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## PRESTON PAPERS.

(From the originals in the Virginia State Library)

(Continued)

J. BRICKINRIDGE (1) TO COL. WILLIAM PRESTON.

Fort Chiswell June 25<sup>th</sup> 1780

D' Uncle

Yesterday an Express was Sent you informing you that the Tories were about to rise up New River & that they had killed some persons: The same accounts have since been brought to the Mines & confirmed, so that I believe there is no disputing

(1) This family, whose name is spelt, variously, Breckenridge and Breckinridge, and frequently, in the Augusta records, Brackenridge, is said to have been forced by religious persecution in the reign of Charles II, to fly from Ayrshire to the North of Ireland.

Alexander Breckenridge came to America in 1728, remained some years in Pennsylvania and was in Augusta Co. Va. (then Orange) in 1738, where, he made his first purchase of land. On Feb. 21, 1738, Alexander, George, James, Robert and Adam Breckenridge entered warrants for 100 acres each with Benjamin Borden. In 1740, Alexander Breckenridge proved in Orange County the "Importation" of himself and family. The names of three of the children are illegible. It is probable that one of them was Adam Breckenridge. In 1751 there is a suit which states that Adam Breckenridge, who was in debt to the plaintiff, had gone to Carolina in 1750. On March 16, 1758, the will of Adam Breckenridge was proved.

On May 24, 1744, Jane, widow of Alexander Breckenridge, relinquished administration on his estate to her eldest son George Breckenridge.

Alexander and Jane Breckenridge had issue: 1. George<sup>2</sup>. On April 20, 1748, there is reference to his wife Ann. A suit begun by him in August 1747, abated March 1748, on account of her death. He is said to have married Ann Doak. He died in Wythe Co. 1790; 2. Col. Robert<sup>2</sup>, was a justice of Augusta 1751 &c., sheriff 1753, was one of the first trustees of Staunton in 1761, removed to what was later Botetourt and when that county was formed in 1769-70, was one of the first justices and lieutenant colonel of militia. Various papers preserved among the Augusta records show that he was in active service on the frontier 1759-61. In 1779 his heirs received bounty land for his services in 1756 commanding a company attached to the 1st Va. Regiment, and also under Col. Andrew Lewis against the Shawnese. He married 1st Mary, daughter of Robert Poague, of Augusta (mentioned as his wife in 1752) and 2d Lettice, daughter of John Preston. Col. Robert Breckenridge died in Botetourt in 1772; 3. James (?). In 1742 a James Breckenridge bought

the certainty of it. Yesterday there was one **Husk** came to the Mines who Capt. Quirk supposed to be a Spie & detained him he informs them of a Body that is gathered up the New River near the Glades; and also that the Chief of His friends are with them & of nine Light horsemen that was killed who attempted to take a parcel of Tories in Carolina.

There was also a Captain of the Militia taken by them of the name of Swift who brings the same accounts, adding that there was a good many British Officers among them but could not ascertain the number. All these accounts seem to alarm

land in Augusta, and in 1746 a suit against him appears in the record; 4. John—nothing known of him; 5. Smith—nothing known of him; 6. Lettice, married Sept. 1749, Elijah McClanahan.  
 George<sup>2</sup> and Ann (Doak) Breckenridge had issue: 7. Alexander, married Magdalen Gamble and died in Bourbon Co., Ky., 1813; 8. Robert<sup>3</sup> born 1743, died in Bath Co., Ky., 1814, married Mary Doak; 9. John<sup>3</sup>, married Elizabeth Willoughby, died in Bourbon Co., Ky., 1824; 10. Elizabeth, married Jesse Evans; 11. Letitia, married—Lindsey; 12. Sarah, married—Findley; 13. Jane, married—Alcorn  
 Children of 2. Col. Robert<sup>2</sup> Breckenridge: (1st m.): 14. Robert<sup>3</sup>, 2d Lt. 8th Va. Regt. Aug 10, 1777; 1st Lt. April 4, 1778, transferred to 4th Va. Sept 14, 1778, taken prisoner at Charleston May 12 1780, exchanged July 1781, served to the close of the War. He was a member of the Ky. Constitutional Convention and speaker of the first House of Delegates. He died Sept 11, 1833; 15. Alexander<sup>3</sup>, 1st Lt. Gist's Regt. Jan. 1777, Captain April 22, 1779, captured at Charleston, May 12, 1780, exchanged June 1781. He removed to Ky., and married Jane, widow of Col. John Floyd and daughter of Col. John Buchanan. (One of his sons was James D. Breckenridge, M. C. from Ky. 1821-23, who died May 1849); (2d m.) 16. William<sup>3</sup>, of Augusta Co. Va., and Lexington, Ky., married Miss Gillam; 17. John<sup>3</sup>, born, Dec 2, 1760, died Dec, 14, 1806, was educated at William and Mary, was a member of the House of Delegates of Va., removed in 1793 to Ky where his home was "Cabell's Dale", near Lexington, Attorney General of Ky. 1795-97, member House of Delegates 1797-1800, Speaker 1800, U. S. Senator 1801-1805, and Attorney General of the United States 1805 until his death. He married, Feb 22, 1780, Mary Hopkins, daughter of Col. Joseph Cabell, of Buckingham Co. (Among his children were Letitia who married, 1st Alfred W. Grayson, son of U. S. Senator Wm Grayson, and 2d General Peter B. Porter, of New York, Secretary of War, U. S., 1828-29; Joseph Cabell, Speaker of the Ky. House of Representatives; Rev. John, Rev. Robert J. and Rev. William L., all distinguished divines); 18. James<sup>3</sup>, of "Grove Hill", Botetourt Co., born March 7, 1763, died May 13, 1833. He married Jan 1, 1791, Ann, daughter of Cary Selden, of Elizabeth City County He served in the Revolution in Col. Preston's regiment under Green; was a member of the Va. House of Delegates 1789, 1790, 1796-1802, 1806-1808, 1819-21, 1823-24 and M. C. 1809-1817. (Among his descendants were Capt. James Breckenridge, C. S. A.; killed in action, 1865, and Col. Cary Breckenridge C. S. A.; a gallant cavalry officer. For account of descendants of Hon. James Breckenridge see "Seldens of Virginia and Allied Families"—index); 19. Preston<sup>3</sup>, married Miss Trigg of Ky.; 20. Elizabeth married Samuel Meredith.

The person who gave me this Information being affraid whilst Griffith was in the County to inform me of it, sent his wife last night who gave me the above information.

Col'o Campbell stopt a few minutes here this morning and to whom I was mentioning these particulars with some others; desired to tel you by the first opp'y that by the Tories not moving any of their property away & of many particulars he heard since he left your house; he has the greatest reason to beleive that the Tories will shortly be back, that it is his opinion if it is in your power to get more assistance from the neighboring Counties, it would be necessary that he is convinced they will make a vigorous attempt to distress the people in this County. He promised he would immediately raise a hundred men and Keep them in Readiness to march upon the shortest notice, to our assistance.

I am Sir, your very hu'ble St  
James McGavock

[Adressed] Col. William Preston

To the care of Capt. Byrn

[Endorsed] James McGavock to Col. Preston

June 30-1780-Tories

Mr. McGavocks Letter-June 30-1780

Abt. Insurgeuts

COL. ARTHUR CAMPBELL TO COL. WM PRESTON.

Camp in Bakers Settius<sup>t</sup> July 3. 1780

Sir

Our Militia have proceeded this far up New River in pursuit of the insurgents under Roberts and I have here received certain intelligence of their being several days march ahead that we have given over hopes of overtaking them, besides the total defeat given at Ramseurs Mill (2) to their main army

(2) The Battle of Ramseur's Mill on the South fork of the Catawba River in North Carolina, was fought June 20, 1780 between a force of about 1300 Tories under Col. John Moore and another of North Carolina state troops and militia under Col. Locke. Late in the action other state troops under General Rutherford arrived. The fight was hard contested, neighbors and relations frequently attacking each other; but the Tories was completely defeated and dispersed.

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has just returned.

The Express who was sent you is a relation of James Bain and I suppose will give them the news before he reaches you.

I am your very affectionate Newpew

J. Breckinridge

June 25<sup>th</sup> 1780

[Addressed] Col'o William Preston  
To the care of Capt. Byon

[Endorsed] J. Breckinridge to Colo. Preston—About Qusur-  
guete

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JAMES MCGAVOCK TO COL. WILLIAM PRESTON.

Fort Chiswell, June 30<sup>th</sup> 1780

D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Last night I rec<sup>d</sup> Inteligence from a person on whom I can depend who gives me such information that alarms me much & which I think if not properly guarded against will be followed by evil consequences. He gives an account of John Griffith being upon Walkers Creek Encourageing the Tories, & getting them in readiness; he has now left that place and gone to their place of Rendezvous at Ramseur's Mill, he is to be back however in about two weeks time in company with a large body of Tories that are to come upon the Inhabitante of this place and to be joined by all those upon Walkers Creek. He has also promised that whoever would take some of the principal men of this County, (your name and mine being particularly mentioned) should be rewarded with a large number of Gunias.

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Among the descendant's of Hon. John Breckenridge (the writer of the letter in the text) were John Cabell Breckenridge, Vice President U. S. and Lt. General and Secretary of War C. S. A.; Wm C. P. Breckenridge, Col. C. S. A. and M. C. from Ky; Clifton R. Breckenridge, M. C. from Arkansas; Judge Samuel Miller Breckenridge, of Mo., Brig General Joseph C. Breckenridge, Inspector General U. S. A.