



Irish NICHOLL Roots - Family Histories



Josiah Nichol of Tennessee

[Margaret Nolen Nichol](#) has provided both biographical information, and the Will of, Josiah Nichol of Tennessee who originated from Donegal. Josiah was the great, great grandfather of her husband, Harry Hite Nichol.

After "A Brief Sketch of Josiah Nichol", [his Will](#) is presented in detail, below.

A Brief Sketch of Josiah Nichol

Information on "A Brief Sketch of Josiah Nichol" was obtained from newspaper clippings in the possession of the writer; deed book of Davidson County, Tennessee; and, Nichol family Bible plus records from many years research of this family.

Josiah Nichol, early merchant of Nashville, Tennessee, was born in Fahan Parish, Donegal, Ireland, 17 Mar 1772. A copy of the Nichol family Bible, verifying his birthplace and date, is now in the Tennessee State Archives. He migrated to America, c1790, with his father, John Nichol, and younger brother, John Nichol, Jr. By 1796, Josiah Nichol and John Nichol, Jr., were in Washington County, Virginia where Josiah Nichol became associated with William King in the mining of salt at Saltville, Virginia.

He married Eleanor Ryburn, daughter of Matthew and Jane Beattie Ryburn, 19 Apr 1797.

On 14 Jan 1799, Josiah Nichol bought a 1/4 acre lot in Knoxville, Tennessee, and shortly after that, purchased another lot in the city. In 1800, he moved his family to Knoxville, and began buying lots and opened a store at the corner of Market (later Gay) and Fourth (later Cumberland) where he opened his store and established his dwelling, also. He became continued his association with William King and became partners with his brother, John in a store in Maryville; and a cousin, Charles McAlister, in Kingston.

Josiah Nichol remained in Knoxville where he took an active role in the governmental and civic affairs until 1809 when he advertised his store and other land holdings and moved to Nashville, Tennessee. He purchased the entire block between Cherry and Summer streets, now Fourth and Fifth streets and, on the corner of Cherry street and Union Alley, built his home. He and his wife, Eleanor, lived in the house until their deaths.

Located in the central part of the city, the house was built along the lines followed by the early architecture of Nashville. The front wall was placed close to the street, with the spacious lawn and flower garden in the rear of the building. The Nichol home was to be a center of social activity and many famous people of the times were entertained beneath its roof. Andrew Jackson had his office nearby, and some of the most intelligent men of the south, discussed politics, the most important question of that time, in the Nichol home. One of the most interesting duels, of the period, was fought in front of the house on Cherry street, by a man named Marlin, Editor of the xxxxx(?) resulting from political differences.

When John Nichol followed his brother to Nashville in 1812, he bought property on the corner of Union and Summers streets and build his home there.

Josiah Nichols store was said to have been on the south side of the square. He was to form partnerships and open stores in many of the county seats of surrounding counties.

The Nichols became active in the affairs of the city, and, June 24, 1812, Josiah Nichol became a charter member of Masonic Cumberland Lodge, No. 60 at its institution. On a Monday morning, November 14, 1814, Eleanor Ryburn Nichol joined six other ladies, and one man, along with two ministers, in a meeting to organize a Presbyterian church. Rev. Thomas B. Craighead, and Rev William Hume, with Mr. Robert Smiley were the gentlemen and the ladies were Mrs. Andrew Ewing, Mrs. Frank McNairy, Mrs. Thomas Talbot, and daughter, Mrs. Elihu S. Hall, Mrs. Josiah Nichol, and Mrs. Patton Anderson.

It was said that these charter members of the First Presbyterian Church (later Downtown Presbyterian) were to be the guiding spirit of determination their way to New Orleans to join General Jackson, and fight the Battle of New Orleans.

One of those soldiers was Captain Robert Armstrong, who was to elope with the Nichols' oldest daughter, Margaret, to the Hermitage, home of Andrew and Rachel Jackson, June 9, 1814. In a letter to the Nichols, Andrew Jackson sent the following message: "I have the pleasure to inform you that Captain Armstrong and his lady is now with me, united in the holy bonds of matrimony.

I hear that this union did not meet with approbation. I have been acquainted with Captain Armstrong since his childhood, so have you! Is there a blemish in his character? He is honest, he is brave, he is enterprising and without a cent of property, he is worthy of any lady, of any family, of any fortune. Be good enough to present my respects, and that of Mrs. Jackson, to Mrs. Nichol, and assure her, until her daughter meets with a full forgiveness from her, she will find in Mrs. Jackson the tender care of a mother, and both, with find in me the care of a father. On Friday, I am to have my friends with me to partake of a dinner, will you, and your lady, do Mrs. Jackson, And myself, the pleasure of dining with me. "

Captain Armstrong was the artillery Lieutenant at Enotalchopco who distinguished himself in that Battle. He was later to have a very distinguished career.

In 1820, Josiah Nichol was president of the Nashville Bridge Company, and in the National Banner and Whigs, March 15th issue, announced that the third installment of \$5 on each share of the capital stock of said bridge, be, and the same is hereby required to be paid, unto John Shelby, treasurer, on or before, the tenth day of April next ensuing.

In 1827, Nicholas Biddle, president of the Bank of the United States, sent his confidential man, Thomas Cadwalader, to Nashville to supervise the establishment of a branch of the bank in that city. Nicholas Biddle appointed W. B. Lewis, and George Washington Campbell as directors of the branch. The presidency was conferred on Josiah Nichol. Josiah Nichol was in charge of President Andrew Jackson's financial affairs while he was in Washington.

When Andrew Jackson ran for President, in 1828, against John Quincy Adams, a feud was rekindled from the 1824-25 election campaign when President Adams, had combined forces with Henry Clay of Kentucky. Henry Clay is said to have been the instigator in uncovering the information that was made available to the press on the questionable early marriage of Andrew Jackson and Rachel Donelson Robards.

During the height of the controversy, William B. Lewis signed a call for a mass meeting at the Davidson County Courthouse at which, after animated and eloquent oratory, a committee was named to detect and arrest falsehood and calumny. A preponderance of the wealth and

prestige of the Nashville district was embodied in the eighteen men not all unwavering admirers of Old Hickory, who served, thereon. Josiah Nichol was a member of the committee.

The matter of the controversy between Andrew Jackson and the Bank of the United States is a matter of record, and the issue had not been settled when Josiah Nichol died, 31 Jan 1833, during the Cholera epidemics that fell upon the citizens of Nashville.

The following **obituary** appeared in the National Banner & Nashville Whig Daily Adventure, 1 Jun 1833:

Josiah Nichol, Esq., President of the Nashville Branch of the United States Bank died in Nashville of Cholera on Fri. May 12th. Josh Nichol was buried in the Old City Cemetery in Nashville.

THE WILL OF JOSIAH NICHOL

(Wills and Inventories, 1802 -1836, Davidson, Tennessee)

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Recorded 5 Aug 1833

In the name of God Amen. I, Josiah Nichol of the town of Nashville, being in perfect health and sound mind, and as life is uncertain and no man knows how long he has to stay in this earth, it therefore, becomes necessary to be prepared in our worldly matters, at least, for that event, and as the great giver of all things has blessed me with this worlds goods, it is my duty and wish that they should be disposed of in the manner following, and for that purpose I do make and ordain this my last will and testament revoking all others.

Item 1st: I give and bequeath to my daughter, Margaret D. Armstrong, the sum of fifteen hundred dollars.

Item 2nd: I give to my son, William Nichol, the sum of five hundred dollars.

Item 3: I give to my granddaughter, Eleanor Armstrong, sixteen hundred and fifty dollars, and my Negro girl, Mary, now living at R. Armstrongs .. hold bill of sale.

Item 4th: I give to my nephew, Josiah Nichol, son of John Nichol, five hundred dollars.

Item 6: I give to my nephew, (should be grandson), Josiah W. Armstrong, one half of my ware house now occupied by Nichol, Hill and Co. and one thousand dollars, which will be valued for eight thousand five hundred dollars.

Item 8th: I give to my son, Charles M. Nichol, one third part of the profits of the Business carried on for two years past by J. N. & Son suppose to be at least four thousand dollars, and an additional sum of eight thousand dollars, in all twelve thousand dollars.

Item 9th: I give to my daughter, Eleanor Nichol, the house and lot now occupied by Benj.. W. Bedford valued at nine thousand five hundred dollars, and seven thousand five hundred dollars in cash, and my Negro woman, Hetty, and her daughter, Milly, and their increase.

Item 10th; I give to my son, Josiah Nichol, my corner store house now occupied by J. Nichol and Son with all appurtenances thereunto belonging, valued at fifteen thousand dollars and

eight thousand in cash, in all about twenty three thousand dollars.

Item 11th: I give to my son Alexander R. Nichol, the remaining one half of my warehouse on Market street now occupied by Nichol, Hill, & Co., so that the property of said warehouse and premises be equal between Josiah N. Armstrong and the above--A.R.N., said one half valued at seven thousand five hundred dollars, and cash of twelve thousand five hundred dollars, in all twenty thousand dollars.

Item 12th: To my daughter, Jane M. Nichol, I give 80 feet of my lot No. 64, adjoining James Nichols lot, including the white house where Capt. A. Kingsley now living, valued at Seven thousand five hundred dollars and nine thousand five hundred dollars in cash, in all seventeen thousand dollars.

Item 13th: to my daughter, Mary Ann Henreitta Nichol, I give 80 feet (or whatever is left after taking off James's part) of my lot No. 64, beginning at James's corner and running southwesterly to Doctor. McNeils corner valued at five thousand dollars, and twelve thousand dollars cash, in all seventeen thousand dollars.

Item 14th: I give to my nephew, William N. Nichol, two thousand dollars.

Item 15th: I leaveto my loving wife, Eleanor Nichol, all the residue of my estate not already disposed of viz, the dwelling house and lot No. 63, valued at eighteen thousand dollars, the lot I purchased of John Bell used as a calf lot, the pasture lot Bilchop survey, both valued at seven thousand dollars, my bridge stock, fifteen thousand dollars, tavern stock, nominal one thousand dollars, \$450 paid, road stock nominal \$700 with my Negroes Sophy, Minta, George, Dan, Ned, Young Comfort, and Minta=E2=80=99s child--all my household furniture, carriage, horses, cart, dray, provisions, etc., valued at about eight thousand five hundred dollars (\$8,500 and the balance of my estate worth at least fifteen thousand eight hundred dollars--in all supposed worth forty nine thousand three hundred and forty five dollars--my Negro woman, Comfort, I wish my wife to set free and support her comfortably free of charge as long as she may live. The above property I wish my wife to use during her natural life as a genteel support and for purposes of charity and at her death, I wish all the property she may die possessed of valued real and personal, and preference to be given to all the said value to my children to become the purchasers Always giving the first offer to the oldest, and so to the youngest, and proceeds To be equally divided between my living children viz. Margaret D. Armstrong. Wm. Nichol, James Nichol, Charles M. Nichol, Eleanor Nichol, Josiah Nichol, Alexander R. Nichol, Jane R. Nichol, Mary Ann Henrietta Nichol.

My debts if any let them all prompt paid out of my wifes property. And for the purpose of carrying the aforesaid Will into effect, I now appoint my two sons, William and James Nichol, my Executors, and my wife, Eleanor Nichol, Executrix, of my last will and testament, and guardians of my children under age to act jointly in all cases, and he the purpose of their acting harmoniously together, as I have no doubt, there is no security, to be required of any of them. My executors will see from the foregoing that Charles M. Nichol is to have one third part of the profits of the houses of Josiah Nichol & Son and Chas. M. & J. N. J .--- et these houses be settled as soon as convenient --- to debts collected and paid off as soon as possible. And if my wife chooses to continue the business as partner she may do so, this at her own option. If my daughter, Eleanor, choses to live with James Nichol she may do so, he the said James taking into his hands her house and lot, and seeing that its properly taken care of, and also her money, and support his said sister, Eleanor, in a rank suitable to her standing for her rents and the interests of her money. My sons, Josiah and Alexander -- wish is that their part of my estate may be collected and then put into business under the immediate inspection of my Executors I might proceed and enlarge on instruction to my executors, but I know that its unnecessary as every thing will be done honestly and with good faith. In witness thereof, I

have herunto set my hand and seal his 30 Mar 1831.

Attested: Pleasant Smith
Josiah Nichol (seal)

Received Nashville 3rd September 1815 of Josiah Nichol ten thousand five hundred dollars, which sum is in full for my wife, Margaret Dysart Armstrongs, part of her father, Josiah Nichols, estate. This receipt is to be a bar to all and every claim, that me or my wife, or any other person may have or set up., to the said estate, as the above sum of ten thousand five hundred dollar is my full and sufficient share. Witness my hand and seal and the day and year above written.

Attest: David Irwin,
Lewis W. Jordon
R. Armstrong (seal)

In addition to the above I have given funds to Mr. Armstrong to purchase a small lot say about \$999 which he held 23rd Jany 1823.

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