

JAMES de GOLIER

James de Golier was born in Paris, France, in 1725, the son of a nobleman named Anthony de Golier. He was of a reckless disposition, and being educated for the priesthood very much against his will, at an early age he left home without the consent of his parents and joined the French army. He was a soldier of France in the War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-48, a soldier in the War of the American Revolution, 1775-82, and the first man to bring his surname from Europe to the Continent of North America, a "soldier of fortune", a soldier by vocation. James de Golier barely escaped death in battle in Europe. His advent into America was accidental, and, by him unpremeditated. He came from Europe to advance the authority and to defend the dominion in America of Louis XV, King of France, and to aid in such further efforts for conquests in America as that monarch might devise. Thus he came as an opponent of everything English in America. Singularly, he soon burst through the military restrictions and broke away from the political allegiance under which he came to this continent. This he did for two reasons: one, to establish his personal independence; second, to become a friend of the people whom he had been sent oversea to oppose, and so to be a willing adherent of the political principles which he had come to attack. He forsook the one cause and accepted, at the risk of his life, the other. And having taken this stand in a time of peace he was not a traitor to the King of France. His sole purpose being to enjoy the freedom of personal independence and the inclinations of his own heart for a domestic life in New England and New York. He settled in the State of Massachusetts, and married Jane Hatch of Sturbridge, in 1754. Their children were: Mary, John, James, Joseph, Anthony, Lydia, and Abel.

During the French War in 1756, while James de Golier was stationed at Fort George, twenty-five men were sent out on a scouting party, and out of that number only one, James de Golier, returned to tell the sad fate of his comrades, twenty having been killed in a surprise attack by the Indians and French; the other five being taken prisoners. The Indians danced over their victims after binding them with moose bark with their backs to trees, after which they fell asleep. James de Golier worked his arms in such a manner as to peel the skin from his wrists causing the blood to run freely. This caused the bark to stretch, by which he got his hands loose and escaped. The other prisoners were all burned the next morning.

While serving in Flanders, where the French were at war with Great Britain and her allies, at the siege of Burgetshumer, James de Golier became injured by having his skull laid open to the view of the surgeon. One after another, eight platoons had made unsuccessful attempts to scale a certain wall, each one being cut down like so much grass. Finally, a ninth succeeded in gaining a footing on the wall, but James de Golier, who was one of the number, soon fell. When the heat of the battle was over, and the dead and wounded were being cared for, the young man barely escaped being placed with hundreds of other unfortunate ones in the open trenches.

But a spark of life was discovered and he was carried to the hospital. The story goes that when de Golier recovered consciousness the attending surgeon brought a mirror and said to him, "Young man, if you live, you can say that you have seen your own brains". A sword stroke had fractured the skull so

that the brain was exposed to view. The injury never healed properly and all during his life he suffered more or less from it.

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When over fifty years of age James de Golier took up arms again to defend the frontier of New York and to maintain the Declaration of Independence. His three sons also enlisted in the War of the Revolution. James, Jr., the second son, was stationed at West Point when Arnold's treason was discovered. When Major Andre military spy, was tried, a volunteer was called for to wait upon the traitor and James de Golier, Jr., responded and acted as his servant until his execution. During his imprisonment Andre asked de Golier to borrow a Bible for him, and on the night before his execution the dreary hours were spent walking the floor and reading the Scriptures. Young de Golier gave Andre his last cup of coffee and as the condemned man was led out he stopped and shaking hands with de Golier, politely thanked him for his many kindnesses.

It was in the Mohawk Valley that James de Golier and his sons served where General Lafayette also served for a period of time, and by whose presence they became inspired. In this region the book, "Drums Along the Mohawk", by Walter D. Edmonds, was written. The de Golier Family had settled in the district near the Mohawk Indian settlements, so the material situation of their hopes and fears can be realized, for they lived only a few miles away from the actual scenes of battle.

Service – American Revolution: James de Golier, Sr. and James de Golier, Jr., served in Capt. Gerrit S. Veeder's Company in the Regiment of the Colony of New York, commanded by Col. Cornelius D. Wynkoop. James de Golier enlisted March 19, 1776, and James, Jr., enlisted April 2, 1776. James de Golier also served as private in Capt. James Magee's Company of Col. Morris Graham's Regiment, and in Capt. John Van Patten's Company of Col. Abraham Wemple's Regiment of Albany County Militia. Upon expiration of his first term of enlistment, he reenlisted and served as private in Capt. Aaron Hale's Company of Col. Marinum Willett's Regiment, over two years.

James de Golier died after June 1, 1790

Mrs. Edward Lee McClain (Lulu Johnson McClain), of Greenfield, Ohio, descendant, is a member of the National Daughters of the American Revolution on this line. A more complete account of James de Golier's service record may be found in the files of this society."

Summary:

Anthony de Golier (?) -

James de Golier - Jane Hatch

(de Golier, 3 of 3)

*Note. A complete history of the de Golier Family, ancestors of Mrs. Edward Lee McClain (Lulu Johnson McClain), of Greenfield, Ohio, may be found in Volume III of the genealogy, "The Washington Ancestry and Records of the McClain, Johnson and Forty Other Colonial American Families", in the Library of the Memorial Continental Hall, Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Edward Lee McClain.