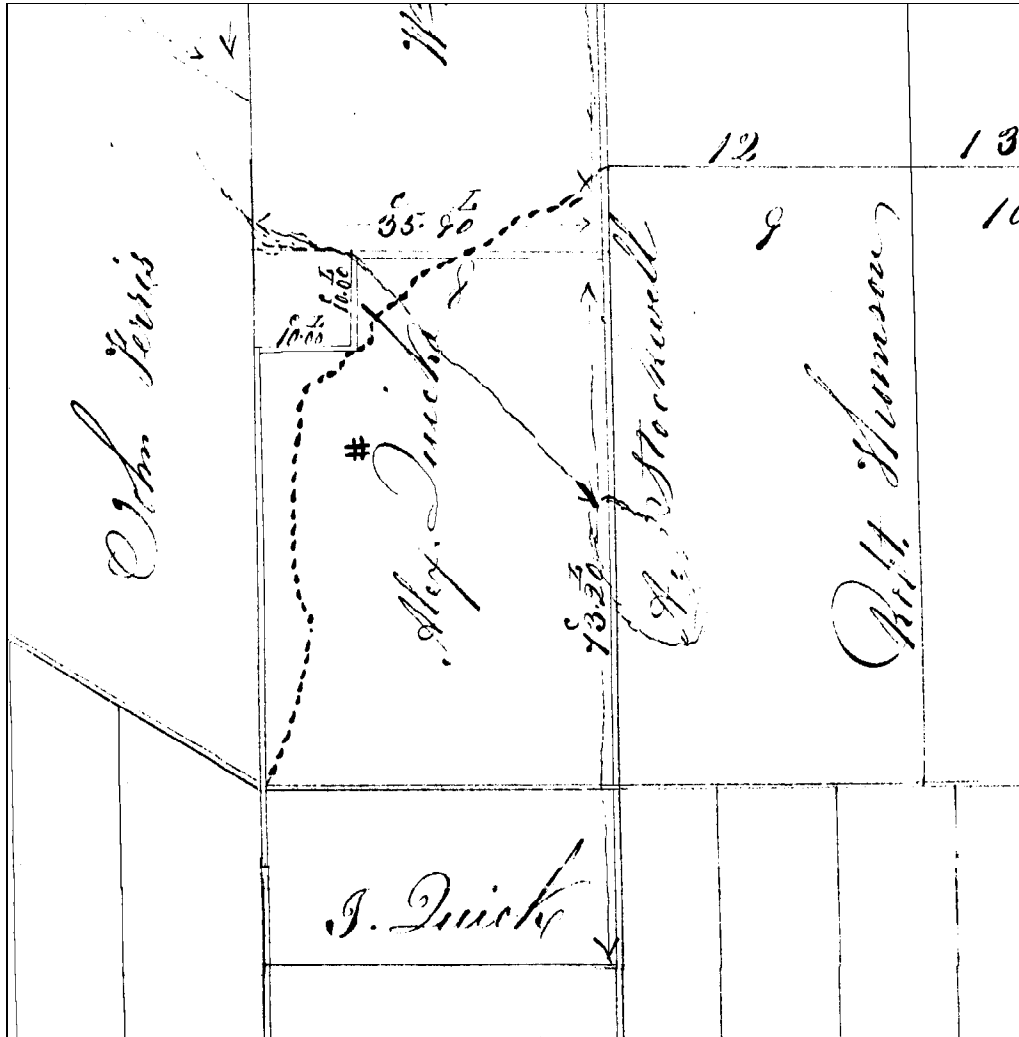


Figure 1. Plan of the Quick Family Homestead in the Gore, Colchester ca. 1840. This fragment is from a larger sketch drawn by the surveyor, J. A. Wilkinson. Lot 8 is shown in the center. The pathway, apparently still in use at this time is indicated by the dashed line wandering in a north-easterly direction. The approximate location of the homestead cabin is indicated by the symbol # placed by the author based on the calculations given in footnote 20 of Chapter 5.

The cemetery can be seen today, though it must be looked for as it lies some distance from the Gore Road in Colchester blocked from view by farm buildings (Figure 2). One can get to it via the driveway and lane. The Quick family homestead was sold out of the Quick family more than sixty years ago and since then has gone through several owners. In the summer of 1972 the cemetery was cleaned of weeds and brush by Gerald Pouget, his students, and Pat Smith and her

family.⁶

Table 1. The family of John and Elizabeth (?) Quick of Colchester, Upper Canada, 1779-1865. This page is a summary only. The E numbers refer to chapters in the Genealogical Section.

Cornelius QUICK and Sarah CRISHAN ?					
his 1st, her 1st John QUICK m prob 1778 prob W.Va. = Elizabeth ? b prob 1754 New Jersey b prob ca. 1758 d Colchester 1801-1807					
his 2nd, her 2nd m 3 Jul 1808 = Mary BALDWIN <i>by Richard Pollard by licence, St. John's Church, Sandwich</i> b 1757 Connecticut USA d 1820 Colchester d 1843 Colchester ON					
all prob born on Kings Creek, West Virginia except Alexander and Elijah in Colchester, Upper Canada (a)					
Cornelius (b)	John Jr (d)	Joseph	David (e)	Alexander (g)	Elijah (h)
b 12 Feb. 1779 (1774?) prob on Kings Creek W.Va m ca. 1802 Elizabeth KNAPP b prob 10 Mar 1785 (c)	b prob 1781 m ca 1807 Ann ? b ca 1785	b prob 1782 m ca 1805 Susanna MUNGER d typhoid fever at age 76 (63?) 29 Aug. 1845	b prob 1784 m 1838 Hulda EDEMONS St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Amherstburg (f)	b prob 1795 m 24 Feb 1818 Mary BALDWIN both prob bur in Quick family cemetery, Colchester	b prob 1796 m ca 1826 Mary A. (?)
Chapter E1.00	Chapter E2.00	Chapter E3.00	Chapter E7.00	Chapter E9.00	Chapter E8.00
Sarah	Elizabeth	Mary	Unknown child daughter? lost to the Indians b prob in May 1790 in Indian country (Ohio)		
b prob aft 1784 m 1st 13 Jan 1800 Philip HUCKLEBERRY (i) m 2nd James LOCKHART	b prob after 1785 m 1st ca 1801 William BUCHANAN (j) m 2nd ca. 1820 Joshua ADAMS	b prob after 1786 m ca 1802 James RAMSEY			
Chapter E4.00	Chapter E6.00	Chapter E5.00			

Notes

- (a) The order of the children here is the order in which they appear in John Quick's will—boys first (excepting unknown)—then girls in birth order. The ten children are consistent with John Quick's claim in his 1797 land petition. Birthyears of 1779, probably 1781 and probably 1782 for Cornelius, John Junior and Joseph, respectively, are consistent with John Quick's claim on his 1799 land petition to have three sons in age from 17 to 20. Also Cornelius and John Junior were of suitable age (21 or over) in 1804 to petition for land. But see also Cornelius's claim in 1847 to be 75 (footnote 17 of Chapter 2).
- (b) Cornelius was buried in the Malott farm cemetery, which fell into Lake Erie many years ago. Elizabeth Knapp is buried in Lakeview Cemetery, Leamington, Ontario.
- (c) Elizabeth was the daughter of Benjamin and Catherine Knapp. ACQ states Elizabeth was born on 10 Mar 1795, which is an obvious typo. It is probably 10 Mar 1785.
- (d) John Jr. moved with his family to Monguagon Township, Wayne County, Michigan, after 1843.
- (e) According to CBRE David moved with his family to Illinois by 1865.
- (f) Register of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Amherstburg.
- (g) If the order of the children is correct then Alexander was born before Elijah, that is, in about 1795. This would make him 17 in 1812 and liable for militia service. It would also make him 23 upon his marriage to Mary Baldwin in 1818.
- (h) A birthyear of 1797 or 1796 is consistent with his age given as 54 on the 1850 Census of Chesterfield Town-

6 Pat Smith describes the cemetery in detail in the genealogical section of this book.

ship, Macomb County, MI (Genealogical Section, Chapter E8.00). He seems to have moved to Wayne County, Michigan ca. 1827.

- (i) Marriage by Wm. Harffy by licence.
- (j) William Buchanan was born in Kirkcudbright, Scotland, 1774.



Figure 2. A recent photograph of the Quick family cemetery, Colchester, looking approximately west towards the modern farm buildings. The earliest graves, of Elizabeth, John and Mary (Squires) Baldwin Quick are not marked with stones.

Draper Interview with John McCormick Down through the years the family's experience among the Indians was remembered in and around Colchester. The American antiquarian Lyman Copeland Draper paid a visit to the area in 1863, some forty-three years after John Quick's death. He found his way to the McCormick family homestead and interviewed John, Alexander McCormick's son, now an old man himself. The following about our family is edited from that interview:

John Quick was a native of Jersey - was living in Wheeling region in 1782, & saw Dr. Knight when he came in from captivity. - Quick settled in Kentucky (above Maysville, on the Ohio, early in 1790.) when he & his wife Elizabeth, & ten children were all taken; & Quick, Girty & McCormick managed to buy them from Indians & when Girty could not get them to consent to sell, he would steal them off - all the children were obtained. Except one girl, who was never recovered. The whole family at once settled in Canada: John Quick died in Colchester in 1821 - his wife having preceeded him several years. He was a good kind of a man.⁷

⁷ John McCormick narrative Draper17S207. The comment in parenthesis is most probably Draper's. It should hardly be necessary to explain that by "a native of Jersey" he means New Jersey.

This narrative, the remembrance of a man who actually knew and almost certainly had numerous conversations with John Quick, is the most credible of the Draper Manuscripts on the family. It ranks much higher in veracity than the legends that would subsequently appear. This narrative is also significant in that it gives the correct name of John Quick's first wife and states the child not recovered was a girl, other reasons for believing John McCormick was a man in John Quick's confidence.

In spite of—or because of—John Quick's reluctance to talk about his past, various legends were passed down in the family. Though care must be taken to avoid placing too much credence on these legends they do contain details that might just be correct.

The Mitte Legend The first legend was published in 1901 all of 38 years after Draper's visit. It was the remembrance of the eighty-one-year-old Mrs. Judith (Ramsey) Mitte, John Quick's granddaughter, then living in Detroit. Judith Mitte was the daughter of Mary Quick who had married James Ramsey:

'I come of a long-lived race', continued the old lady. 'My mother must have been 115 years old when she died and she was a fair faced, rosy cheeked woman then and was scarcely grey at all. During the Revolutionary War the Indians captured my grandfather's whole family, carried them over into Canada, turned my grandfather out in the woods and told him to go to work and earn back his family. He had a hard time doing this, but had bought them all back except my mother when the Indians decided to come back to the United States again.

My grandfather had only \$50.00 to give for my mother, and they would not accept that. He did not know what to do, but finally applied to a Col. Elliott who gave the Indians a young negro and the \$50.00 and they let my mother go. She was only six years old when she was captured and grown to be a young lady before she was freed. The Indians pierced her ears all the way around the lobe, and she always wore caps to hide this disfigurement'.⁸

Surely some of these details are correct.

Legends in the Commemorative Biographical Record of Essex County (1905) Much of what has been told and retold about the Quick family and its Indian captivity can be traced to stories in this publication (abbreviated herein as CBRE). This book was produced in 1905 by Beers Publishing, a US company. The work for Essex County is typical of others for counties throughout Canada and the US, being comprised of short self-written biographies of subscribers, i.e., people who had pre-purchased the book. Some also submitted photographs. It is essential to remember that the stories were written some 85 years after John Quick's death and are not bona fide historical documents. Some are demonstrably inaccurate and incomplete, in particular as to the name of John Quick himself. Some legends have his name "John Alexander", others "Alexander G.". None mentions John Quick's first wife Elizabeth. In spite of this the legends warrant at least a cursory examination so I have extracted the parts having to do with the origins of the family below.

Annie A. (Quick) Brush Mrs. Brush was a granddaughter of Joseph Quick. She recalled

Tradition says that three of the daughters and one son of Alexander [sic] Quick were carried away captive by the Indians, and only two of the daughters were regained even by the payment of a ransom, though the son, Joseph, was released.

She recalled the following about Joseph in particular:

8 The reference has been given in footnote 11 of Chapter 4.

Joseph Quick was born in Kentucky, about one mile from Cincinnati, Ohio. He was the eldest of the family, and, with his sisters, was captured by the Indians. While two of his sisters were brought back, he was kept thirteen years before released through the agency of Col. Elliott, of Amherstburg.⁹

Mrs. Brush was mistaken as to the name of Joseph's father; his name was John not Alexander. Colin Birch Quick Colin Birch Quick was a great-great-grandson of John Quick, a descendant of Cornelius. His memory of what he had heard within the family went like this:

The parents of Cornelius Quick lived in Ohio. They were captured by the Indians and kept in captivity six years, being released on the advice of the Hudson's Bay Company.¹⁰

Thomas E. Quick Thomas E. Quick was a great-grandson of John through Alexander. His memory probably depended on stories told by Alexander:

The Quick family is of German extraction, and its early members came from Germany, settling in Pennsylvania, where Alexander G. [sic] Quick, the grandfather of our subject was born and where he grew to manhood... Indians were very troublesome, and it is even declared that three daughters of Mr. Quick were carried away by the savages, held for ransom and only two were ever recovered.¹¹

This is the source of the name "Alexander G.". The grandfather's name was John not Alexander G. It bears remembering that if Table 1 is correct then Alexander was born in 1795 and had no first hand memory of the captivity.

Joshua Adams Joshua Adams was a grandson of John Quick, a son of Elizabeth and her second husband Joshua Adams. He recalled a few facts that had no doubt been told by his mother:

When a child Miss Quick was captured by a band of Wyandotte Indians, and taken to their village on the Maumee River, in Ohio. There she was kept seven years, when she was sold to the French at Detroit. Her father bought her from the French, paying \$80 for her and her mother. Some two years later the family moved to Colchester.¹²

The fact Joshua names the Wyandotte as the tribe that held his mother lends some credence to her story.

The Pearson Legend This legend is of recent collection, written out for the late Mrs. Bea Cutting of Windsor, Ontario, by Mrs. Irma Pearson of Indiana sometime prior to 1975:

John Alexander [sic] was born in Scotland, emigrated to Kentucky, then settled in Ohio about two miles from Cincinnati. Joseph and his two sisters went picking berries on the banks of the Ohio and were captured by the Indians. John Alexander succeeded in buying back one of his daughters Polly Ramsey for \$5 and a horse. The other daughter was never heard from again. Joseph was taken to the Indian village. Here Joseph was kept with fifteen other white boys, who were stained to look like Indians, apparently by using Black walnuts for dye. The boys were treated like slaves. Joseph was kept for thirteen years as "Black Squirrel" as the Indians called him.

One night Joseph and another boy escaped. They started for Detroit and night over took them at present site of Trenton, Michigan. In the morning they started on and walked until they came in

9 CBRE, 48-49.

10 CBRE, 120-121.

11 CBRE, 617-618.

12 CBRE, 260-261.

sight of the Detroit River. They swam to an Island in the river with the aid of a basswood log. Then they walked across the island and started swimming for another island. (Grosse Isle and Bois de Blanc Isle).

In the meantime the Indians had discovered the boys escape and followed them. They saw the boys swimming for Bois de Blanc Isle and started after them in one canoe. After much delay, they captured and returned the other boy to the island. As a result of the delay, Joseph was able to reach Bois de Blanc and cross it and start for the Canadian side at Amherstburg before the Indians could start after him. He reached the Canadian shore and crawled under the porch of the little fort.

Shortly after that the Indians landed but could not get near the fort as the dogs raised a great commotion. The dogs had been trained to keep Indians away. When the soldiers came out to see what had caused the noise they were advised by the Indians that one of their boys had run away and that they had tracked him by foot marks in the early morning dew and that he must be in the fort. Col. Elliott in charge had much difficulty in trying to convince them that the boy could not be inside. The colonel was greatly puzzled as to how Joseph could enter the gates of the fort without the dogs barking at him --- unless, he was not an Indian boy!

With the aid of an interpreter Joseph told the colonel his story. During his time in captivity, he had learned three Indian languages. Col. Elliott knew of a family named Quick living near the fort who had children stolen by the Indians. They were summoned and Mrs. Quick said if the boy was her son he would have a scar on his shoulder and a crooked toe. The walnut stain was scoured off and the scar found. The toes were crooked. Joseph recalled that his mother had a mole on her face and Mrs. Quick had such a mole.¹³

Some of the details are quite seductive, though mostly a figment of the imagination. It need hardly be said that John (not John Alexander) was born in colonial New Jersey and not in Scotland.

In 1839 John Quick Junior (who since his father's death had become "John Quick Senior") sold the 60 acres his father had given him in the year of his marriage to his younger brother Thomas Alexander for £100. This may have been done in anticipation of his move to Michigan. In September of the following year, Thomas went to Sandwich to have the purchase recorded in the land registry office.¹⁴ Thomas gave his name as the one he was probably known by within the family circle, a name that has ancient roots in our family as this book has attempted to show. He gave his name as Tunis Quick, and it was so recorded.

13 Narrative of Bea Cutting in Pat Smith's, Quick Newsletter, January 1975.

14 Land Registry Office, Windsor, Ontario. "Old" Index Book, Colchester, Lot 8, Gore.

Personal Name Index

This index has been made as accurate as possible. However, on account of many edits and rearrangements of material, it may be in error by a page or two, especially near a page boundary.

