

**Records of a DAR Applicant:  
Bryson, Palmer, Stephens, Russell, and Sullivan Families**

*Karen Wood*

Housed at the William H. Smith Memorial Library at the Indiana Historical Society are transcribed copies of letters from Major John J. Palmer of Chicago, Illinois, to his grandniece Annie Russell Sullivan of Indianapolis, Indiana, dated May 27, 1894, and June 9, 1894, and Sullivan's application to the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).<sup>1</sup>

Annie Russell Sullivan was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1858.<sup>2</sup> Her application was approved on October 2, 1894, by the Caroline Scott Harrison chapter of Indianapolis and accepted by the DAR's national board of management on October 4, 1894.

**Lineage**

James Noble Bryson born June 17, 1744, died November 20, 1813.

Mary Miller born March 20, 1742, died December 31, 1799.

Married in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on November 10, 1774.

Sarah Bryson, daughter of James and Mary (Miller) Bryson, born December 5, 1782, died November 7, 1860.

James Washington Bryson, son of James and Mary (Miller) Bryson, died December 16, 1818.

Thomas Palmer born April 10, 1776, died August 14, 1846.

Ann Dagnea Palmer, daughter of Thomas and Sarah (Bryson) Palmer, born January 17, 1809, died October 17, 1856.

Charles Stephens born August 15, 1803, died February 21, 1855.

Isabella Stephens, daughter of Charles and Ann Dagnea (Palmer) Stephens, born April 9, 1831, died December 17, 1866.

James Noble Russell born August 8, 1829, died October 28, 1869.

Annie (Russell) Sullivan, daughter of James and Isabella (Stephens) Russell.

James Noble Bryson was the ancestor who assisted in the American Revolution. He acted as assistant postmaster general under Benjamin Franklin and a member of the militia at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Bryson was of Scots-Irish descent, his father coming from Belfast to Philadelphia. Mary Miller Bryson was descended from a German nobleman who held the title “Master of Hounds” to the grand duke of Württemberg. She was buried in the Christ Church burial ground in Philadelphia. James Bryson died at the fort at Newport, Kentucky, where his son James Washington Bryson was quartermaster during the War of 1812. They are buried next to each other.<sup>3</sup>

When her mother died, seventeen-year-old Sarah Miller Bryson moved in with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bache. James and Mary had named their daughter after Sarah (Franklin) Bache, the daughter of Benjamin Franklin. Sarah Bryson stayed with the Baches until she wed Thomas Palmer.

In 1813 Sarah and Thomas Palmer moved with their five children from Philadelphia to Cincinnati, Ohio, where Thomas founded, edited, and published the *Cincinnati Gazette*. In 1825 they moved to New Harmony, Indiana, and on August 15, 1828, their daughter Ann married Charles Stephens, who had immigrated to the United States from Edinburgh, Scotland, with social reformer Robert Owen.

## Notes

1. Annie Russell Sullivan Family Papers, 1894 (SC 1893), Indiana Historical Society.
2. 1900 U.S. census, Marion County, Indiana, Indianapolis, ward 6, enumeration district 85, page 3A, dwelling 45, family 53, George R. Sullivan household, NARA microfilm number T623, roll 388.
3. Calendar, William Henry Harrison Papers and Documents, 1791–1864 (M 0364, OM 0034), Indiana Historical Society. Available online at <http://www.indianahistory.org/>.

[Online Connections](#)

[Family Records](#)