

**No Surviving Descendants  
of Revolutionary Patriot  
George Summers  
1747-1825**

by Mary Ann Schaefer

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## ***Introduction***

The intention of this article is to correct misinformation pertaining to the lineage of a Revolutionary patriot named George Summers, 1747-1825. Based on applications to the DAR and SAR approved long ago, many families believe they are related to this George Summers. I do not dispute that this George Summers was a Revolutionary Patriot, but I do claim that the lineage indicated in DAR/SAR applications cannot be correct because this George Summers did not have any children who survived to adulthood.

As of this writing (August 2021), genealogists from both the DAR and SAR have reviewed the evidence pertaining to George Summers, and they have agreed with my conclusion. What follows here is my documentation to support the conclusion.

## Evidence

The DAR/SAR applications provide documentation that tells us about the Revolutionary service of a George Summers in Pennsylvania. The genealogical connections, however, are attributed to one unsourced and apparently self-published book:

G. Byron Summers, A history of George Summers of Douglass and Lower Dublin townships, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, 1918.

I contend that this source, as well as three other county histories, were based on the same misinformation. See my article: M.A. Schaefer, "Correcting the Genealogy of William Summers of Conshohocken, PA," Oct. 2015; <http://yesteryours.net/mann/docs/WilliamSummers.pdf>.

All of the sources listed on page 4 of my article claim that this George Summers and his wife, Ann, had four children: John, Eli, David, and Martin. However, the only evidence we have of any children of George and Ann Summers is with the Upper Dublin Lutheran Church in Montgomery County, PA.

Rev. Marion Gilbert Richard, A History of Upper Dublin Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1903, p. 24:

"A memorial brass tablet to the Summers family, whose remains are buried here, was presented by a relative, Mr. William Summers, of Conshohocken, Pa, and placed in the Sunday school room."

I made several initial attempts to locate this plaque, to no avail. But on 23 Mar 2021, I received an email from a stranger who was visiting the cemetery office of the church. She sent this image:



See the Appendix for more information about this find.

Transcription:

To the memory of George Summers and his wife and John their son (emphasis mine) whose bodies lie beneath this tablet Died 1825-1829-1791 respectively George came from Germany in 1752 and was a drummer in the Revolutionary War Sixth Pennsylvania Regiment.

For reference, George Summers and Anna Neswanger were married on 19 January 1773.<sup>1</sup> There is no birth record found for their son, John, but later burial records suggest John's birth year as 1775.<sup>2</sup> John would have been 16 years old when he died.

I visited this cemetery in 2013 and the sexton showed me three graves believed to be those of the George Summers family. Here are the notes I recorded after my visit:

They [the graves] are so very faint - really can't be read. But we could make out the MM in Summers as well as GEO at the beginning, and ANN for Ann's (middle) - the smaller one [grave] I couldn't make out anything but possibly 1791.

Here is a picture of the graves; there is a Revolutionary War marker in front of the grave that belongs to George Summers:



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- 1 Ancestry.com. Pennsylvania, Marriage Records, 1700-1821 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA. Image 269/332. Original data: Pennsylvania Marriage Records. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Archives Printed Series, 1876. Series 2, Series 6; p. 281; George Summers and Anna Mesminger.
  - 2 Findagrave Memorial #81397983.

## **Negative Evidence**

Even with the cemetery evidence just laid out, which seems to indicate George and Ann Summers had only one son, John, who never married, the possibility could still exist that this George Summers and his wife, Ann, might also have had the other children mentioned in the older sources, namely Eli, David, and Martin. In fact, the 1800-1820 federal censuses of George Summers in Warrington, PA show there were children in the Summers household.

However, I argue that the absence of any mention of any children in the wills of both George and Ann Summers indicates that this Summers couple had no children, or for that matter, grandchildren who survived them.

## **Will of George Summers**

Bucks County, New Jersey, Register of Wills, probate packet #5422; will written 22 Jul 1822, proved 3 Nov 1825; also see also Will Book 10, p. 403.

My Abstract:

Mentions two people: James Wilson whom he raised from infancy (left him \$100) and his dear wife Ann. Jacob Cassel of Montgomery County is executor along with dear friend Jacob Summers of Philadelphia. There is no mention at all of children.

Note the mention of James Wilson, who was apparently an orphan raised by the Summers. This evidence gives some explanation about children found in the Summers household in the censuses.

## **Will of Ann Summers**

Bucks County, New Jersey, Register of Wills, probate packet #6071; will written 5 Jan 1827.

My Abstract:

Will written 5 Jan 1827, filed 11 Apr 1830

Mentions her sister Elizabeth (Addis) and her brother in law Enoch Addis, who is executor. She leaves everything to the nieces and nephew: Nancy Corson, and Abby, Sarah, and Amos Addis. It looks like Jacob Cassel (exr of husband George's estate, did the inventory).

My Note: references in the will to Nancy Corson refer to the niece named Ann Sommers Addis who married a Courson.

## **Conclusion**

- The combination of cemetery evidence and the absence of children named in wills indicates that George Summers 1747-1825, who was buried at Upper Dublin Lutheran Church Cemetery along with his wife and his only son, did not have any other direct descendants. Even if we imagine that George and Ann had another child who married, had children, and died before George and Ann wrote their wills in the 1820s, those grandchildren would have been named in the wills. Instead, the George Summers legacy was left to siblings (Ann's), nieces, a nephew, and an orphan.
- The DAR/SAR applications that list this George Summers as an ancestor cannot, therefore, be correct because this George Summers had no surviving descendants.
- As noted in the introduction, this conclusion has been reviewed and accepted by both the SAR (Apr. 2016), and the DAR (Aug 2021).

## **Appendix**

### Email Records:

On 3/23/2021 6:59 PM, mary claire Valletta wrote:

Mary Ann,

We visited the cemetery today to purchase space in the columbarium. I asked Mo Redding about the plaque. He has been there since 2016 but said he can't find the grave. I asked if I could take a picture and do a little research. Your letter was one of the first things I came across.

The plaque is quite large and sits right beside Mo's desk. His phone # 215-646-1134 and I am sure he would appreciate any info on where the grave is located.

Best to you,  
Claire Valletta

On 3/24/2021 8:40 AM, Mo Redding wrote:

Hello Mary Ann,

This plaque is in my office here in Rose Hill Cemetery. The old cemetery is Upper Dublin Cemetery is across the street on Susquehanna Road.

So glad to find information on Mr. Summers. I have been trying to find his gravestone but they are very old and worn. But with the picture you sent I know exactly where it is located.

Let me know if I can be of any help to you.

Sincerely,

Mo Redding

Property Superintendent

Upper Dublin Lutheran Church

215-646-1134

My correspondence with Mo Redding on 24 Mar 2021:

Hello Mr. Redding,

I'm very glad to meet you. You can imagine how surprised I was to receive photos of that plaque!

I spent last night looking at the satellite map so I could describe to you where the graves are -- just across the street from the church near the road but behind a big tree. You know the place?! It's not really clear to me if those gravestones were moved at some point - do you know? The plaque is a bit



confusing because the history says it was donated to a school house, but the plaque itself says "here lie the bodies". I guess it's hard to say.

Does the church have a special place to store historical artifacts? I wish there was a place we could display it, but clearly it can't be outside. I'll have to think if I have any suggestions that the church would consider.

In the meantime, I can send you information for your records about who those people were, which might be good to store with the plaque. The George Summers buried there was the son of George Summers (Georg Sommer) 1722-1785, who arrived on the ship Brothers in Philadelphia in 1752. He was married at the time and brought with him two children from Friestett, Baden, Germany, namely George Jr. (in your cemetery), and my 5th g-grandmother, Maria Magdalena Summers.

Lots of people seem to think they descend from the George Jr. in your cemetery, but my article shows why that isn't possible. The man who donated that plaque, William Summers (1833-1921), really thought that the George in your cemetery was his original ancestor, but he was wrong. Nevertheless, everything he inscribed about George Jr. on the plaque is correct! He was indeed one of the early patriots.

Thank you for contacting me and please let me know if I can provide more information to the church about George Summers Jr. I assume that I can have permission to use the image that Ms. Valentta sent me. I would like to post it on my blog about genealogy research.

best regards, Mary Ann Schaefer