

HISTORICAL NOTES FROM THE RECORDS OF AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA.—PART I.

(By CHARLES E. KEMPER)

The migration of families from Lancaster, Chester and adjoining counties in southeastern Pennsylvania to the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia commenced actually in 1737, but from 1740 to 1745 it was in full tide, and it can be stated with certainty that at least three fourths of the present inhabitants of the Valley descend from Pennsylvania families. In many respects, the Shenandoah Valley is a southwestern extension of southeast Pennsylvania, and the descendants of the first settlers have made it the most prosperous section of Virginia.

The following notes from the records above named show in part the migration of Pennsylvania families from Lancaster, Chester and adjoining counties to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, and chiefly to the present counties of Augusta.

Their names and places of residence in Pennsylvania appear in the suit news and deeds cited as authorities.

The first white settler in the Valley of Virginia was Adam Muller. He came to the colony in 1727, and settled on the Shenandoah river, in the present County of Page, Virginia. He was naturalized in 1742 by Gov. Gooch, and his papers in same) still owned by Miss Elizabeth B. Miller, his great-great-granddaughter state that he had settled and inhabited on the Shenandoah for fifteen (15) years prior to his naturalization, which gives 1727 as the year of his settlement in Virginia. In 1742 he bought 820 acres of land, including the present Great Bear Lithia Spring, about three (3) miles northeast of present Elkton, Rockingham County, Virginia. He died there in 1783, aged eighty years. His estate comprised 1170 acres, much of which is among the most fertile land in the Valley of Virginia. A petition filed by him and other Germans, which appears in Palmer's Calendar of Virginia, shows that Adam Muller and his associates had resided in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, before removing to Virginia, and that county can claim the credit of the first movement made to settle the Shenandoah Valley.

The first explorer of the Shenandoah Valley was Louis Michell, a Swiss, who lived in Chester Co., now Lancaster Co., Pa., in the period of 1706-7, as shown by the Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, in the month of February, 1707. See Vol. 3. He was acting on behalf of George Ritter and others, of Berne, Switzerland, who were endeavoring to obtain large grants of land in the Shenandoah Valley, upon which they desired a Swiss colony. In the year 1907, the writer of these notes received from the British Public Record Office, London, England, copies of George Ritter's petitions, addressed to Queen Anne, asking for lands in Virginia for the purpose above stated, and among them a map was found, made by Louis Michell in 1706 or 1707.

He started from Annapolis, Maryland, with one, Clark, of Maryland and crossed the Potomac, about Point of Rocks, a few miles below Harper's

Ferry, West Virginia, in present Lowden County, Virginia. He crossed the Blue Ridge through Snicker's Gap, into the Shenandoah Valley, and passed over the Shenandoah River in the present County of Clark. His route was then up the Valley to present Strasburg and Edinburg, in Shenandoah County. On his return, he crossed the Potomac at the point of his first passage of the stream and then turned to the left and went up the Valley of the Monocacy, on his return to Pennsylvania.

Edgree vs Alexander

The Augusta records also show that, in 1744, Alexander Crawford was a resident of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and in 1745, he was a resident of Augusta County. His brother, Patrick Crawford, came to Virginia in 1737, and by the year 1740, the four brothers, Alexander, Patrick, George and James Crawford, were living in Augusta County, Virginia, as shown by the survey books and other records of the county. They are believed to have been the sons of William Crawford, named above.

In February, 1732, James McIlwaine was a resident of Sussex County, Delaware, and Hugh Matthews owed him an account. Matthews removed to Augusta County, Virginia.

McIlwaine vs Matthews, file 387.

Francis Beaty was a resident of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, October 16, 1735. Certainly until May 1, 1738. In 1752, he was certainly living in Augusta County, Virginia.

Smith vs Beaty

John Allison, Francis Beaty and William Caldwell were, in 1738, residents of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Samuel Norwood was a resident of Donegal Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, October 1, 1738.

Edmonson vs. Norwood.

He was a Captain in Augusta County, Virginia, Militia, in the French and Indian War.

Michell's explorations of the Valley antedate the visit of Governor Alexander Spottswood of Virginia and the "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" to the Valley by at least nine years. For the Ritter documents and Michell's map, see the January Number, 1921, of the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography.

In 1716, Governor Spottswood, then Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia, came over the Blue Ridge Mountains into the Valley of Virginia, with a company of about forty, on an expedition of discovery. They crossed the Blue Ridge at Swift Run Gap, in the present County of Rockingham, Virginia, and reached the Shenandoah River in the vicinity of present Elkton in that county. In commemoration of this expedition, he had a number of small golden horse shoes made, which he gave to each one of the gentlemen who accompanied him on the expedition, and they are known in Virginia history as the "Knights of the Horse Shoe" and the "Knights of the Golden Horse Shoe."

On December 20, 1723, John Alexander, Samuel Crafford and William Crafford (Crawford) lived at Octoraro, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and were traders. James Alexander removed to Augusta County, Virginia, prior to 1741, and was one of the Commissioners appointed to build the Presbyterian Meeting House in that county at Tinkling Springs, in 1741, the second oldest church in the county.

The deposition of Edward filed in Court Papers No. 1, Augusta County, Virginia, shows that John Hindman was in Chester County, Pennsylvania, on January 5, 1739-40. He had a license to preach by Donegal Presbytery in March, 1742, and was immediately sent to the Shenandoah Valley as a missionary. In that year, he preached among other places in Virginia, "at the Head of Shenandoah." This place is the present village of Cross Keys, Rockingham County, Virginia. He there preached the first sermon ever delivered in the county, of which there is known record. In 1745 or 1746, he organized the Old Peaked Mountain Presbyterian Church, now called the Massanutten, of Cross Keys, the oldest of all the churches in Rockingham County. Mr. Hindman was a native of Londonderry, Chester County, Pa., and died in October, 1748. He is buried in the cemetery at Cross Keys. In the year 1747, he changed his church affiliations and was appointed the first Rector of Augusta Parish.

See, also, deposition of Providence Scott, in Fletcher vs. Hindman's Administrators.

James Rutledge was a resident of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, November 5, 1741. As a trader (Indian), on February 28, 1744, he was still in Lancaster. On the date first mentioned, he executed his deed to Robert Dunning, of Pennsborough, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and to Samuel Blunston, of Hempfield, of the same county. He died in Augusta County, Virginia, prior to November, 1750.

Dunning's Ex'or. vs. Parker

Members of this family moved to South Carolina prior to 1751. In April 1753 he was dead.

George Lewis was, on April 10, 1742, a resident of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Dickinson vs. Lewis

John Shry (or Story) and John Rutledge, in the County of Chester, and Province of Pennsylvania, "traders," executed their bond to William Blyth, of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, April 11, 1743. They were still living in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, November 21, 1749.

Bryan McDonald was a resident of now Chester County, Pennsylvania, February 27, 1744-5.

Borden vs. McDonald.

Thomas Carson and Alexander Gibboney were residents of Lancaster Borough, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, September 28, 1744.

Gibboney vs. Carson

William Lusk was, on November 24, 1744, a resident of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Paxton Township.

Armstrong vs. Lusk

Daniel Sink was a resident of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, July 29, 1752.

Francis Waser (Wuser?) was an Indian in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1752.

See Cross vs. Sink, file 391.

John Hartlias, of Augusta County, Virginia, executed his bond to John Lindsay, of Gilford Township, Cumberland, October 1, 1752. Lindsay was a "trader." Indian?

Lindsay vs. Hartlias, file 392

Nathaniel Wartsher was a resident of Paxton Township. Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, prior to November 25, 1752.

Morrison vs. Wartcher, file 394.

Michael Finney, of Augusta County, Virginia; gave bond to William Hall, of Chester County, Pennsylvania, dated November 28, 1752.

Hall vs. Finney

Suits filed in the Augusta County Court (Va. November, 1754.)

John Shields was a resident of Chester County, Pennsylvania, and a weaver by trade, December 25, 1745.

Borden vs. Shields

Joseph Love was a resident of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, September 22, 1746, and bought goods from Simon and Lazarus, Merchants, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on that date. Robert Thompson was a Justice of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1753.

Simon & Iazarus vs. Love

Joseph Love was a resident of Augusta County, Virginia, September 22, 1752.

See Love vs. Brown

Jacob Miller was a resident of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, May 16, 1747.

Bowman vs. Miller, file 387.

William Hamilton, living in Chester County, Pennsylvania, executed his note to Aaron Hassert, on May 20, 1747. The note bears this endorsement:

"In Virginia, Augusta County,

"Care Pastor Eyrich Tract."

The Pastor of the "Irish Tract" in Virginia was the Rev. John Craig, whose home in Pennsylvania was in Lancaster County. Mr. Craig came to Virginia in the fall of 1740, and was the Pastor of the Augusta Church and Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Congregation. He was the first regularly settled Minister in the Shenandoah Valley.

George Croghan was a resident of Pennsborough, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, October 8, 1748.

Croghan vs. Strother's Admin.

John Caldwell, whose home in Pennsylvania had been at Chestnut Level, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, was, on December 27, 1748, a member of the County Court of Augusta County, Virginia.

See paper filed in Court File No. 1

Augusta, County, Virginia.

John Caldwell was the grandfather of John Caldwell Calhoun, of South Carolina, who, in political effort, was the great leader of the movement which lead to the secession of the South in 1861.

Chestnut Level is an early place (name) in Augusta County, Virginia. It was evidently called after Chestnut Level, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

See Robert Hamilton's Survey, October 12, 1766.

Entry Book p. 65.

John Lytner (Lightner) a resident of Lancaster County on March 10, 1750-51, upon that date relinquished a power of attorney given to him by his father-in-law, Christopher Francisco.

See Court Papers file No. 2

Members of the Lightner family are now residents of Augusta County, Virginia. The records of Orange County, Virginia, of which Augusta County was a part until 1745, show that, in 1738, Christopher Francisco, Sr., bought from Jacob Stover 3800 acres of land on the Shenandoah River, in what is now Rockingham County, Virginia, five miles below Port Republic. Two of his sons, Christopher Francisco Jr., and Ludwick Francisco, came to Virginia and settled on their father's land.

James McRenald and John Scott resided in Cecil County, Maryland, and on March 27, 1750, executed their bond to Peter Bayrad.

Ardry vs. McRenald & Scott