

JOSEPH BLACK
Contributed by Fred Weyler

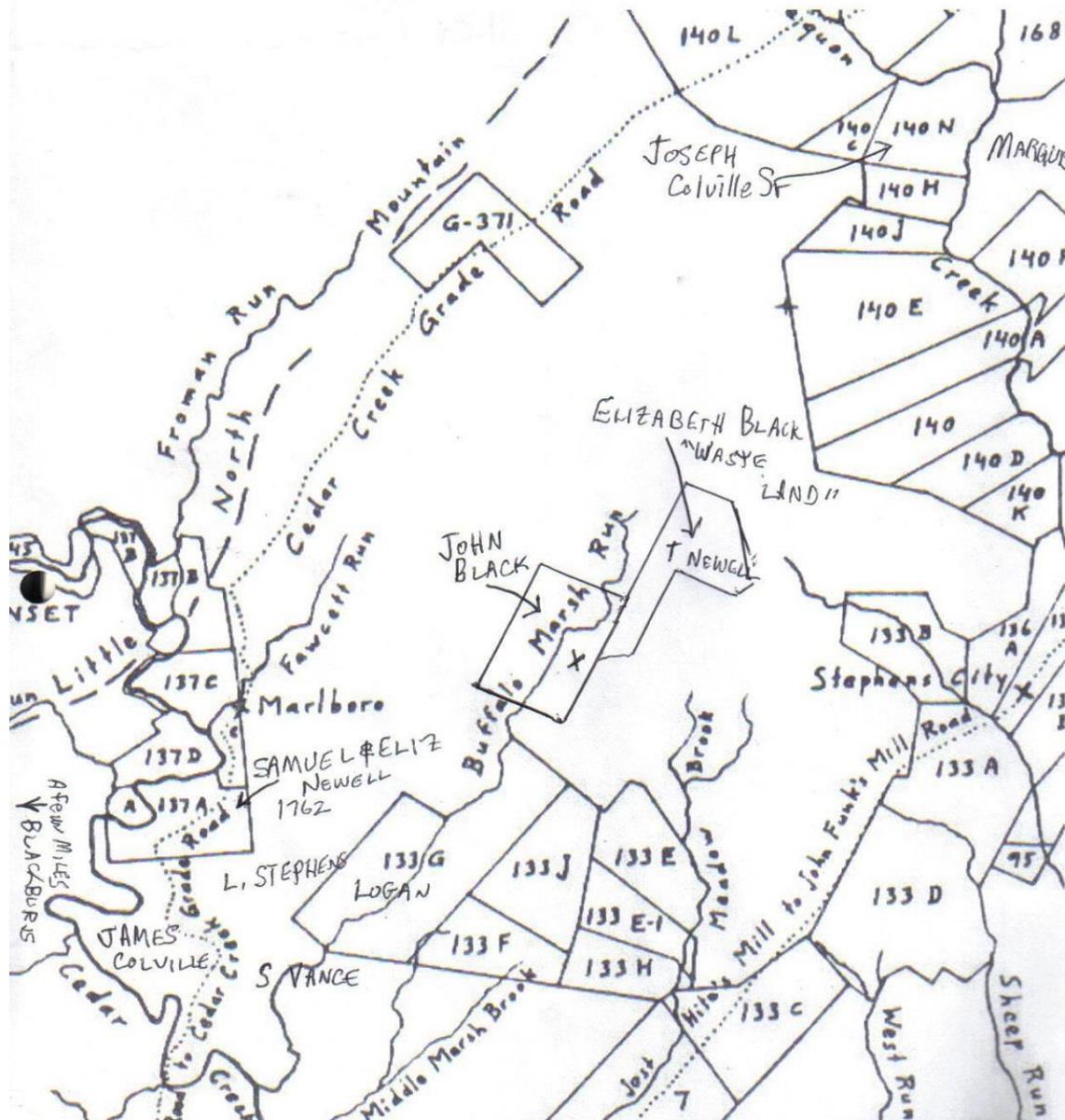
Joseph Black was born 22Feb1747 on Buffalo Marsh Run (or at Joseph Colville, his grandfather's house on Opequon Creek nearby). He was the first son of John and Elizabeth Colville Black. His father died later that year before the birth of his younger sister, Elizabeth. Joseph inherited his father's farm which was deeded to him upon his age of majority. He grew up in the very Presbyterian community adjacent the plantation of David Logan. His mother's younger brothers, Andrew and Samuel Colville, served early fatherly capacities. Then at age seven Joseph acquired a step father, Samuel (1713) Newell, and big brother Thomas Newell. His boyhood next door neighbor, Benjamin Logan moved with him to the Holston in 1771. Younger brother, Samuel Newell, joined the family 04Nov1754 while his step father was detained by storms at sea returning from business in Scotland.

Horsemanship was a prominent activity among the Cedar Creek/Opequon Creek neighborhood. Captain (and sheriff) Lewis Stephens lived nearby. We can imagine Joseph with a 1757 stallion equal to the pride of owning a shiny 1957 Chevy Impala. When the word of Cornwallis' surrender reached Abingdon in 1782, Black was one of those indicted for horseracing in the wild celebration. The Knoxville Gazette reported his loss of Black's horses in 1794 to renegades from across the gap of Chilhowee Ridge in Happy Valley. The Marlboro Virginia community had other boys "shining their Impalas": the Blackburn boys on the Shenandoah county side of Cedar Creek, cousin Samuel Vance on the next plantation down Buffalo Marsh Run, John Vance of Opequon run, other Colville uncles and cousins on both sides of Opequon and Cedar Creeks, and several Newell boys among others.

Frederick County Virginia Will Book 3, page 422 records the 12 Sep1767 Will of David Vance. Among his children was one Gannet (Jannet, Janet) Vance. We can presume that she married Joseph Black at Opequon Presbyterian meeting place. Because they were not Anglican Church members, their marriage was not officially recorded and could have been one of the causes for William Hogue's conviction in Winchester for performing ministerial deeds while officially a Presbyterian clerk, not a reverend.

Many first born sons inherited farms and remained at home to further improve and develop them. Some cashed in their developed land at premium prices and moved west to the frontier to start afresh and develop new farms. The younger sons more often left the family homestead and moved away to make their own nests.

In the late 1760s, Daniel Smith was Dr. Thomas Walker's real estate agent in Augusta and Frederick counties selling subdivided tracts of his Loyal Land Company grants in the Holston Valley (Smith also hawked land for Edmund Pendleton). Appearances are that Joseph Black, Andrew Colville, Samuel Colville, and perhaps some of Andrew Evans, Samuel Vance, Joseph Vance, John Vance, George Blackburn, Arthur Blackburn, John Cusick, Christopher Acklin, Benjamin Logan, Samuel Newell and William Blackburn scouted Dr. Walker's Wolf Hill Tract neighborhood. This is suggested by Augusta, Botetourt, and Fincastle County records among which was the early road commission from the head of the Holston to Eighteen Mile Creek (Town Creek and Wolf Creek upon which Black later built forts). Joseph Black, Samuel Colville, and Andrew Colville bought adjacent Wolf Hill tracts with the others. The 1771 caravan from Opequon to Wolf Hill began Joseph Black's residence at what would become Blacks Fort Virginia, county seat of the new Washington County, now Abingdon, Virginia.

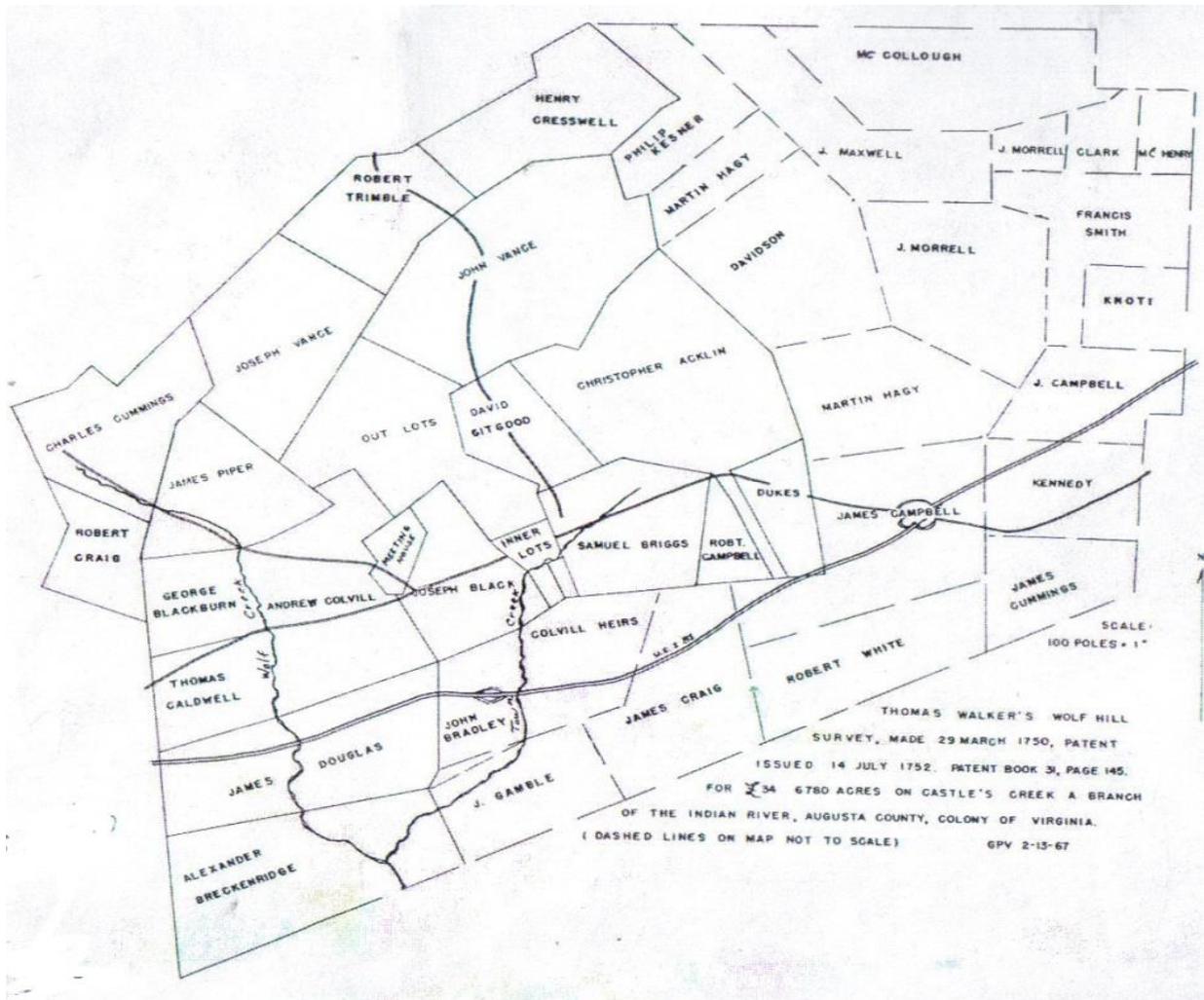


Cecil O'Dells Old Frederick County Virginia Map 8 annotated.

To correct some misconceptions, let's here inject some Newell facts. Thomas remained to shine his Impalas (with other Newells) around Cedar Creek and established a Shenandoah County record. A branch of Joseph Black's extended Newell family took their Impalas to the Monongahela and established a record with George Rogers Clark and William Henry Harrison sometimes attributed to Black's step father or Black's brother Samuel Newell. A Newell uncle had already gone to shine his Impalas on the James River near Fincastle. Presumably from this branch, Samuel Newell signed the Cumberland Compact, had trouble with his taxes on Sugg's Creek in current Wilson County TN, and fathered another Samuel Newell who was with Andrew Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans. Finally, the James Newell Branch had left Frederick County to shine their Impalas on New River years before the 1771 caravan. Joseph Black would be

involved with them at Draper's Meadow, at Fort Chiswell, at the New River Ferry, and at the Chiswell lead mines from the Fincastle County days (1772-1776) through the Revolutionary War years.

Samuel Newell, a son of James Newell of current Wythe County, was often confused with Black's step father or brother giving them credit for his service at the Battle of Point Pleasant, the garrison at Long Island, and as an emissary to the Cherokee Nation. His Samuel Newell's estate settlement was in the final chapter of Fincastle County records after the county was disbanded because he had been murdered by thieves at Toqua (on the Little Tennessee River) in December 1776.



*Courtesy of "The Depot" Abingdon Virginia, SW VA Historical Society
Dale Carter of Colonial Heights has more precise depiction overlay on USGS Topo quadrangles*

From cause unknown, Uncle Sam Colville died before establishing his new plantation. His widow Elizabeth remarried William Davidson and they moved to help establish the Black's Fort community. Samuel's purchase was recorded in a Fincastle County deed to the Colville orphans. Later records show them to be Samuel Colville junior, Joseph Colville, and George Colville. Joseph Black built a small fort on Wolf Creek north of the knobs on the plantation of Uncle Andrew Colville. It was referred to locally as "Black's Little Fort," "Newell's

Improvement,” and “the Muster Ground.” Later he built a larger fort to accommodate up to 600 which became the court house and from which timbers for further improvement were taken to build the second courthouse and jail at the site of the current Washington County court house.

Black’s mother, Elizabeth Newell and her second husband, Samuel Newell, claimed a tract (now known as Wyndale Station on the railroad west of Abingdon) at the head of Beaver Creek. It was partially surveyed and marginally improved before the change of plans for the Colville orphans. Black’s mother instead occupied “Black’s Little Fort” on her brother Andrew Colville’s farm to raise her nephews and daughter Sarah Newell.

<http://www.markerhistory.com/site-of-blacks-fort-marker-k-48/>

Joseph Black was listed among Lewis Preston Summers’ veterans of the Battle of Kings Mountain. In his Annals of SW Virginia, Summers also listed many veterans of Kings Mountain who were in the militia in 1780. Probably they mustered at Ebbing Spring or Sinking Spring, but they did not all go to Kings Mountain. About one out of seven stayed at home.

Gathering minutemen from Groseclose to Cumberland Gap could not be instantaneous. Charles Cummings, the Fighting Parson, had two congregations and two meeting places. Both of them, Sinking Spring and Ebbing Spring, were likely used to sign in the troops. A writing place and writing material were required to make records for payroll. Captain David Beattie’s supplemental ration roster had Ebbing Spring neighborhood men, but not the Sinking Spring captains Neal, Craig, and Colville men. Bowen’s Maiden Fort ration list was even farther separated.

Colonel Arthur Campbell’s muster proceeded to the Watauga a day later. Some went to Sycamore Shoals and returned to Washington County instead of proceeding across the mountains. Conspicuous among Summers’ list is Samuel Colville. Obviously Black’s Uncle Samuel Colville was long deceased. Joseph Black’s cousin Samuel Colville was likely a teenage militia man, but Washington County recorded his estate settlement in March 1780, half a year before the September muster at his teenage home. We might guess that cousin Sam Colville lost his life in service on the “Wilderness Road” to childhood neighbor Benjamin Logan’s fort (Stanford KY).

In August 1823 Joseph Black’s half brother wrote to Governor David Campbell. In the letter, Samuel Newell tried to recall the names of all the casualties and all the officers of Campbell’s corps at the Battle of Kings Mountain. He referred to William Russell of Fayette County KY for corroboration. Conspicuously absent from the list of Campbell’s officers was one Captain Joseph Black. Some forty years later, would Samuel Newell have forgotten that his own brother was at the battle of Kings Mountain if in fact he had been there? Is it not more likely that Black would be the best commander for the home guard at his own fort where the women and children could take refuge from any Tory or Indian threats?

<http://www.markerhistory.com/revolution-war-muster-ground-marker-k-60/>

The term Craig’s Meadow on the marker came years later than Black’s Little Fort and Newell’s Improvement. The Andrew and Mary Craig Colville farm was later obtained by her brother Robert Craig to add to his farm across Wolf Creek to the west.

<http://bkmnp.com/ovta/muster-ground> has links to maps and markers around Abingdon, the town that Joseph Black and his extended family built.

About 40 years after the Revolution, seven old soldiers mentioned serving under Captain Joseph Black. None of them placed him at Kings Mountain. You may read what they said at RevWarApps.org . Their Federal Pension file numbers are shown here.

Laton Smith: guarding at Black's Fort-/s1778

Andrew Evans: at Wetzel's Mills -s1778

James Simms: Chasing Tories -s4840

Ensign **Joseph Campbell:** at Black's Fort and cutting the Kentucky Road - s2414

Ambrose Yancey: after BKM under Colville, transferred to Black's company for Boyd's Creek expedition -/s46059

William McFerrin: three Tories from Blue Ridge back to Black's Fort for trial -s2791.

Samuel Davis - Boyds Creel/Chota then 1797 to Blount County -S16756

In December 1780, Captain Joseph Black raised a company under Col Arthur Campbell to join John Sevier pursuing renegade Cherokee south of the French Broad. They ranged around Chota clearing villages of renegade Indians.

After the watershed battle of 07Oct1780, not only for the forming new nation of these United States, but so much more acutely at Blacks Fort, Joseph Black was a leader in helping the community to recover, from both the tragic consequences and the glorious result. Immediate needs were the estate settlement of his baby sister Elizabeth's deceased husband, Lt. William Blackburn, KIA at Kings Mountain for which Joseph was an administrator. Another was the matter of deceased neighbor William Lusk, presumed by some KIA at Kings Mountain, listed by Summers as a veteran of Kings Mountain. In the same court session with the treatment of the other Kings Mountain casualties, the Lusk orphans were split with Joseph Black adopting three and Andrew Colville taking in the other three.

Abingdon heard the news of Cornwallis' surrender from Yorktown with complete joy. They overdid the celebration. In the next court session there was a sizable list of indictments. Joseph Black was one of the leaders charged with horse racing. There were several dignitaries who joined Black among the chastisement of the magistrates. Future Chief Justice of Tennessee David Campbell (one of several David Campbell's) is just one example. Friends and neighbors disturbed the peace, committed adultery, fornicated, drank watered down liquor, and celebrated beyond the dignity of a dominantly Presbyterian community. Maybe predestination caused these expressions of relief from years of hardship and grief. Closer to home for Joseph Black, one sister was charged with adultery and a brother in law, Christopher Acklin, who operated the Old Abingdon Tavern was charged with overcharging for drinks.

Settling back down to business, the Washington County tax commission assigned a precinct to Captain Joseph Black. His taxpayers are in a surviving record of the 1782-1783 tax list. Joseph Black assumed duties as magistrate of the court. His sessions are in the court journals into 1784.

The Old Abingdon Tavern



The Tavern

03750

Like several of the Kings Mountain veterans, Joseph Black agreed with the Cherokees at Christmas Dinner in Chotah that they would settle the Little River Watershed. As a buffer between the Shawnee raiders and the Tanasi River, the white settlers would be a defense for their friends to the south. Joseph and Janet were not in the first wave, but in a later caravan started their new Plantation near the Warriors' Path on Crooked Creek at the current Blount County Tennessee neighborhood know as Blockhouse after the structure he built there. In the area also known as Carpenter's Campground and Montvale, Black was between Fort Craig (Maryville) and the gap leading to the Cherokee town of Chilhowee.

Governor William Blount of the Territory South of the Ohio appointed Joseph Black as an officer in the Knox County militia when the county was established and the Blount County militia when it came into existence. US treasury records show his rosters when his company was called out for action or for drills. James Simms of Frederick County Virginia, then Washington County, then the Eusebia community was both an elder in the church and a militia man in Captain Black's company. The Cherokee villages of Tuckaleechee and Ellejoy were abandoned and never again was the area threatened by Shawnee. Instead the Creeks and the transplanted Cherokee at Chickamauga filtered through the Hiwassee and Tanasi more peaceful villages to pillage on the Little River. They were the focus of Joseph Black's militia company.

In the aborted state of Franklin, Black was among sundry citizens south of the French Broad who petitioned North Carolina more than once about several frontier issues. One of the petitions dated on a Sunday suggests that after a service at Eusebia, signatures of the parishioners were more convenient than those obtained from remote cabins. We know that Joseph and Janet

Black attended Eusebia where the graves of both Joseph (with a Revolutionary War marker) and their son Joseph Black Jr. are located. The Warriors' Path passed Black's Blockhouse and crossed Little River at Ellejoy on the way toward Eusebia. The path continued to Boyds Creek passing the 625 acre tract at the Sevier/Blount County line where Joseph Black started building his house in 1816.

In 1794 the Knoxville Gazette reported that Indians stole five horses from Joseph Black. In November General William Blount met Chief Watts at Tellico Blockhouse to resolve various issues. Blount told the chief that General Logan wanted to bring an army from Kentucky to discipline the raiders south of the Little T. Chief Watts did not want a Logan army in his territory. He agreed to take care of justice among the Indians. Apparently Logan heard about his boyhood next door neighbor, later young adult trail blazing partner, Joseph Black, and told Blount that his people were loyal to their friends south of the French Broad.

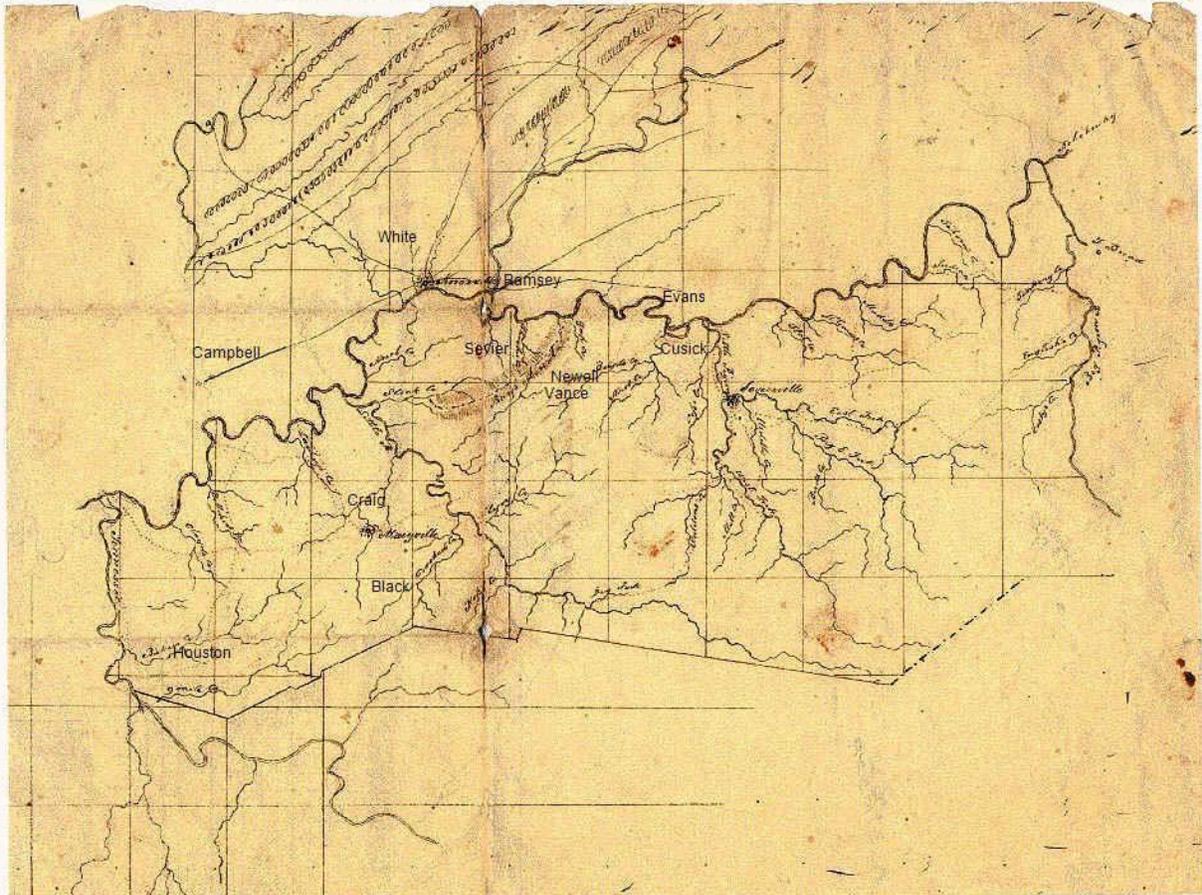
Being a horseman with knowledge of the terrain, it is most likely that in 1797 Joseph Black helped in running the Hawkins line which overcame the Hopewell Treaty to restore the Little River watershed into Tennessee. The line from Southwest Point to Clingman's Dome crossed the Chilhowee Range near Black's Blockhouse. Joseph and Janet could then be full citizens of Tennessee without the special provisions in the constitution.

In 1796 Tennessee gave residents south of the French Broad certain second class citizen rights. Though they could not own property, they got promises of future pre-emption rights on part of their property. By permitting them to hold office, Cocke, Sevier, and Blount counties could function and be represented in the 16th District of these United States. In 1796, Joseph Black was elected one of twenty two in the first General Assembly of Tennessee representing Blount County. He served another term after the 1798 election. The votes were counted at his half sister Sarah Newell (Mrs. Joseph) Vance's house near Eusebia for both Blount and Sevier Counties. In the neighborhood of Newell's Station, the final capital of the aborted state of Franklin, security was trusted for this purpose more than that of either Sevierville or Maryville.

Black's cousin Joseph Colville lived at Hubbard TN near the Ellejoy crossing of Little River on the Warriors Path. Colville was elected sheriff of Blount County when it was first organized. Colville left Blount County before full citizenship was granted. He moved from Cherokee territory back into Tennessee to establish Warren County and McMinnville.

In 1806, Tennessee voted to let citizens south of the French Broad own property if they would pay again. Over the next few years, they reduced the price, but still wanted to sell land (to get funds for the children) to folks who had lived on it for thirty years. Per oral history and without land records to prove otherwise, John Cusick refused to move and refused to pay again. Joseph Black's land records at Montvale are not researched herein.

DISTRICT SOUTH OF THE FRENCH BROAD & THE HOLSTON. BY MATTHEW RHEA. { UNDATED, CIRCA 1830 }



RHEA FAMILY PAPERS - BOX No. 2. 14. MAPS - TENNESSEE - FRENCH BROAD & HOLSTON
 TENNESSEE STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES, NASHVILLE TENNESSEE

On 25Mar1825, Joseph Black assumed his temporary place at Eusebia having departed this life. His son would later join him there with his wife, his sister Martha Black Cusick, and his brother in law John Cusick. Probably his mother is also in one of the unmarked graves.



Note that there was never an official unit named Sevier's Sharpshooters. John Cusick served in the Virginia Militia in the Boyd's Creek, Guilford Court House and probably Kings Mountain expeditions. The Cusick community is east of Newell's Station on US441/US411 at Knob Creek.

Elizabeth Colville Black Newell,

b. ca 1725

d. ca 1796,

m.(1) John Black d. 1747 Frederick Co VA

m.(2) Samuel Newell d.1794 Sevier County, Territory South of Ohio

Jane Colville Black, b. 04Feb1741 in Marlboro, Frederick Co., VA,

10May1741 christened at the Old Stone church by Rev. John Craig,

d. 14Mar1835 in Abingdon, Washington Co., VA,

m. John Vance, b. 12Feb1735/36 in Opequon Run, Winchester, Frederick Co., VA,

married 15Nov1759 in Opequon Presbyterian Church, Frederick Co., VA.

BKM (Battle of Kings Mountain)

Christian Black,b. 04Nov1745--(?)

m. Christopher Acklin

Operated the Old Abingdon Tavern.

Martha Black, b. 31Jan174_ --(?)

m. John Cusick (1744-1816) BKM - Newell's Station, Fort Craig area pioneer.

Buried--Eusebia Cemetery Blount Co.

Joseph Black, 22Feb1747 (built Black's Fort, the first county seat of Washington Co., VA.)

d. 25Mar1825 Burial Eusebia as Joseph Black Sr.

m. Janet Vance (Janet, John, and Joseph among children of David Vance Sr.)

Elizabeth Black, 12Dec1747,

d: 29Dec1827 Paris, Edgar Co., IL

m William Blackburn 1769 BKM KIA

owned the Harrison Chilhowee Baptist Academy property

Samuel Newell, 04Nov1754 BKM

m. 30Sep1782 Raphine, VA, New Providence Church.

Jane Montgomery d/o John and Esther Houston Montgomery.

Jane's cousin Samuel Houston built the first school at Rockford, TN.

BKM wounded.

Built Newell's Station (Seymour, TN)

Served in 1st TN Assembly with Joseph Black

Sarah Newell, ? Jan1756, m. Joseph Vance, Sevier Co. magistrate.

Tallied Blount and Sevier County ballots at their home – 1798 election.