

Lingering Questions Related to Margaret Corbin's Life

The details of Margaret Corbin's life were not documented as extensively as more well-known, or wealthier, individuals of the 18th Century and many historical holes remain throughout all parts of her life.

There are various stories and pieces of information about Margaret's life that have floated around for close to 250 years. While some details are confirmed by primary source documentation, some have been muddled through years of folklore and confusion with other individuals and events. Even information that is frequently referenced as "facts" about Margaret is subject to scrutiny unless we find reliable sources to cite of that information's origin.

Any additional pieces of information can be clues that lead to important discoveries, but information with verifiable sources (preferably primary) are more significant and useful.

Here is a sampling of questions related to Margaret Corbin where we lack strong answers or reliable sources:

Young Margaret and her family pre-Revolutionary War

- What details can we learn about Margaret Cochran Corbin's early life?
- Genealogical research into Margaret's paternal and maternal lines (any descendants?)
- Genealogical research into husband John Corbin's family (any descendants?)
- What primary records could give us information about Margaret's early life?
 - o When was she born? Where?
 - o Parents names: father Robert Cochran; what was her mother's name (and maiden name)?
 - o How/what do we know about the Indian raid in 1756?
 - o How do we know she married John Corbin of Virginia in 1772 (perhaps in Pennsylvania)?
 - o What do we know about John?

Battle of Fort Washington

- What are the historical records and accounts of the Battle of Fort Washington (that include details about the battle as well as Margaret's specific efforts or surroundings)?
- How do we know about John and Margaret's time in the regiment?
 - o How/what do we know what Margaret was doing as a camp follower (cooking, mending, bringing water to wounded)?
 - o How/what do we know what happened during the battle?
 - o How do we know what happened to her after the battle? Paroled into custody General Greene at Fort Lee? Corps of Invalids?

Margaret post-Battle of Fort Washington

- What can we piece together about her life and her whereabouts following the battle (1776-1800)?
- How/what do we know related to her time in Highland Falls?
- What else can we learn regarding the information from William Price letters?
 - o How did he procure boarders or caregivers for “Captain Molly” – any records associated with those agreements?
 - o What can we learn about the people he mentions wanting money for taking care of Molly (Mrs. Elizabeth Swims; Mrs. Randall)?
- No written record of “Captain Molly” by William Price (or anyone else?) after 1790?
 - o Can we find any written record of her over the next 10 years?
 - o Was she still receiving government care via the Army post at West Point after 1790/up until her death?
- What other questions can we ask or information can we pull from the records associated with her: Journal of Continental Congress 1779, Pennsylvania Colonial Records of 1779, Board of War 1780, General Knox Papers 1782, Corps of Invalids (discharged 1783)

Highland Falls (aka Swimtown and Buttermilk Falls before being incorporated as Highland Falls 1906)

- What can we learn about the town and people who may have known her in Highland Falls (who might have been boarding her when she died, who participated in her burial, etc.)?
- Where can we fill holes in her life with other historical information about the events and people living in Highland Falls around that time (~1780-1800)?
- What background can we find on the land that was eventually purchased by J. Pierrepont Morgan, Sr. (which he later named Cragston)?