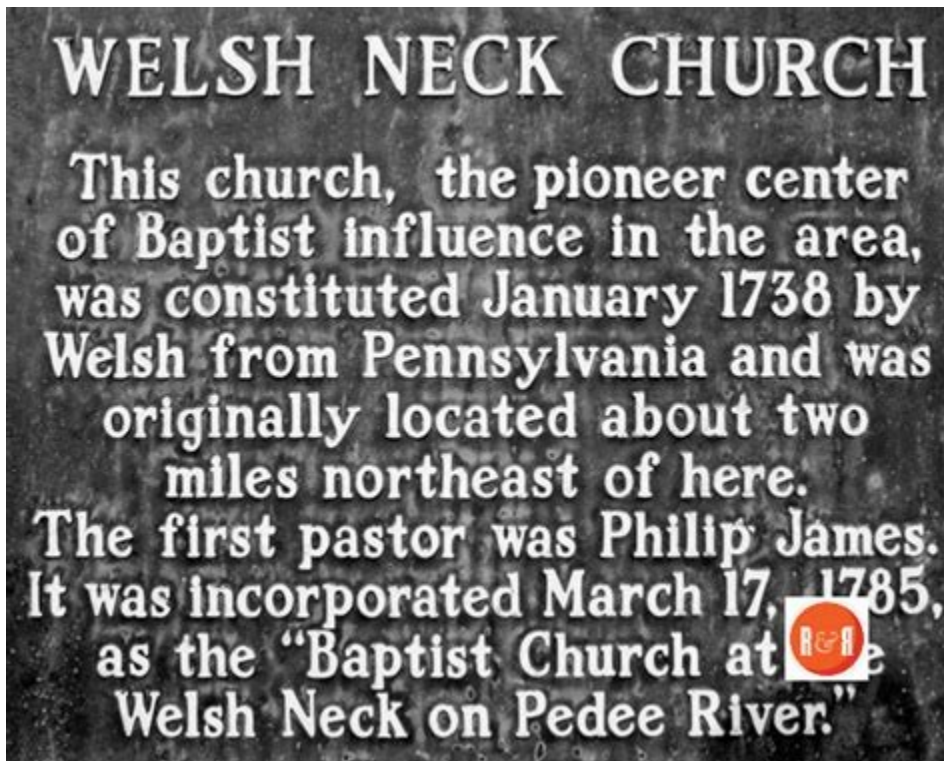


The Role that Welsh Neck Baptist Church Played in South Carolina

Tips by Jeannette Holland Austin



In 1737, a colony of Welsh from the Welsh Tract in Germantown, Pennsylvania (now Delaware) settled along the east bank of the Pee Dee River. A year later this colony of people met and organized themselves into a Baptist church, known as the Welsh Neck Baptist Church.

It is said that the original church was built at Long Bluff (near Society Hill) on the bank of the Pee Dee River to the right of a public road leading from Bennettsville to Society Hill. A fieldstone in the old Cashaway Baptist Church graveyard near the site of Cashaway Ferry, marks the resting place

of Colonel Abel Kolb, a Revolutionary patriot and officer who was slain by Tories in 1781 while standing on the porch of his mansion.

The British occupied most of the backcountry as well as the port of Charleston and this was the time when General Nathaniel Greene was preparing his attack on Ninety-Six. The Revolutionary War Pension of Colonel Kolb reflects that the Kolb family from Germany arrived in the country during 1707 and settled around Germantown in Pennsylvania. Four Kolb brothers, sons of Dielman Kolb and his wife, a Shumacher (shoe maker) of Manheim in Germany, were named Martin, Johannes, Jacob, and Henry.

A fifth brother, Deilman, arrived in 1717. Johannes Kolb left Pennsylvania about 1737 and settled on the south bank of the Great Pee Dee River, called Kolb's Neck and located below present-day Society Hill. Johannes Kolb was the father of nine children, including Peter Kolb, the father of Abel Kolb. An early minister of the church was Reverend Philip James from Wales.

The Surviving membership rolls reflect the first organizers, plus dates from 1759 to 1780s and reflect German and Scottish names. Two McIver families transferred their membership from Scotland on the rolls. The present-day cemetery appears to have started its burials about 1850 and also reveals a number of Scottish names. The surviving Membership Rolls listed under Churches on South Carolina Pioneers