

Biography of Andrew J. Zellner

Contributed by Tommy Thompson III and Charles Thompson

Two dates of birth have been suggested for Andrew Zellner, son of George Peter Zellner and Mary Capehart. His tombstone reads 7 Sept 1800 but the date 24 Sept 1798 has been given on various records. It is noted that one of his sons, also named Andrew, was born on 24 Sept., so perhaps this is the reason for the confusion. Bertie County, NC., is believed to be the place of birth. Whether or not he was a twin to Sarah is also cause for debate.

On 7 Jun 1819, (in Wilkes Co., GA), Andrew was married to Rebecca Holmes, sister to Margaret Holmes who married Andrew's brother Arnold. Rebecca was the daughter of Benjamin Holmes (1758-1816) and Mary Hughes (1765-1819). Rebecca was born on 27 Aug 1803, in Wilkes Co., GA

According to an article in "The Gospel Messenger" (1892) written by their oldest son, B.H. Zellner, "Andrew and Rebecca both joined the Baptist Church at Greenwood, Columbia Co., GA, soon after their marriage and were baptized by their pastor, Elder Armstrong."

"In 1824, they moved with their three children from Lincoln Co., to Monroe Co., GA, where they lived to raise five sons and 2 daughters. Their further descendants now number about 53 grandchildren, 127 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great grandchildren, most of whom now live in said county of Monroe..."

"Andrew Zellner was a prominent and consistent member of 70 years, and over 60 years as a deacon. He was in the organization of Sharon Church, Monroe Co., GA, about the year 1827 and about 10 years later, having moved to the vicinity of Forsyth, was in the organization of Smyrna Church, of which he remained a member until his death.

He was a successful farmer and provided well, even bountifully, for a large family and other dependents. Modest and unassuming, his influence and teachings were mainly from example. In relation to ways and means and duties pertaining to time and this life only, he was ever ready to reason, consult and be instructed. But his religious convictions having been the result of long and close reading and studying of scriptures, and as he believed revelation by the Holy Ghost he would listen to no manipulation or compromise of the cardinal doctrines of the New Testament as taught by Christ, the Apostles and evangelists.

Of human depravity and helplessness, his experience ruled out all doubt. Of salvation by grace, through faith, and that of the Lord, he had not a doubt. Even in the last hours of his greatly prolonged life his cry was "Jesus, Jesus,

Jesus, my all in all !! Lord, thou hast promised and I believe ! My unworthiness cannot hinder ! Great is Jehovah; blessed be the name of the Lord !" Although his last illness was severe and greatly prolonged and his mind, at times much confused, he never, for a moment, wavered in his entire reliance on Jesus, and Him alone for salvation. Finally, without the slightest movement, or twitching of muscle, he ceased breathing and was no more."

In all, ten children were born to Andrew and Rebecca. The three oldest sons, Benjamin Holmes, Francis Arnold and Thomas were born in Lincoln Co., GA., the remaining children in Monroe Co., GA. Two children died young; Thomas at age 13 and Matilda at age 5 months. All surviving children married and raised families in Monroe County.

Andrew died in Monroe Co., on 18 July 1892 at age 94 and his wife preceeded him on 27 Apr 1875 at age 72. Their descendants number in the thousands today.