

John Benefiel (1761 - 1835) P-113057

Ranger on the frontier, PA; Pvt. 4th Class, Cumberland Militia, Col Culbertson; also served in War of 1812 with the rank of Colonel.

Born in 1761, John Benefiel waited till the war's end to marry Rebecca Fitzjames of Scotland. His military service saw him defending the western edge of the colonies from the British and their Indian allies. His service included being a Ranger on the frontier of Cumberland County, PA from 1778-1783. He was a Private Fourth Class in the Cumberland County Militia, 7th Company, 4th Battalion under the command of Captain Robert Dickey, Captain Wm Huston and Colonel Samuel Culbertson. After the war, John and his bride settled near Carlisle Indiana to start their family. John had to once again serve to defend his country from the British. He was a Colonel of the militia and perhaps even the Light Horse Dragoons of Carlisle.

As a prominent citizen and devout Methodist, John was one of the framers of the Constitution of the State of Indiana. John Benefiel was one of the signers of the Indiana Constitution in 1816, and a member of the Legislature in 1820.

The gravestones of Col. John and Rebecca Benefiel were almost destroyed by a tornado years ago. The stones were saved by the school children of Carlisle. Later, the entire cemetery fell into a state of disarray and decay with heavy bushes and thorns obscuring many graves. Mr. Roger Cox took note, contacted Speaker of the Indiana House John Gregg, and the conditions were quickly remedied. A modern, more weather-proof marker has been added to the gravesite site of John Benefiel's – one of Indiana's Founding Fathers.

Submitted by: Steven R. Fields, NSSAR 192802