

Ann Robertson Cockrill  
February 10, 1757 – October 13, 1821  
John Cockrill  
December 19, 1757 – April 11, 1837

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John Cockrill was born near Winchester, Virginia on December 19, 1757. In 1779, he joined James Robertson and a band of adventuresome men on the 400 mile overland trip from Watauga to French Lick (now Nashville) arriving on Christmas Day 1779. These pioneers were determined to build a community on the western frontier.

Ann Robertson was born on February 10, 1757, in Wake County, North Carolina, the daughter of John Randolph and Mary Gower Robertson.

Ann's husband David Johnson/Johnston died in 1777 in the Watauga Settlement. In the fall of 1779, she joined the pioneers headed west. About 120 women and children plus 35 men, under the leadership of Col. John Donelson, left Watauga on flatboats to travel by river to French Lick. After a long and harrowing journey they reached French Lick on April 24, 1780. The boats travelled almost a 1000 miles from Fort Patrick Henry, along the Holston, Tennessee, Ohio and the Cumberland rivers.

On board the *Adventure* the flag boat of Colonel Donelson's fleet, were the children of James Robertson and some 20 more. In this boat Mrs. Ann Johnson, sister of James Robertson, organized these children into a school – a day school during the week and a Sunday school on the Sabbath.

Ann and John Cockrill were married at one of the forts at the Cumberland settlements. Ann had three young daughters, by her first marriage and eight more children by John Cockrill. Ann was awarded a land grant of 640 acres from the North Carolina Legislature. She was the first woman to receive such a grant. The Cockrills established their home place at *Cockrill Springs*, a favorite stopping place for travelers on the Natchez Trace. Today the Cockrill's original farm is the site of Centennial Park, located between Charlotte Pike and West End Avenue. Their graves were moved from *Cockrill Springs* to City Cemetery in 1911.

Chronicles of the Cumberland Settlements, 1779-1796. 2012. Paul Clements. Page 133. C.D. Elliott 1886 with information from Colonel John Cockrill.

*Tennessee Encyclopedia*. On-line

"*Centennial Park's Cockrill Spring Sees Daylight*" August 8, 2014. Philip McGowan. On-line

Obituary *The Whig*, Oct. 17, 1821. Mrs. John Cockrill. City Cemetery website

Obituary National Banner & Whig. May 10, 1837. John Cockrill. City Cemetery website

Cockrills Springs and House. *West Nashville Its People*. Sarah Foster Kelley. 1987

Removal of Cockrill graves to City Cemetery 1911. City Cemetery website

City Cemetery Tombstone Inscriptions for Ann and John Cockrill

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