

CAST OF CHARACTERS

David Johnston

Grandson of Dr. John Johnstone of Edinburgh, who emigrated to the United States in 1685 and subsequently served as Mayor of New York City from 1714-1718. Dr. Johnston later moved to Perth Amboy, New Jersey, where he practiced medicine until his death in September of 1732.

Born January 3, 1724 in Perth Amboy, in Middlesex, New Jersey, David Johnston or Johnstone, was one of eleven children. In 1753, David married Magdalene Walton. His name first appears on a poll list for the election to the Provincial Assembly in February, 1761, and was a registered Freeman of the City of New York on August 21, 1770. He was listed as "David Johnston, Gentleman." He had a fine city mansion on the east side of Bowling Green, which was burned in 1776 or 1777. After the war he withdrew to a large estate at Nine Partners, Dutchess County, N.Y., which he made his permanent residence.



Johnston became the father of nine children, six daughters and three sons. He was predeceased by three of his daughters. Being one of the Nine Partners of Dutchess made Johnston an extremely wealthy gentleman. According to the 1800 Federal Census of Washington, Dutchess County, NY, there were 23 people living in the Johnston household: two men between the ages of 26 and 45, three men over 45, one woman between 16 and 26, one woman between the ages of 26 through 45, one woman over 45, three other free persons except Indians not taxed (servants) and 15 enslaved Africans. The previous census lists Johnston as having 14 slaves in his household. David Johnston died in the year 1809.

John Johnston

John was born in 1762 in the town of Washington in Dutchess County, New York. He married Susana Bard, a daughter of Samuel Bard. Samuel was the first physician appointed to NY Hospital and President George Washington's personal physician. The Johnstons had eight children; four boys and four girls. After the death of his father, John Johnston temporarily took over the ownership of his father's home in Washington. The 1810 census lists three members of the family, two over 45 (John and Susana) and one male between 26 and 44. John Johnston served the City of Poughkeepsie as its Judge of Common Pleas. He and his wife eventually moved to Hyde Park. He eventually died in 1850 at the age of 88 and was buried in the St. James Cemetery in Hyde Park.

Ann DeWitt Bevier

Born in the town of Clinton in Dutchess County in 1762, Ann DeWitt met and married Philip Dubois Bevier, a retired Revolutionary Captain in the New York Continental Army at the age of 20. The Bevier's were slaveholders as evidenced in the 1800 Federal Census for the town of Rochester when 11 enslaved Africans were living in their household. When Philip died in 1802, Ann was left a widow with a large estate and eight children to raise.



Her 1802 farm ledger illustrates her shrewdness as a businessperson. She was able to manage a large household, a farming business, and the construction of a large estate simultaneously.

Rachel (Hornbeck) Wesbrook

Neighbor of Ann Bevier and wife of Wessel Wesbrook.

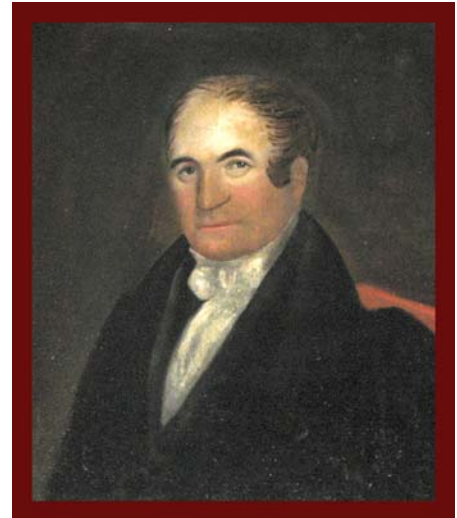
Derek Wesbrook

He was a resident of the town of Rochester and member of the church. He has been referred to as “Judge Westbrook”.

James Murphy

Born, a slave in 1788, the son of Jane, the biracial slave of David Johnston of the town of Washington (Milbrook) in Dutchess County. In his early years he was trained as a saddler, but went on to study theology at the New Brunswick Seminary.

He joined the Rochester, Wawarsing, and Clove Churches in Ulster County, New York serving as their minister from 1814 until 1825. While holding the title of minister he married Catharine L. Kinsella, and had four children. Their births are recorded in the Rochester Reformed Church records: James G. Junior (October 29, 1815), Francis (July 8, 1817), Winnifred (June 24, 1819) and Jesse Fonda (October 11, 1823)



The 1820 Federal Census for the household of James Murphy states the following information:

<i>Free white males under ten</i>	1
<i>Free white males of 16 and under 26 including heads of families</i>	1
<i>Free white males of 26 and under 45, including heads of families</i>	1
<i>Free white females of under ten</i>	2
<i>Free white females of 16 and under 26 including heads of families</i>	1
<i>Free white males of 26 and under 45, including heads of families</i>	1
<i>Male slaves under 14</i>	1
<i>Female slaves under 14</i>	2
<i>Female slaves of 14 and under 26</i>	1

His obituary in the February 1, 1857 issue of the New York Herald states the following:

Rev. James Murphy, D.D. died in the village of Herkimer, New York on Tuesday last, aged sixty-nine. Dr. Murphy belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, and entered the ministry in the year 1814.

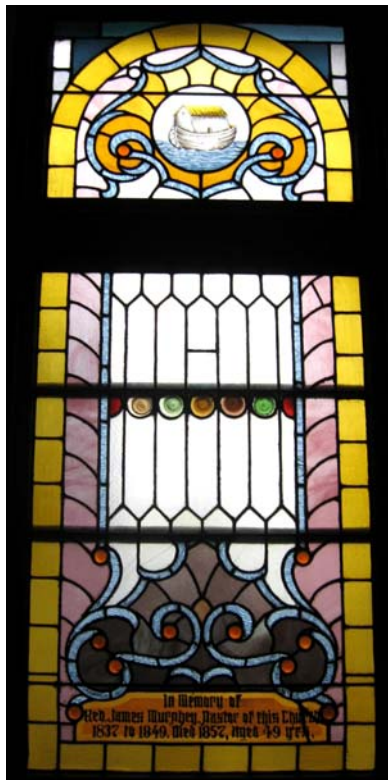
Catharine Murphy



Born in Albany, New York c. 1783, Catharine L. Kinsella married the Reverend James Murphy and gave birth to four children between the years 1815 to 1823. After leaving Ulster County, she moved to Herkimer County with her husband and children.

Jane Cox

Very little is known of Jane Cox. She was one of the slaves of David Johnston and was freed upon the death of David's wife, Magdalene. Magdalene died in 1806. Jane was living in Poughkeepsie at the time she put her X on an affidavit swearing she was the mother of James Murphy.



Herkimer Reformed Church Stained Glass window
– picture taken by Susan Perkins