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Ancestry.com. *Pennsylvania Women in the Revolutionary War* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: The Generations Network, Inc., 1997. Original data:

Egle, William Henry. *Some Pennsylvania Women during the War of the Revolution*. Harrisburg, PA, USA: Harrisburg Publishing Co., 1898.

About Pennsylvania Women in the Revolutionary War

Often the most prominent heroes of the Revolutionary War are men such as George Washington or Thomas Paine. However, this is to overlook the women who also played a role in the founding of the United States. This database contains biographical sketches of many women from Pennsylvania who aided the Revolutionary cause, especially in the early years of the war. Names of husbands and children are included in these biographies and often parents and grandparents, as well as places of birth and residence. In a few cases more detailed genealogies are also a part of the entry.

[p.157] Elizabeth Potter, only child of James Potter by his first wife, Elizabeth Cathcart, was born October 17, 1755, in An-trim township, Cumberland county. Her father was an officer in the French and Indian war, was under Colonel Armstrong at the destruction of the Kittanning, and during the War of the Revolution early enlisted in its cause. The services of General Potter in the Pennsylvania campaign of 1777 were very distinguished, and in the spring of 1778 Washington wrote from Valley Forge that "if the state of General Potter's affairs will admit of his return to the army, I shall be exceedingly glad to see him, as his activity and vigilance have been very much wanted during the winter." The opportunity for female education being very limited in those early days, Elizabeth Potter of course enjoyed very few advantages. She was not fond of study, but dreaded being thought ignorant. She read all the books that came in her way, and thus acquired much miscellaneous knowledge. She had a very quick perception and intuitive comprehension of all that was said around her by wiser heads, and had great tact and ready adaptation to persons and circumstances. She was peculiarly an intelligent listener, and often created astonishment by the readiness with which she seized upon an idea. All this, joined to a retentive memory and great fluency and even elegance of speech, made her one of the most brilliant conversationalists of her day.

On the eve of the Revolution Elizabeth Potter married James Poe. He was among the first to volunteer in the [p.158] cause of freedom, and, far from holding him

back or lamenting over his determination, his young and spirited wife did her best to encourage and, to help him. The services of her husband were chiefly on the frontiers and on several occasions when it was necessary for the Rangers to go into camp for the winter, Mrs. Poe always rejoined her husband, enduring very cheerfully the narrow quarters and camp fare. Her courage and her spirits, however, never failed her, and in the cold and comfortless camp, as in her happy home at Antrim, she made sunshine for all around. Of her services and of her self-denials during the War of the Revolution, they were in common with the settlers on the frontiers, ministering to the comfort of those who were struggling for their country's independence. Her after life was one chiefly of struggle and sorrow, for it was during the second war for independence that her well-beloved son, Adjutant Thomas Poe, fell at the battle of Chippewa, on the 6th of July, 1814. Mrs. Poe died on the 11th of September, 1819, and was buried at Brown's Mill graveyard. James Poe, son of Thomas Poe, was born in what is now Antrim township, Franklin county, Pennsylvania, April 15, 1748. He was brought up on his father's farm as was most of the sons of the pioneers, and found it necessary to earn his bread "by the sweat of his brow." As early as the 26th of July, 1764, although but a lad of sixteen years, he formed one of a party of settlers who, under the command of Lieutenant James Potter, pursued the savages who had massacred the schoolmaster and scholars at Guitner's school house. When the war for independence became an established fact, James Poe was among the first to offer his services to his country. He assisted in the organization of a company of associators in 1776, of which he was a lieutenant. He was commissioned July 31, 1777, captain of the [p.159] Third Company, Eighth Battalion, Cumberland County militia, commanded by Colonel Abraham Smith. He held the same position in May, 1778, and from that on until the close of the Revolutionary struggle he was in active service, especially on the frontiers. At the close of the war Captain Poe returned to his farm in Antrim. His military services were, however, supplemented in after life by important business of a civil character. On the 22d of October, 1783, Mr. Poe was appointed by the State authorities Commissioner of Taxes for Cumberland county. Upon the formation of the new county of Franklin, he was chosen its first county commissioner, and served in that capacity from 1785 to 1787. In 1797 he was once more chosen for a term of three years. In

1796 he was elected a member of the Assembly, and served in that body again from 1800 to 1803. Under the act of March 21, 1808, Franklin county was made an independent Senatorial district, and Captain Poe was chosen the first Senator under that apportionment, serving in the Senate from December, 1811, to December, 1819. With the close of his last Senatorial term he retired from public service. He died at his farm on the 22d of June, 1827, surviving his admirable wife but three years, and was buried by her side in Brown's Mill graveyard, and a broad stone slab bears the following inscription:

Sacred
to the Memory of
JAMES POE, Esquire,
Patriot of the Revolution of 1776,
a sincere friend and honest man
and
a professor of the Christian Religion,
who departed +this life June 22d, 1822,
aged 74 years. [p.160]