

William Huston (1751-1785) P-188971

Lieutenant of the Pennsylvania Line

William Huston was an Irish immigrant born in Dublin in 1751. In 1761 at age 11 William arrived in the city of Boston on the "Sloop Swallow Samuel Doggett." In 1771 at age 20 he married Susanna Woodruff in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. "My mother saw, met and fell in love with Lt. Lieutenant Huston, and they ran off and got married. My mother was an Old School Presbyterian, and she wanted a minister of that denomination to marry her." - (oldest daughter Sarah in 1857.)

William Huston served in multiple positions, including as a Lieutenant in several Pennsylvania Line Regiments including the 11th Regiment and Corps of Invalids during the Revolutionary War.

September 30th, 1776 at age 25 Huston was commissioned Ensign in Col. Thomas Hartley's 11th Additional Penn. Regiment. He was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant on June 2nd, 1778, William was made Regimental Adjutant. About this time the regiment was detached for service on Pennsylvania's exposed western flank and established a headquarters at Sunbury. From there the regiment marched as far north as Tioga Point on an expedition against a force of British regulars, Tories and Six Nations of the Iroquois Indians. This action was the forerunner of Sullivan's more ambitious effort of August 29th, 1779. On Dec. 16th, 1778, at Newtown, New York (modern day Elmira), Huston was severely wounded in the joint of his right elbow (10 others were wounded and 6 killed.). Huston's wound (which Dr. Wm. Rogers feared would be mortal) did not prove to be fatal but was still extremely serious.

On August 13th, 1779 the Regiment was designated 11th Pennsylvania and in February 1780 Huston was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. William then disappears from the records until 1783 when he is found in West Point, New York attached to the Invalid Corps. Washington had ordered the Corps moved to West Point in the fall of 1783. William Huston died on July 20th, 1785 and was buried in an unmarked military grave at West Point. With him at the post were his wife, Susanna Woodruff Huston and three small daughters (ages 6, 5 and 2) and his son, William Huston, Jr. (age 13). On July 4th 1786 at the annual meeting of the Society of the Cincinnati of Pennsylvania a letter from Captain James was read recommending the Society Treasurer be directed to provide Mrs. Houston, a widow with children, forty Dollars to enable her to go to her friends at Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

The widow Huston married Rev. John Taylor in Philadelphia in 1790. Following their marriage the Taylors moved to Pittsburgh area of Pennsylvania where they made their home and raised four more children, Hannah, Susannah, John & Christopher. Susanna Woodruff died in 1829 at the age seventy-five and is buried along with her 2nd husband in the old graveyard of Episcopal Trinity Cathedral in downtown Pittsburgh.

Following the Revolutionary War, William Huston's son, William Huston, Jr., moved to the Ohio Territory. He appears on the rolls serving in Captain William Huston's Mounted Company during the War of 1812.

Submitted by Samuel Preston Adams III
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