

## Gill (1787)

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Descendants of John Gill (1748-1822) John Gill, the fourth of nine children, was born in County Down, Ireland in 1748. A veteran of the Revolutionary War, he married Jane Shaw (1749-1841) in 1768, and the couple began their family in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. In the late 1780s, the Gills moved west to buy a 100 acre farm in Plum Township (later Patton Township; today's Monroeville). John and Jane are buried in Monroeville's Cross Roads Cemetery. The couple had nine children (Sarah, Elizabeth, Ebenezer, Jonathon, Isaac, Samuel, Jane, Rebecca and John). The Gills were a devout frontier family, who were very active in the Presbyterian Church. In 1810, John was selected as ruling elder of the Thompson Run Society of the Greensburg Reformed Presbyterian Church. His son, Ebenezer, was also elected as a church elder, and another son, Jonathan (1777-1846), would go on to graduate from Jefferson College, before pursuing theological studies in Philadelphia to become a minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America. Times were hard for the struggling student, and in 1812 Jonathan was to write a letter home telling his parents of his dire financial straits. I am sinking in debt and have no prospect of making anything to relieve myself. I continue to teach a gentleman's sons the Greek and Latin languages, for which, I receive one hundred dollars per year, but this is far from being sufficient to meet my demands. Teaching is out of the question here, for the teachers are almost equal to the scholars&hellip; &hellip;let me know how you stand affected in the country, respecting this great war that is about to take place. They are beginning to enlist men here. The embargo has put an effectual stop to all trading&hellip;a great number of those who are out of employment will join the navy. Happily, Jonathan Gill was able to stay in Philadelphia and complete his studies for the ministry. He graduated, and married Rachel Moore Steen of Philadelphia in 1815. Jonathan Gill went on to serve as pastor for various congregations before, in 1836, becoming a professor of languages at the Western University of Pennsylvania (today's University of Pittsburgh). Subsequently, he moved back to Patton Township where he established the Tranquil Retreat Academy, the first school in Patton Township. The most famous student at Mr. Gill's academy would be Judge Thomas Mellon, the well-known banker and financier. (The Mellons lived near the academy on land that would be later sold to Samuel King Beatty to become Monroeville's Beatty farm). Jonathan Gill was a respected preacher, scholar and educator. He died of pneumonia in 1846.

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Sources: 19th Century Genealogical and personal histories of the Greater Monroeville area, unpublished paper. Paul Damon, 1986, Archives of the Monroeville Historical Society  
Thomas Mellon and His Times. Thomas Mellon, 1994, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.  
Letter from Jonathan Gill to his parents. Philadelphia, 1812, courtesy Barbara Hazzard.