

Yancey, James ^[1]

Yancey, James

by Katherine K. Kendall, 1996

ca. 1768–27 Nov. 1829

See also: [Yancey, Bartlett](#) ^[2] (from the *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*)

James Yancey, legislator, merchant, planter, public official, and educator, was born in Gloucester District, Orange (now [Caswell](#) ^[3]) County, of English and Welsh ancestry, the son of Bartlett, Sr., and Ann Graves Yancey. He was the elder brother of [Bartlett, Jr.](#) ^[2]., and the first cousin of [Calvin Graves](#) ^[4]., the Reverend [John Kerr](#) ^[5]., and Senator James Kerr.

Yancey represented [Caswell County](#) ^[3] in the General Assembly in 1798, 1801–3, 1807–8, 1811, and 1822. In 1802 he introduced a bill to establish Caswell Academy, the first chartered school in the county, of which he served as trustee. He was a justice of the County [Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions](#) ^[6] from 1802 to 1829 and attended most quarterly meetings. In 1822 he was elected the first permanent chairman of the county court, serving until his death. His leadership, important to the establishment of sound government in Caswell County, resulted in agreeable negotiations for a site for an enlarged courthouse, public square, and other public buildings. In 1793 Yancey's store was one of the landmarks of the county.

He was married twice, first to Lucy Kerr on 14 Jan. 1794, and second to Zilpah Johnston, the daughter of Dr [Lancelot Johnston](#) ^[7]., on 24 June 1811. His children were James Monroe, Mary Elizabeth, Albert Gallatin, William, and Mildred Yancey. James Yancey was buried on his plantation five miles south of Yanceyville, the county seat, near the tripartite house he built before 1800.

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