

GENEALOGICAL
AND
PERSONAL HISTORY
OF
Western Pennsylvania

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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James Moore was born at Ballyavelin, county Londonderry, MOORE Ireland, in the year 1767. Few records of vital statistics were kept at that time in Ireland, and what few are extant are but fragmentary, so it is utterly impossible to ascertain with any degree of certainty the names of his father and mother, or those of any of his more remote ancestors. It is reasonably certain, however, that the male line was of Scottish descent and were among the troops of Cromwell, who took possession of Ireland in the seventeenth century, and, after reducing the island to subjection, were rewarded by grants of Irish land and, instead of returning to their homes in Scotland, looked with favor upon the fertile valleys and green slopes of Ireland and colonized the northern portion, which has ever since held to the tenets of the Protestant (Presbyterian) faith.

He was the youngest of four sons and it fell to his lot to take care of and provide for his parents, which duty he performed faithfully and well. His brothers had emigrated to America while he was quite young, leaving the responsibility of caring for his aged parents resting entirely upon him. They are buried in the old cemetery of Drumachose parish, about a mile from the town of Limavady, formerly Newton-Limavady. Their graves cannot now be identified owing to the fact that in those days it was only the grand families who could afford monuments and headstones suitably inscribed. The graves of those of humbler origin being entirely unmarked, or at best marked by a plain stone or a rough piece of rock.

James Moore married, in the latter part of 1801, Elizabeth Canning, born in 1778, died November 12, 1843. She was the second of three sisters—Martha, the eldest, having married James Steele, and Nancy, the youngest, married James Smith, and emigrated to America, where they settled in Wayne township, Erie county, Pennsylvania.

James Moore, as his father had been for many years, continued a tenant of Lord Waterford, whose estates comprised nearly the entire countryside of Ballyavelin. The farm consisted of forty-two acres, for which he paid an annual rental of one hundred and forty dollars. The house, which is situated about four miles east of Limavady, was built by the father

of James Moore about 1750. It is still standing and, aside from the fact that the straw-thatched roof has been replaced by one of slate, is unchanged in appearance and is in as perfect condition as when it was built, over a hundred and fifty years ago. It is built of stone and mortar, one story high, and about sixty feet in length and, like the usual Irish cottage, is painted a glistening white. It contains four large rooms and the stable, which occupies one end under the same roof. The present owner has added to the other end of this structure a two-story stone addition, but continues to use the original dwelling for a kitchen, dairy and storage room. The kitchen contains the large old-fashioned fire-place and the crane used by our ancestors, and this is the room most popular with the present occupants in the winter time, as they gather around the fire of glowing peat. The house is surrounded by a high whitethorn hedge, which forms an arch over the front gate, rendering the taking of a satisfactory photograph a matter of considerable difficulty. By a singular coincidence the present owner of the farm, Mrs. Marcus Gault, is distantly related to the Moore family, her grandmother, Leah Smith, having been a cousin of Elizabeth Canning, the wife of James Moore.

Lord Waterford was much beloved by all his tenants and was known as a very kind and just landlord, and to be one of his tenants was considered a great privilege. In the spring of 1818, having left Ireland and taken up his residence in London, he left in charge of his estates an agent by the name of Marrah, who, in his treatment of the lord's tenants, was as harsh and exacting as Lord Waterford had been kind and considerate. While he could not alter the terms of existing leases, as fast as they matured, he demanded most excessive rents for all renewals, in many cases doubling the previous rental. It was customary to draw leases for farm lands running twenty or twenty-five years, and the lease of this farm expiring at this time, the agent demanded a rental of two hundred and fifty dollars per year as a condition for executing a new lease. James Moore was a good farmer and a thrifty and prudent man, and although he had accumulated some little money and property, he well knew that if he were to renew his lease, at the exorbitant rent demanded by the agent, it would not only absorb his entire savings but, within a few years, reduce him to beggary, so he decided to come to America. After disposing of such property and effects as were not easily to be transported, he, together with his wife and nine children, took passage on board the "Thomas and Henry," sailing from Londonderry, June 10, of that year, bound for St. Johns, New Brunswick, commencing a voyage nearly equal in length to that of the "Mayflower."

Driven by storm after storm out of their course, oftentimes being entirely lost, with the hatches closed for three days at a time, the passengers suffered great hardships and completed their voyage, which should have been made in four weeks, in eight weeks and five days. Mrs. Moore was sick throughout the entire voyage and on this account the family were obliged to remain at St. Johns until she recovered, when they continued their journey to New York city, in a small coasting vessel. This vessel

had been condemned as unseaworthy, and the captain did not dare make a landing in the daytime, but on reaching New York he loitered about the port until midnight, when he ran into port, landed the family and their baggage, and left again as soon as possible. The family and their effects were unloaded hurriedly and in the bustle the baby (Mary) together with some of the bedding was thrown by the sailors upon the dock at some distance from the boat and was not discovered until some time after the boat had left. This landing was made about midnight on Saturday night, about the first of September. Sabbath morning soon dawned and with the sun shining in its glory and the clear sky affording a roof for their dwelling, Mrs. Moore thought it a proper time to array her children in their new clothing which had been provided for them before leaving home, and made preparation for keeping holy that Sabbath day. Early in the day, however, people began to assemble on the dock and make inquiry as to the manner in which they had been left there. Among them were two well-to-do men who not only made inquiry but proceeded to procure for them a house in which the family and their belongings were soon installed. They left with the assurance that they would call the following morning, which they did, and one of them bought a clock which Mr. Moore had brought with him from Ireland. It was an eight-day clock, giving in addition to the time, the day of the month and the changes of the moon. It was a perfect timepiece and was sold for seventy dollars. If it were now in the family it would be treasured very highly. The two kind friends who rendered them such valuable assistance were very desirous of adopting two of the little boys, aged three and five years respectively, but Mrs. Moore would not give her consent, as she said she had brought them thus far and would try to keep her family together. They remained in New York eight days, Mr. Moore and his two sons, John and Alexander, working every day unloading wood from vessels for which they received one dollar each per day, which aided materially in the support of the family. They also had the privilege of carrying home what wood they could at noon and night for family use.

From New York they journeyed by stage and steamboat to Philadelphia, where they remained eight days, the father and oldest sons engaging in the same work of unloading vessels. From Philadelphia they went to Pittsburgh by wagon, a trip that required fourteen days, and they arrived there on a Sabbath. Soon after their arrival Mr. Moore met an old friend by the name of John Steele, who informed him that he had seen his older brother, John Moore, the day before on the market in that city. This was glad tidings to him, for he had not heard from his brother John for thirty years. Mr. Steele told him that John lived about ten miles below the city and furnished him with a horse upon which he rode out that day to see him and on the following day (Monday) John Moore took his team and wagon and carried his brother's family to his own home and he and his neighbors immediately set to work and erected for them a house, which was even better than the one in which he lived. The flooring was obtained from the floor of an old boat that had been providentially de-

posited on the river bank at the time of a flood. The boards had a number of auger holes in them which Mrs. Moore calked with corn cobs by driving them in with an axe and cutting them off smooth with the same tool. This house, when visited twenty years later (by Uncle John) was in as good condition as the day it was built, even to the corn cobs. Here they lived that winter and the next summer, and the following autumn Mr. and Mrs. Moore came to Waterford to visit James Smith, whose wife was Mrs. Moore's sister.

While here, he rented from Thomas King a farm of fifty acres, situated on the Union Road, about two and one-half miles from Waterford borough and removed his family to Waterford in February, 1820, taking a comfortable log house in which three children were born to them, thus making a family of twelve, six sons and six daughters, all of whom lived to maturity. In 1835 he purchased the farm for the sum of two hundred dollars, and after his death, in the year 1848, it was purchased from his heirs by his youngest son, Wilson Moore, who, with his family, resided on the old homestead until his death in 1876. Shortly after removing to Waterford, on account of the prosperity which had attended him and of the love he had for his adopted country, James Moore made application for citizenship, declared his intention to support the government, and was in due time made a citizen of the United States, which he remained until the time of his death, which occurred December 4, 1838. Of his family there were twelve children, none of whom are living; sixty-eight grandchildren; eighty-two great-grandchildren; sixty-six great-great-grandchildren; and five great-great-great-grandchildren, making a total of two hundred and thirty-three descendants.

James Moore's reasons for leaving his native country were not selfish. He saw his large family of children growing up about him, and realized that he would not be able, by remaining in Ireland, to give them the advantages he desired for them and keep them together. He had seen his father's family grow up and scatter to foreign lands, and he felt that it was his duty to his children to emigrate to America, where they would have better opportunities to earn a livelihood and might be located near each other, for he was a Christian man and believed in the words of the Psalmist: "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

In Ballyavelin the name of James Moore is still revered by those now living, whose ancestors were his contemporaries. He was known throughout the community as a "grand, good man," and just, and it is said that so highly were his opinion and sense of justice regarded, that when any of his neighbors fell into a dispute among themselves, they always referred their affairs to him and he never failed to bring about an amicable and satisfactory settlement of their quarrels. That he was a man of good judgment and much respected in the community is shown by the records of the vestry of the Drumachose Parish Church (Church of Ireland) in the town of Limavady. Under the date of the 16th of May, 1801, it ap-

pears that he was appointed by the parish, one of a committee of three gentlemen, to take steps to investigate the condition of and grant badges to the deserving poor entitling them to beg within the parish. The following entry is also on record in the parish register:

"At a vestry meeting held on the 14th day of June, 1805, the vestry refused to confirm the applotment made and to appoint church wardens, and at a vestry meeting held in the church of Newton-Limavady, for the Parish of Drumachose, on Tuesday, April 8, 1806, being Easter Tuesday, due notice thereof having been given, the majority of the parishioners refused to nominate and appoint any church wardens for the ensuing year; I, therefore, the Rev. John Wilkinson, Curate, do in the name and for the Honorable and Reverend Charles Knox, Rector, nominate as required by law, for the approbation of William, Lord Bishop of Derry, the following two men to be church wardens for the ensuing year: Mr. James Moore, of Ballyavelin, and Mr. Robert George, of Newton-Limavady, who are by law obliged to make and levy a rate for the repairs of the church and to furnish all things necessary for the due celebration of divine worship. The late church wardens have neglected to receive from their predecessors the amount of the cess laid on in their year, as also to collect their own cess, and therefore, have not settled their accounts or done aught toward repairing the church, &c. (Signed) John Wilkinson, Curate. (Witnessed) Richard Ross, William Patterson." "The vestry is adjourned until the 8th of May, 1806, for the purpose of entering in this book his Lordship, the Bishop of Derry's nomination and appointment of the said James Moore and Robert George to the office of church wardens. (Signed) John Wilkinson, Curate."

"At a vestry meeting held at the church of Newton-Limavady, for the Parish of Drumachose, on Thursday, the 8th of May, 1806, pursuant to adjournment from the former vestry, for the purpose of entering in this, the vestry book of the said parish, the nomination, constitution and appointment of James Moore and Robert George, to the office of church wardens for the year commencing on the 8th of April, 1806, till Easter, 1807, by the Right Reverend William Knox, Lord Bishop of Derry, in default of the parishioners of the said parish, said parish in vestry assembled on Easter Tuesday, the 8th day of April, 1806, having refused to appoint church wardens, a true copy of the said nomination, constitution and appointment of the said James Moore and Robert George to the office of church wardens is hereto annexed and regularly entered in this, the vestry book of the said parish.

"William, by divine permission, Lord Bishop of Derry, to James Moore, of Ballyavelin, and Robert George, of Newton-Limavady, both in the parish of Drumachose, Greetings: Whereas, it hath appeared to us by faithworthy information that the parishioners of Drumachose, at vestry assembled on Easter Tuesday, the 8th day of April, 1806, did refuse to appoint church wardens for the said parish, for the present year, and Whereas, by reason of the said refusal, the appointment of church wardens devolves upon us, and, Whereas, you the said James Moore and Robert George have been returned to us by the Reverend Charles Knox, Rector of the said parish, as proper and fit persons to serve the office of church wardens for said parish, for the present year, we do hereby, by these presents, nominate, constitute and appoint you, the said James Moore and Robert George, church wardens for the said parish for the year commencing on the 8th day of April, 1806, and ending Easter, 1807, and have caused the said nomination, constitution and appointment to be recorded in the registry of our diocese. Given under the Episcopal seal of said diocese, the 24th day of April, 1806. (Signed) William, of Derry. A true copy. (Signed) John Wilkinson, William Patterson, Joseph Maxwell."

While it may seem strange that James Moore, a strict Presbyterian, should be chosen as a church warden by the rector of the Drumachose parish church (Episcopal), which was then the established church of Ireland, we find that the office of church warden was not at that time an ecclesiastical, but rather a civil one. Previous to the establishment of the Church of Ireland, the church wardens were responsible for the levying and collection of the rates, the care of the roads and the poor, the furnishing of coffins for the destitute and the making of necessary repairs to the church edifices, not only of the established church, but of those of all denominations within the parish, duties that would more properly appertain in these times to a parish supervisor. It was, therefore, a striking tribute

to his ability and the estimation in which he was held in the parish that, when trouble arose in the parish church through the failure of the wardens to discharge their duties, the rector should go outside of his own congregation and select James Moore, a Presbyterian, for that responsible office.

Although the early records of the Drumachose Presbyterian Church were destroyed, it is presumed that he and his wife were both members of that congregation, as this church was built in 1743, rebuilt in 1875, and is to this day attended by the Steeles and Cannings, many members of whose families are buried in the beautiful churchyard adjoining the sanctuary. He was one of the founders of the first church of Waterford, and one of the first elders in the church, which position he filled as long as he lived. The members of his family all united with the same church. His last will and testament, duly proved and registered on the 8th day of January, 1839, a copy of which is hereto appended, reflects the character of the man:

"In the name of God, Amen. I, James Moore, of the Township of Waterford, in the county of Erie, being in a low state of health, and knowing that life is uncertain and that death to me is at no distant period certain, do make and declare the following instrument of writing to be my last will and testament. 1st. It is my will and desire that all my debts, of which there are but few and none of magnitude, be promptly paid. 2d Item. I will and bequeath to my wife, Elizabeth, the sole use and occupancy of my dwelling house and barn and the fifty acres of land embracing them, to be enjoyed by her during her natural life, with all the appurtenances. 3rd Item. I also will and bequeath to my said wife (after the payment of my just debts) the use of all my other property, personal and mixed, to be used and disposed of by her, at her discretion, for the support of herself and such of our unmarried children as may choose to reside with her. 4th Item. It is further my will and desire that at the decease of my wife, the said real estate, with whatever may then remain of the personal property, be sold at public sale, and the avails thereof be divided equally, share and share alike amongst all my children. 5th and lastly. I hereby constitute and appoint my sons, John and Alexander, together with my son-in-law, Simon Himrod, or the survivor or survivors of them, to be my executors to execute the foregoing will. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal the first day of Dec., A. D. 1838. James Moore (Seal). Witnesses present, John W. Smith, John C. Smith."

His wife, Elizabeth, was a woman of uncommon education and refinement, as were her sisters and her brother, John Canning, who ranked as one of the most talented musicians in the North of Ireland. She was a woman of deep religious sentiment, a good wife and a good mother, and her memory was ever held in sacred veneration by all her children. The following poem, written in her own hand and signed by her, is worthy of a place in this work:

"Remember me,
Not as thou wouldst a flower whose leaves are broken,
Whose rich, glad hues were brightened but to flee;
That were, alas! too fair, too sweet a token
To 'waken in thy breast my memory.

"Remember me,
Not as thou wouldst a thought once proudly glowing,
With all life's early freshness, warm and free,
For then the fount of memory is flowing,
Too high, too full, to call up thoughts of me.

"Remember me,
Not as thou wouldst thy morning's early breaking,
When the bright sun shone glad on land and sea;

Thy bosom is too proud of its awakening,
To cast one blissful thought on me.

“Remember me,
E'en as thou wouldst the autumn leaf that's lying,
In solitary sorrow by the tree,
Clinging to what is loved in life, tho' dying,
'Tis thus I'd have thee sadly think of me.

“Remember me,
As thou wouldst call back some old strain of sweetness,
Whose melancholy breathings pleasur'd thee
And when thou sighest o'er its vanished fleetness,
Then, waken in thy heart one thought of me.

“Remember me,
Sadly remember me—for I am lonely,
And pleasant things are but a mockery;
I would be with thee in thy sorrows only,
Therefore, in thy grief, I pray thee, remember me.”

The above sketch of the founder of the Moore family in this country is due to the courtesy of P. W. Free, James S. Moore and Harry L. Moore.