

**John Rickey (Abt 1727 in New Jersey-1825 in Ohio):
A Presbyterian in Northumberland, Pennsylvania and Jefferson County, Ohio?**
Research Request by [John V. Richardson Jr.](#)

Apparently from childhood, John Rickey attended the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church in Somerset County, New Jersey, but moved to Northumberland County, PA by 1776 (when he appears in local tax records) and then onto Jefferson County, OH by 1800 when he identified as a founding elder of a local Presbyterian church. Looking for more specificity about his membership, possible pew-holder information, any letters of dismissal, or any other documentation to provide further details of his Presbyterianism in these two locations. Primary evidence with full citation (title page and copyright information) as well as high resolution scans, ideally, with enough information to locate information again in the future, if necessary. Note that John Rickey [occasionally Ricky, or Recky, but not Ritchie] may appear with his family members: 1) son, John Jr. (to add to the confusion); 2) Cornelius, another son, and perhaps his wife, 3) Machtel "Matilda" Veldtman Rickey.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, PA

On 31 May 1787, the Presbyterian members of three congregations [i.e., at Sunbury (n=8), Northumberland (n=17), and Buffalo (n=48, which may date to 1773)] signed the Call and Hugh Morrison became the first pastor in October 1787. **(1A) But who actually signed that call?** Note that the Buffalo Valley (or Buffalo Cross Roads) Church has a Treasurer's Book, but Rickey's name does not seem to appear therein.

Immigrating in 1786 after the Synod of Donegal admitted him, Hugh Morrison (1753-1820) appeared in the 1790 Census in Northumberland County but he was dismissed on 11 November 1801 from Buffalo Cross-Roads Church. He and his wife are buried in Sunbury Cemetery, Northumberland County, PA. Are there archival records, from Sunbury or perhaps more likely Northumberland, to indicate the members who signed Morrison's original Call? **(1B) Who's named therein? Is Rickey among them?**

JEFFERSON COUNTY, OH

John Rickey Senior is generally acknowledged to be "one of the first settlers" in Cross Creek Township by 1802. But, when actually? Church records could help resolve this issue.

The Rev. Messrs. John Clark, John McMillan, Joseph Patterson, James Hughs and John Bruce requested a separate Ohio Presbytery of the Virginia Synod of the

Presbyterian Church about 25 September 1793. Finally "on Sept. 26, 1798 it was reported by the Ohio Presbytery to the Synod of Virginia then meeting in Winchester, Virginia, that the Northwest Territory had settlements for the expansion of the church, and we assume that Island Creek was one of these, for on April 16, 1799, an application was made by Island Creek Congregation for a supply minister and we believe this date would be the birth date of Island Creek Church." (2) **Who actually made the application – name names?**

Furthermore, a great deal of confusion in the secondary sources exists about the **first** Presbyterian Church there in Jefferson County; it could have been any one of the following (or perhaps some of these names are synonyms for the same place):

- 1) The Old Presbyterian Church (aka Old Third) at 235 South Fourth Street
 - a) "This pioneer organization was established in 1800, given by Bezeleel Wells where upon a small brick edifice was built in the winter of 1803-1804."
- 2) The First Presbyterian Church (chosen and ordained one of the first Ruling Elders along with Samuel Meek," Hunter, p. 155 and Brief History, 1858, p. 4)
 - a. According to Hunter's Pathfinders (1898) the dubious claim is made that "The Presbyterian Church kept no records. The Presbyterians are individualists, and thus being the antipode of socialists, the church was not a civil community organized to relieve the individual of responsibility. The head of a family was expected to keep the records thereof--to note in his family Bible the marriages, births and deaths of his family" (p. 170).
- 3) The Cross Creek Presbyterian Church (some sources say he settled near there)
- 4) The Island Creek Congregation (circa 1799)
 - a. "With Thomas Vincent, John Milligan, Samuel Hunter, and Samuel Meek," according to Hunter, p. 260.

The credibility of Hunter is problematic and seems to be causing some these difficulties, but (3) **What's the correct name of his local church?**

TO BE LOCATED (UNAVAILABLE ON ILL FROM UCLA)

- Records of the Synod of Virginia, vol. 1-2 (1788-1806)
- E.B. Welsh, Minutes of the Presbytery of Ohio, vol. 1-10, 1793-1870

- WOO Spec Coll BX8958.O37 A, vol. 1 (1793-1806) @ (330) 263-2527
- Aka Records of the Presbytery of Ohio, 1793-1870 or ****Records of The Ohio Presbytery, 1793-1870**** (cited both ways—the latter by Guthrie, 1952, p. 278; not in OCLC, although Guthrie says Western Theological Seminary held them, but their Beardslee Library's HopeCat doesn't show any holdings) or later,
- The Records of the Synod of Ohio, vol. 1 (1802-1827)

REFERENCES

- Encyclopedia of Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, p. 1101.
- John B. Linn, Annals of Buffalo Valley (1877), p. 296
- First Presbyterian Church, Brief History, Constitution, Rules and Catalogue of Members (1858), p. 4
- Isaac Grier, Old Buffalo Church, 1772 (Centennial Historical Discourse, 19**)
- Andrew G. Slade, ed. Presbyterianism in the Upper Ohio Valley: Bicentennial U.S.A. (Steubenville, OH: Presbytery of the Upper Ohio Valley, 1976)
- Joseph Stevens, History of the Presbytery of Northumberland (1888), p. 32.
- Howard McKnight Wilson, The Records of the Synod of Virginia, 1788-1806, 2 vols. (Richmond, VA: Synod of Virginia, 1970)

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