

Daves, John ^[1]

Share it now!



★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Average: 5 (1 vote)

Daves, John

by Gertrude S. Carraway, 1986

1748–12 Oct. 1804



Portrait of John Daves. Image from [Archive.org](#). ^[2]John Daves, Revolutionary War officer, was born in Virginia where his paternal ancestors had immigrated during the middle of the seventeenth century. When he was two years old, his family moved to New Bern. Residing there the rest of his life, he built—largely with his own hands—[an early frame house](#) ^[3] on lower George Street that has recently been restored. In its rear yard is a huge mulberry tree, thought to be one of a number planted by Baron [Christopher deGraffenried](#) ^[4], founder of New Bern in 1710, who reportedly imported silkworms and attempted to start a [silk](#) ^[5] industry.

As a soldier of the first Continental line troops, Daves was appointed quartermaster of the Second Regiment, aided in the repulse of Lord Dunmore in December 1775 at Norfolk, Va., and helped defeat the British the next June at Sullivan's Island. Commissioned an ensign 30 Sept. 1776, he was ordered to join General George Washington's forces, with which he served bravely at Brandywine, Germantown, Valley Forge, Eutaw Springs, and Monmouth. Following duty at Morristown and in the New York highlands, he was wounded in 1779 at Stony Point. In September 1781 he was promoted to captain.

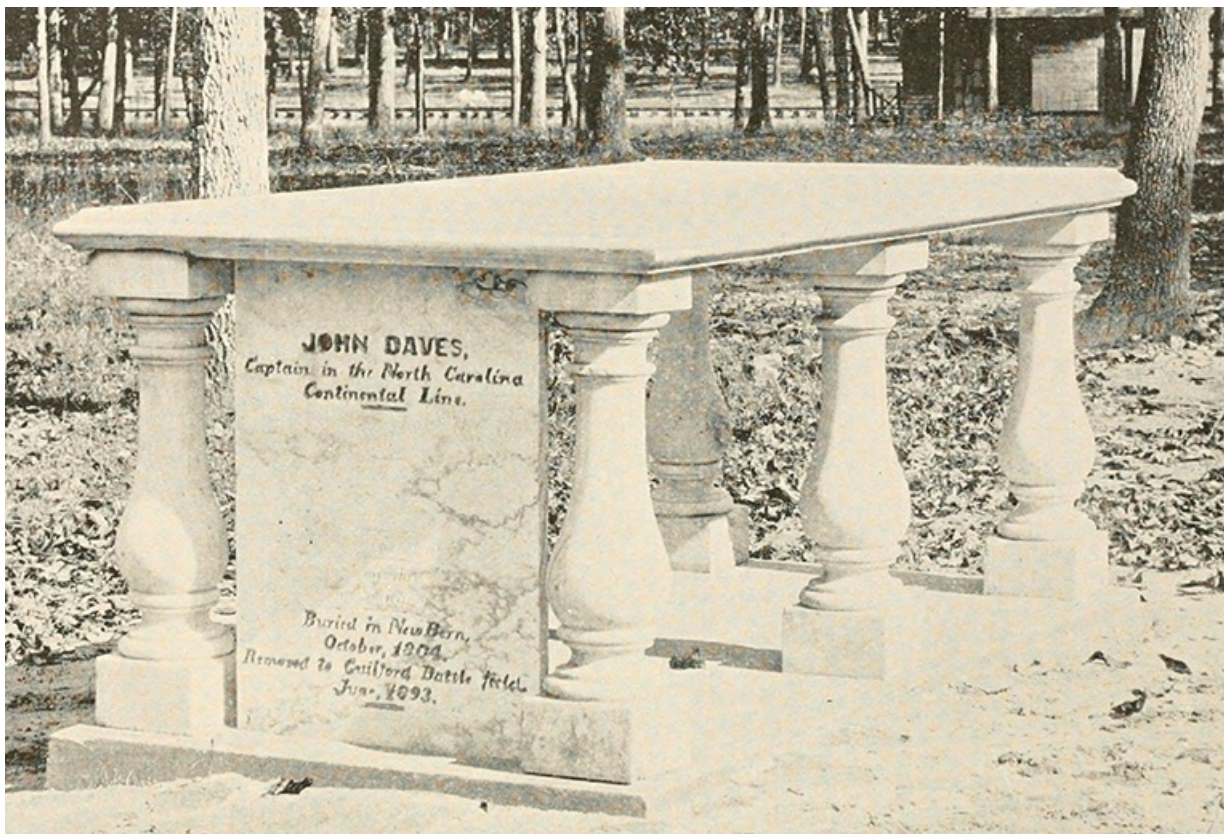
After the war Daves was a major of the North Carolina state troops. Aiding with the organization of the [North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati](#) ^[6], he was among its sixty original members. On 9 Feb. 1790 President Washington named him the first collector of customs at New Bern, where a customhouse had been opened in March. He became inspector of surveys and ports 6 Mar. 1792. Daves was a warden of Christ Episcopal Church. At his death he was buried with military and [Masonic](#) ^[7] honors in Cedar Grove Cemetery, New Bern. Still standing there is a tombstone listing his chief accomplishments. During June 1893 the casket was taken to a place of honor at [Guilford Court House National Military Park](#) ^[8].



Photograph of a portrait of Mary Haynes Long Davis. Image from the North Carolina Museum of History.

^[9]Major Daves was married twice. His first wife, Sally Bryan, died shortly, leaving an infant, Mary (1776–1840), who became the wife of James McKinlay (1751–1819), a native of Scotland and for forty years a New Bern merchant and banker. During April 1782 Daves married Mary Haynes Long Davis (1751–11 Apr. 1822), twice a widow previously. They had two daughters and two sons. Sally Eaton Daves wed, in New Bern, Morgan Jones of Maryland, but died 17 Feb. 1802 at the age of nineteen. Ann Rebecca Daves was married in New Bern to Josiah Collins ^[10] of Edenton in December 1803. Thomas Haynes Daves, who married Harriet Hatch on 11 Mar. 1812, was a Craven County ^[11] sheriff but moved in 1836 to Alabama where he died in 1839. John Pugh Daves (23 July 1789–21 Mar. 1838), the older son, was a planter. He married three times: on 4 Feb. 1813 to Mary Bryan Hatch, who died the next February; on 1 Feb. 1816 to Jane Reid Henry (1793–1827), sister of Louis D. Henry ^[12]; and on 14 Jan. 1830 to Elizabeth Batchelor Graham (3 Aug. 1804–9 May 1885), the daughter of Edward Graham ^[13] (18 Feb. 1764–22 Mar. 1833) and Elizabeth Batchelor (1772–26 Apr. 1850), who were married 16 June 1795 at New Bern.

John Pugh Daves and his wife Elizabeth were the parents of several distinguished children, including Edward Graham Daves (31 Mar. 1834–1 Aug. 1894); Major Graham Daves ^[14] (16 July 1836–27 Oct. 1902); and Mary McKinlay Daves (2 Jan. 1835–23 Jan. 1916), who, on 11 Aug. 1858 at Christ Episcopal Church in New Bern, became the second wife of Governor John Willis Ellis ^[15] and after his death married, on 15 Sept. 1866 at New Bern, Haines E. Nash of Petersburg, Va. When the Ladies' Memorial Association of New Bern was organized in 1866, Mrs. Nash and her mother were its first vice-president and president, respectively. The group erected and dedicated (11 May 1885) the tall Confederate monument in Cedar Grove Cemetery, New Bern. Mrs. Nash was from 1892 to 1896 the first appointed state regent of North Carolina, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, having joined the organization on the service of her grandfather, Captain Daves.



The grave of John Daves at the Guilford Court House National Park, 1893. Image from Archive.org.

[16]

References:

Samuel A. Ashe, ed., *Biographical History of North Carolina*, vol. 2 [17] (1905).

Christ Church Records (New Bern).

Craven County Records (North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh).

Tombstones, Cedar Grove Cemetery (New Bern).

Additional Resources:

Daves, Graham. *Captain John Daves of the North Carolina Line of the Continental Army* Baltimore: Press of the Friedenwald Company. 1892. <http://books.google.com/books?id=XoEvAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA1#v=onepage&q&f=false> [18] (accessed March 22, 2013).

"Major John Daves." *A memorial volume of the Guilford Battle Ground Company. Organized May 6, 1887, at Greensboro, N.C. It contains a brief history of the battle of Guilford Court House, an account of the organization and progress of the Guildford Battle Ground Company, biographical sketches, and a full account of the Holt monument and its dedication, July the 4th, 1893.* Greensboro, N.C., Reece & Elam, printers. 1893. 6-11.

<https://archive.org/stream/memorialvolumeof00guil#page/6/mode/2up> [2] (accessed March 22, 2013).

"List of Classified Structures: Maj. John Daves Monument." National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. <http://www.hscl.cr.nps.gov/insidenps/report.asp?STATE=NC&PARK=GUCO&STRUCTURE=&SORT=&RECORDNO=4> [19] (accessed March 22, 2013).

"Some Colonial Families: Daves of North Carolina." *The American Historical Register* (April 1895) 779-793.

http://books.google.com/books?id=fQQ7AQAAIAAJ&lpg=PA779&ots=ahp_bKkKnK&pg=PA779#v=onepage&q&f=true [20]

Image Credits:

"John Daves." *A memorial volume of the Guilford Battle Ground Company. Organized May 6, 1887, at Greensboro, N.C. It contains a brief history of the battle of Guilford Court House, an account of the organization and progress of the Guildford Battle Ground Company, biographical sketches, and a full account of the Holt monument and its dedication, July the 4th, 1893.* Greensboro, N.C., Reece & Elam, printers. 1893. 7.

<https://archive.org/stream/memorialvolumeof00guil#page/6/mode/2up> [2] (accessed March 22, 2013).

Lothrop's Studio. "Photograph, Accession #: H.1952.61.7 [9]." 1890-1910. North Carolina Museum of History.

"Monument of Major John Daves." *A memorial volume of the Guilford Battle Ground Company. Organized May 6, 1887, at Greensboro, N.C. It contains a brief history of the battle of Guilford Court House, an account of the organization and*

progress of the Guildford Battle Ground Company, biographical sketches, and a full account of the Holt monument and its dedication, July the 4th, 1893. Greensboro, N.C., Reece & Elam, printers. 1893. 11.
<https://archive.org/stream/memorialvolumeof00guil#page/6/mode/2up> [2] (accessed March 22, 2013).

Subjects:

[American Revolution \(1763-1789\)](#) [21]

[Biography](#) [22]

[Military personnel](#) [23]

[Public officials](#) [24]

[UNC Press](#) [25]

Authors:

[Carraway, Gertrude S.](#) [26]

Origin - location:

[New Bern](#) [27]

From:

[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press](#) [28]

1 January 1986 | Carraway, Gertrude S.

Source URL: <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/daves-john>

Links

[1] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/daves-john>

[2] <https://archive.org/stream/memorialvolumeof00guil#page/6/mode/2up>

[3] http://www.visitnewbern.com/pdfs/revolutionary_war_tour.pdf

[4] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/graffenried-christoph>

[5] <https://www.ncpedia.org/silk>

[6] <https://www.ncpedia.org/society-cincinnati>

[7] <https://www.ncpedia.org/freemasons>

[8] <https://www.nps.gov/guco/index.htm>

[9] <http://collections.ncdcr.gov/RediscoveryProficioPublicSearch/ShowItem.aspx?25933+>

[10] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/collins-josiah-sr>

[11] <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/craven>

[12] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/henry-louis-debonair>

[13] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/graham-edward-kidder>

[14] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/daves-graham>

[15] <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/ellis-john-willis>

[16] <https://archive.org/stream/memorialvolumeof00guil#page/10/mode/2up>

[17] <https://archive.org/stream/cu31924092215445#page/n119/mode/2up>

[18] <http://books.google.com/books?id=XoEvAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA1#v=onepage&q&f=false>

[19] <http://www.hscl.cr.nps.gov/insidenps/report.asp?STATE=NC&PARK=GUCO&STRUCTURE=&SORT=&RECORDNO=4>

[20] http://books.google.com/books?id=fQQ7AQAAIAAJ&pg=PA779&ots=ahp_bKkKnK&pg=PA779#v=onepage&q&f=true

[21] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/us-revolution>

[22] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/biography-term>

[23] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/soldiers>

[24] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/public-officials>

[25] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/subjects/unc-press>

[26] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/authors/carraway-gertrude>

[27] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-41>

[28] <https://www.ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/dictionary-no>