

Families and Their Military History

By Dennis Boyd

A few years back my wife and I moved from Washington, IL to Monticello, IN when I retired. We began attending a small church in Monticello and started making many friends over the next few months. One lady was a member of the Daughters of The American Revolution (DAR) and was very active. She asked my wife, Roslynn, if she was a DAR or if she knew of any family members that had fought in the war for independence.

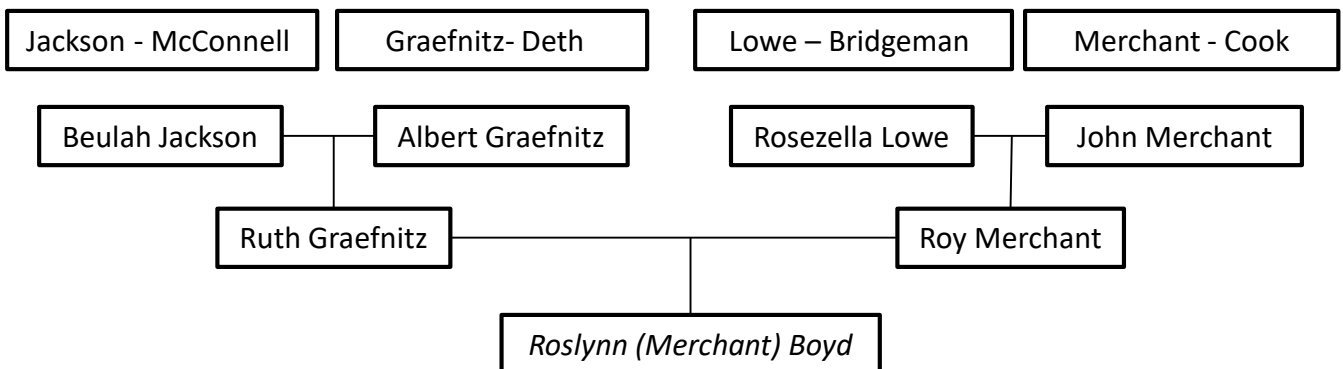
Neither one of us had found any information that we had relatives in the war even though I'd been dabbling in genealogy for a few years. A while later we were cleaning a bunch of old family documents out of her mother's closet putting them into a box and taking them home to go through at a later time.

In the paperwork we discovered an old copy of a "Sons of the American Revolution" list of names in which her Great Grandfather, George Jackson, was listed as a member in the Tippecanoe County Chapter. With this, we went back to the friend at church and asked if she would be able to track his name down at the DAR website. By the next week she told us that she had found his membership number and tracked his ancestors back several generations to the Revolutionary War where his ancestor had served in the Pennsylvania Militia.

From the information she gave us, we pieced in Roslynn's grandmother (daughter of her Great Grandfather) including her birth and marriage certificates and the same for her parents and ourselves. An application was submitted and verified by the DAR and Roslynn became a member. With that I began looking through Ancestry.com to determine if I could get additional information on the Jackson family. Between the website and other letters and newspaper articles we'd found, we traced her Jackson ancestors back several generations.

With that success I began doing an earnest search through the website for all our relatives. The amazing fact was how many I found that served in either the Revolutionary or Civil wars along with the War of 1812 and of course, the first and second world wars which we had already confirmed through our families.

There are eight family names that comprise the four grandparents of Roslynn are listed as shown:



Below is what we found for just my wife, Roslynn (Merchant) Boyd's side:

Revolutionary War Family

- **George Jackson** (1737–1805) served as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 3rd Battalion – Bedford Militia, 4th Company under Col. McAlevy of the Pennsylvania Militia during the war. He is buried at the Shaver Creek Cemetery in Logan Twp. of Huntingdon County in Pennsylvania. *(He is Roslynn's 6X Great Grandfather – Jackson Family)*

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- **David Jolly** (1735-1804) served as a private in the Pennsylvania Militia during the Revolutionary War. David was born in 1735 in Washington Co., PA, and died on August 2, 1804 in Chillicothe of Ross Co. in Ohio. A family story said that the Militia was far from the Lehigh Valley and the men from East Allen Township were captured on Nov. 16, 1776, when the British Army seized Fort Washington along the Hudson River. After fighting from sunrise to sunset, the East Allen men were out of ammunition and surrounded by 10,000 British and Hessian troops. They used their guns as clubs until they collapsed from exhaustion. They were put into an enclosure for three days and four nights and given nothing to eat or drink. Their commander, Gen. Robert Brown, a prominent Northampton County citizen of Scotch-Irish background, used his own money to buy food for his men and saved many lives. Later on they were released. *(David was Roslynn's 5x Great Grandfather – McConnell Family)*
- **Hugh McConnell** (1756-1835) served as a private in the Virginia Militia in Spencer's Regiment during the War. Hugh, while doing duty with a scouting party out of Fort Wheeling, near Wheeling, West Virginia, was shot thru the lung by one of Simon Girty's band of Indians. Most of the party was annihilated, and those who survived escaped to the fort under fire. Hugh was born in Newcastle, Delaware and is buried in an unmarked grave near Covington, IN where he migrated. *(He is Roslynn's 5x Great Grandfather – McConnell Family)*
- **William Cooke Jr.** (1730-1830) served with the 7th Virginia Artillery during the War. He was born in 1730 and died in 1830. William participated in the War as a bombardier of Capt. John Champ Carter's Company, also known as Capt. William Water's Company, 1st Artillery Regiment, Continental troops. He enlisted Dec. 20, 1776 to serve three years; he was appointed Colonel, Aug. 1, 1778 and Sergeant, Nov. 1, 1778; he was discharged on Dec. 20, 1779. This regiment was assigned to the State of Virginia. He also was at Valley Forge. *(He is Roslynn's 6x Great Grandfather – Bridgeman Family)*
- **John Alexander** (1756-1816) served with the Pennsylvania Militia during the War. He joined the Army in December 1776 and was part of the troops at the capture of the Hessians at Trenton, on the 25th of December. A letter to his father shows he was yet in camp on the 5th of February 1777. *(He was Roslynn's 6x Great Grandfather)*
- **Alexander Brown** (1763-1791) served with the 8th Battalion in the Pennsylvania Militia during the War. He was born on June 12, 1763 in Big Springs, Pennsylvania, and died in 1791 in Philadelphia, PA - From DAR Information on Alexander Brown: Ancestor #: A015248 - Revolutionary War Service in the Pennsylvania Militia, it shows he held a rank as a Lieutenant Colonel with the 5th Battery. *(He was Roslynn's 6x Great Grandfather – Jackson Family)*

Civil War

- **William Marion McConnell** (1828-1916) served in two companies of the war of 1861-1865 (Civil War) in Company D of the 16th Indiana volunteers and also in Company K of the 147th Indiana volunteers. From a letter found in the family history it states that "Marion was in the service three years and six months. He endured many hardships as only soldiers are called upon to endure. He was the color bearer for 2 years from that time in the service. In 1861 Marion McConnell enlisted as a soldier in the Civil War and was in the service 3 ½ years. It does not state in the family book, but he said he carried the flag for some time. He was stunned by a cannon ball, it whizzing by his head. (The flag after the war ended, was given to him and although a silk one, was very much tattered and torn. It was stored in his home for years until it was fast holding together." *(He was Roslynn's 3x Great Grandfather – McConnell Family)*

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- **Andrew Murphey**, (1826-1864) the son of John Murphey-founder of Morocco, he joined the Indiana 99th infantry, 51st Regiment, Company G during the War as a private. Andrew died in action in 1864 at Nashville, TN. (He was Roslynn's 3x Great uncle)
- **George Fred Merchant** (1844-1919) joined the Indiana 9th Cavalry, 121st Regiment, Company D on December 24, 1863 in Liberty, IN. When his parents and the rest of the family moved to Newton County, Fred joined the War. Fred died on May 25, 1919 and is buried at the Riverside Cemetery in Brook, IN. (He was Roslynn's 3x Great uncle)

1st World War

- **Fredrick C. Graefnitz** (1880-1917) served during the 1st WW, was discharged shortly after entering Europe because of being wounded during a gas attack. Fred passed away shortly after his return from the war. Fred had migrated to the United States from Germany in the late 1870's with his parents and family. (*He was Roslynn's Great Uncle – Graefnitz Family*) An ironic fact was that unbeknown to Fred was that he was fighting against his uncle Wilhelm, who was in the German Army and he'd never known, and who was killed in action two days before the Armistice on November 9, 1918. When we travelled to Germany on vacation to the town that Fred had come from, Wilhelm's name was on a plaque in the local Lutheran Church. (*Wilhelm was Roslynn's 2x Great Uncle – Graefnitz Family*)

In addition to the above, Roslynn's father (Roy Merchant) and two uncles (Warren and Russell Graefnitz) also were in the service during the 2nd World War. Roy was in the Army and Warren and Russell were in the Navy.

It is truly amazing how much is available today on the "Ancestry.com" site, the Mormon Genealogy site and the "fold3" Military website for those that would like to find their family history. I'm sure, with additional digging, we might even find more family members that gave their service to our country.

Dennis Boyd