

# Gillespys in Walkill Precinct

## Ulster/Orange, New York

**1790-1800**

MA Schaefer

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## Introduction

Now that I've mapped the 1788 Gillespie properties<sup>1</sup> (Gillespie St. in Crawford and Little Britain), what comes next? Well, the 1790 census of Ulster/Orange counties has always bugged me because there were more James Gillespies enumerated in the area than we can account for.

- Montgomery: 2-0-4-0-0, next to Samuel Crawford, lots of Millspaugh, Robert Hunter; Wm Wallace on same sheet (supposedly 2 of them?)  
[discussed in *Gillespys on Hill Ave., Montgomery, NY 1790-1800*; MA Schaefer; 29 April 2020.
- New Windsor: 1-3-3-0-0  
[discussed in blog post, "*Stewart State Forest*," Gillespie Roots, MA Schaefer; 26 April 2020.

That leaves these locations where a James Gillespy was enumerated:

- Walkill: 1-1-2-0-0, next to Campbell & McVaughn
- NYC, South Ward: 1-0-1-0-0; near Jane Deacon, widow or MIL of George Gillespy

In this article, I would like to figure out the Walkill James, at least where he lived. Note that the only other Gillespy enumerated in Walkill in 1790 was David, the one who would soon after move to the bounty land (Marcellus, NY) of his brother, James, who died in 1780.

Note that any discussion about Gillespies in Walkill should include Neil Gillespie.<sup>2</sup> He died in 1769 and his farm in Walkill was subsequently sold, per his will. Unfortunately, the location of Neil's farm is still unknown. The Neil Gillespie family moved upstate in 1770, so I do not cover this branch of Gillespys further in this study of Gillespies in Walkill.

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1 [Welcome to Gillespie Street](#); The lands of James Gillespy in Pine Bush, Montgomery, Ulster, NY; MA Schaefer; 23 April 2020.

["Stewart State Forest"](#); Gillespie Roots Blog; MA Schaefer, 26 April 2020.

2 [Updated Case Studies of Gillespy/Gillespie Families in Early Ulster/Orange/Dutchess](#), NY; MA Schaefer; Revision 1; 3 April 2020, pp. 15-17.

## Locale & Maps

Walkill has many references in early Ulster/Orange, New York!

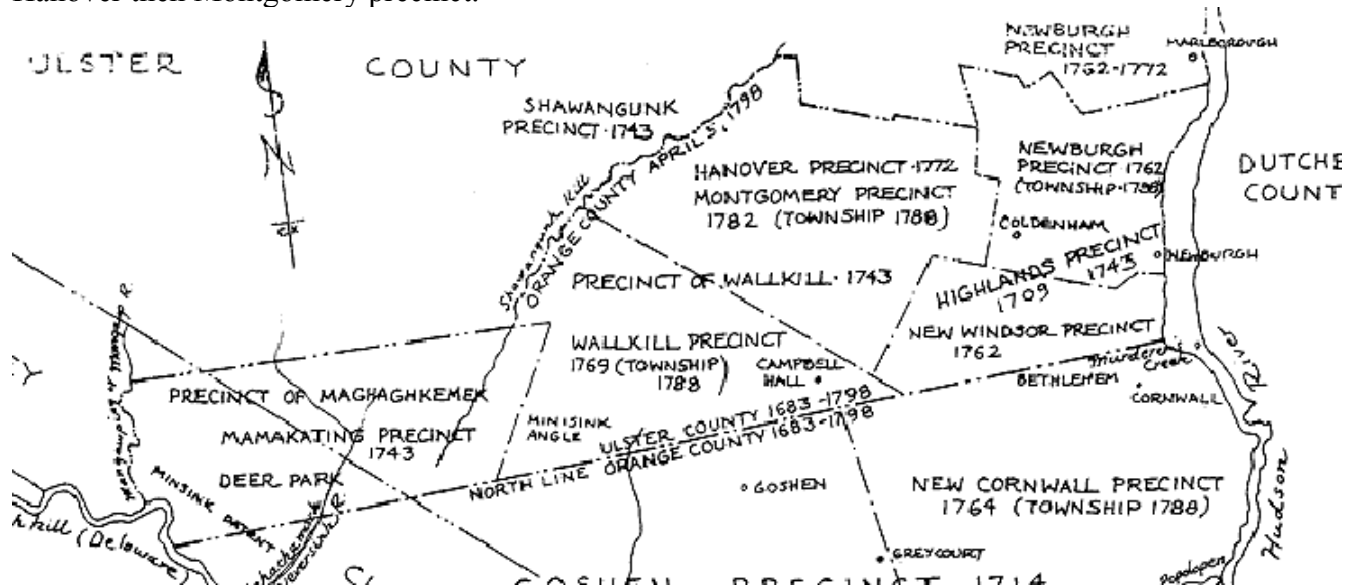
- It was a broad region west of the Hudson River. Refer to the [History of Orange County](#).
- It became the name of a river originally called the Paltz River.
- It was a precinct established in 1743, which bordered Shawangunk precinct on the north, ran from the Plattekill River to the Shawangunk River south along the Shawangunk mountains to the Orange county border. The precinct of Walkill became the [town of Walkill](#) in 1788.
- It was a village built around a bend in the Walkill River that was the site of mill and bridge called Ward's Bridge, today the city of Montgomery.
- It is today the name of a hamlet located in the town of Shawangunk in Ulster County.

The following map<sup>3</sup> shows the village of Walkill on the east side of the river:

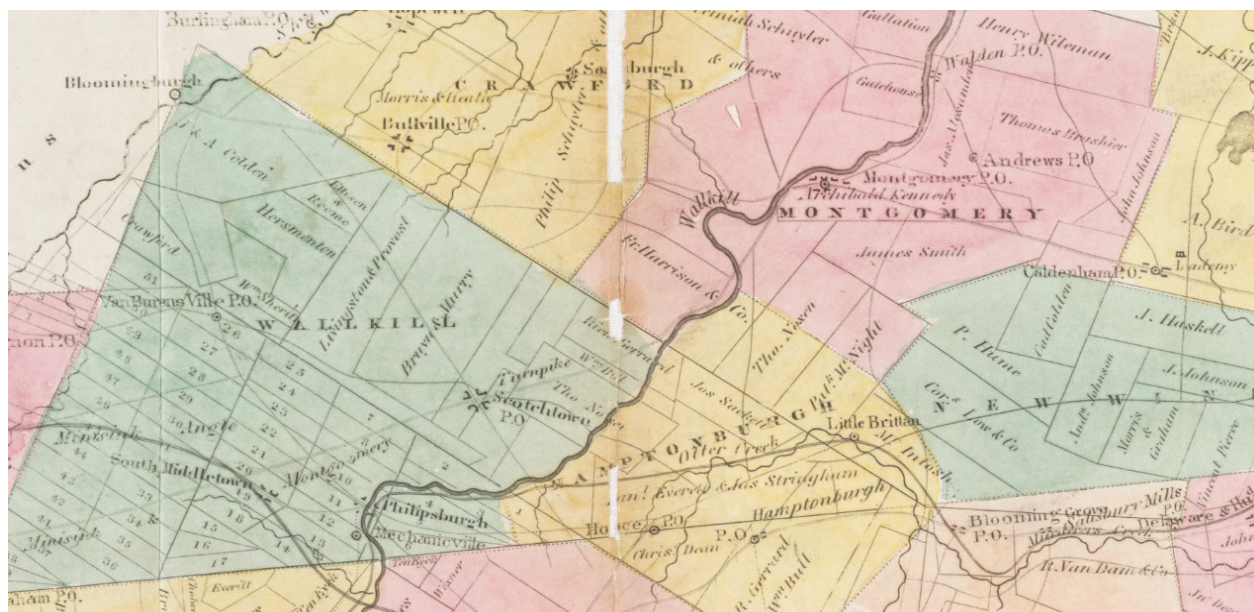


3 A chorographical map of the [Province of New-York in North America](#), divided into counties, manors, patents and townships; exhibiting likewise all the private grants of land made and located in that Province; Claude Joseph Sauthier & William Faden; London, England, 1779.

I have found this map very useful.<sup>4</sup> The original precinct of Walkill included what later became Hanover then Montgomery precinct.



Here is a patent map of Walkill.<sup>5</sup> It's a little confusing to look at because it shows Hamptonburgh which did not become a separate town until 1823.



4 [Maps of the Minisink Region](#); Minisink Valley Historical Society; access 5 May 2020.

5 [Map of the Counties of Orange and Rockland](#), David H. Burr and Simeon Dewitt, cartographers, created 1829, published 1839, New York Public Library Digital Collections

## Census

Now let's look at the [1790 census where James](#) Gillespie was enumerated in the township of Walkill (census taken January 1791):

John Head	1	2	2	.	.
150 John Smith	1	3	2	.	.
Henry Savage	3	4	1	.	1
William Falkner, the 2 <sup>d</sup>	2	3	3	.	.
Andrew McCord	1	2	6	.	1
Ebenezer Clarke	1	3	1	.	4
William Willson, the 2 <sup>d</sup>	2	.	4	.	.
Murtha Egan	3	1	4	.	.
Thomas Knight	1	2	3	.	.
Ebenezer Kelly	2	.	2	.	.
James Willson	3	.	2	.	4
160 Israel Rogers	4	1	3	.	.
Israel Coleman	1	1	3	.	.
Elisha Curwin, Sr	1	4	5	.	.
Dan Hillsbaugh	1	4	2	.	.
Job Robbins	1	2	2	.	.
Archibald Brown	1	5	4	.	.
John Brown	2	1	6	.	.
William Campbell	1	1	3	.	.
James Gillespie	1	1	2	.	.
Daniel McVaugh	3	3	3	.	.

Note all the Brown names enumerated very close to James. I have not yet been able to identify those Browns but the Brown surname has these connections to Gillespie:

- The first wife of James Gillespie who lived in Hurley/Rochester was Elizabeth Brown.
- A James Gillespie married the widow Mary Brown Bannerman. We are still trying to figure out his story.
- Ann Gillespie, 1787-1853, daughter of Matthew Gillespie and Jane Neely, married William Brown in 1807. The Brown's moved to Bethel, Sullivan, NY where Ann later became a widow. She married second, William Gillespie, 1778-1849, the son of the previously mentioned James Gillespie and Mary Brown Bannerman.

## Deeds

Next I started looking up Ulster County deeds for names that appear around James on the census. I started with Faulkner because I recognize his name from the militia records:

**GG-77** 400/682

10 June 1769

William Faulkner Jr, mason, from James Rogers & wf Rebecca, both of Ulster county

1. beg at a stake standing on the west side of the Walkill being the NE corner of Henry Savages land
2. thence NE along the said Kill as it runs to a stake standing on the bank of the said being the corner of the lands belonging to the heirs of Robt McCord dec
3. thence along their line NO 47 deg 15 min W, 56 ch 55 L to a white oak tree marked on three sides
4. then SO 62 deg 30 min W, 22 ch 35 L to a stake in the sd Savages land
5. thence SO 47 deg 15 min east, 59 ch 40 L to the place of beg
6. cont 110 ½ ac

Note that McCord is listed next to Faulkner in the census, so we must be in the ball park.

**GG 157** 441/682

William Falkner of Ulster from Thomas Noxon of NYC, schoolmaster

deed dated 17 Jun 1736 and recorded 1767 and 1771

in the pct of Sgk

1. beg on the western side of the Paltz River and on the side line of William Bull's land
2. thence running along his line NW 57 ch
3. thence SW 33 ch
4. thence SE 67 ch to Paltz River
5. thence down as the Palze River runs to the fxxx fxxx station
6. cont 200 ac

wits were John Hayward, Israel Rogers; memorandum on 18 Jun 1736 signed by Israel Rogers and John Wilkin

OK, now more clues –

- west side of the river
- Israel Rogers is on the census between Faulkner and Gillespy
- Wilkin is a name of interest!

This is the Grantor index from Ulster County deeds for Israel Rogers:

INDEX OF DEEDS, Ulster County, N. Y.							Liber	Page	
YEAR	AB CDE	FGH IJ	KL MNO	PQR ST	UVW XYZ	GRANTOR	GRANTEE		
1765		Israel				Rogers	James Rogers	37	289
"		"				"	William Wilkin	"	303
1766		"				"	James Rogers	"	369
1769		James				"	William Faulkner	93	77
1783		Israel				"	James Mc Cord	23	259
1768		James				"	Israel Rogers	"	309
1783				Robert		"	"	"	313
1775		Israel sr				"	"	"	315
1747		"				"	" jr	"	315
1792			Moses			"	Mary Barrett	22	519
1795		Jason		Susanna		"	Jason Rogers	22	528
1798	Annetie			Peter		"	John De Mint	mm	415
1806	Edward	Jacob	Nancy	Mary		Rogger	Joshua Du Bois	19	339

**FF-303** 200/682  
 4 Oct 1765  
Israel Rogers to William Wilkin

- land situate in Ulster county, bounded on the SO by lands of Thomas Bull and on W by the Walkill and on the E by the lands of Mr. Booth So far on the said Walkill & said Mr. Booth's land as to include 200 ac
- wits Phebe & Wm Denn

this land was on the east side of the Walkill

**GG-149** 437/682  
 28 Oct 1737  
Thomas Noxon of NYC distiller to John Wilkins of the Paltz River yeoman  
 letters patent 21 Dec 1727 to Thomas Noxon  
 land in Ulster county lying on both sides of the Paltz River  
 there being part of the lands formerly granted to Capt. John Evans thence vacated

- beg at the most southerly corner of 500 ac formerly granted to William Bull
- running thence along his line NW 244 ch
- thence SW 100 ch
- then SE 204 ch
- then NE 100 ch to the place of beg
- cont. 2000 ac (!)

Given all the names and property descriptions in these deeds, I think this is the general area where this James Gillespy of Walkill was living in 1790:



Notice that the patents of William Bull and Thomas Noxon cross the Walkill, and the patent of Stringham borders Walkill just east of Philippsburgh. Oh yes, and look how close Little Britain is....

## Discussion

It's hard to say with certainty, but given the placement of James Gillespie's name with others in the 1790 census, I think James was living somewhere between [Scotchtown](#) and the Paltz River. If he was enumerated in Walkill, he would have been on the west side of the river. A number of Browns were living just south of Scotchtown later in the 1800s.

Also I think we have to pay attention to the Wilkin connection remembering that we think Wilkin has some very early connection with Gillespies. In looking at the Wilkin deeds, I think John Wilkin was the original immigrant, and here is some of what I have found on his family group:

John Wilkin 1688-1783 + Elizabeth Crawford  
(these are just some of their children, those of interest at the moment)

- William Wilkin 1720-1787 + Elizabeth Rogers – she must have been connected to Israel Rogers in these deeds. Their son, William Wilkins Jr. married Susanna Crans and he died in Hamptonburgh, just across the river.



- James Wilkin 1723-1803 – this guy was of the town of Walkill when he wrote his will which was witnessed by **William Gillespie!** Supposedly James Wilkins' first wife was Anne Booth, a surname also mentioned in these deeds. I'm thinking this is probably the guy we see with James in the 1790 census.
- George Wilkin 1737-1778 – this was the guy who sold property to Capt. John Gillespy and then died in the war
- Capt. Jason Wilkin – we know that he served with the Gillespies
- Mary Wilkin – married **William Gillespie**
- Ann Wilkin – married Robert Graham

It's worth noting that I don't find any Gillespies enumerated in Walkill in 1800, but from 1810-1820 and again in 1850, Robert Gillespie, 1774-1857, was enumerated there. Robert Gillespie is one of our mystery Gillespies. He had married Lea Crans, a surname that was also tied to the Wilkins. Maybe Robert could use more research!

Finally, I haven't yet located the 1779 tax assessments for Walkill Precinct. Having them would be helpful to filling out this picture.