

ANNALS OF
OLD WILKINSBURG
AND VICINITY

THE VILLAGE
1788-1888

Compiled by the
Group for Historical Research, Wilkinsburg

Edited by
ELIZABETH M. DAVISON
AND
ELLEN B. McKEE

WILKINSBURG, PA.
GROUP FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH
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She was of the eighth generation of her family in America, the first of whom, Jean de Vigne, had settled on Manhattan Island about 1616-1620. The geneological line follows:

- I. Jean de Vigne was a Huguenot from Valenciennes, France, who probably emigrated to America to escape the persecution of Protestants which continued for years after the St. Bartholomew Massacre of August 24, 1572. De Vigne was married in France and his oldest child, Maria, was born there. Family tradition locates his homestead near the present Wall and Pearl Streets, New York City.
- II. His daughter, Maria, married Abram Isaacson Verplanck in 1630. This marriage took place four years after the purchase of Manhattan Island by the Dutch nation from the Manhate Tribe of Indians. The price paid was \$24.00. At this time the population of the island did not exceed three hundred. Verplanck became a very influential man. In the conflict which arose between the aristocratic "Patroons" holding great tracts of land, whose aim was to establish a feudal form of government, and the small landowners—the commoners, Verplanck was chosen by the governor to be one of the Council of Twelve, which body was one of the early attempts to establish a representative government in the Dutch Colony. He became wealthy by land transactions, in which he showed wise foresight, and his descendants were people of distinction. In 1700 a manor house was built by a Verplanck on the banks of the Hudson River at Fishkill, New York. This stone house acquired historic distinction as the headquarters of General Van Steuben during the Revolution, and from the organization in it of the "Society of Cincinnati."
- III. Abram and Maria Verplanck's daughter, Susannah, married three times. Little is known of her first marriage beyond that she became a widow in a short time and was left with one son, Guyleyne Von Leijer. Her second husband was John Garland of New York City.

John Garland was of English or Welsh stock, and thus in the two children of this marriage a new strain was added to

the French-Dutch strain of the three preceding generations.

Different records show that John Garland had a license, which permitted him to trade not only in New York but also up the river above New Castle, Delaware, in any vessel belonging to New York; he had also a commission to trade in Delaware. The extension of this license to his wife, Susannah, indicates that she was a capable business woman.

John Garland's married life was also short, as he died when about 30 years old. His will discovers the large estate of a gentleman of that period. To his wife, Susannah, he gave . . . "my riding horse, together with all my goods and debts by bill, bond, booke or bookes, whatsoever (except hereafter excepted). To my eldest sonne, Silvester my sword, wearing cloathes, pistolls, and ffurniture therewith belonging. And for my horses and mares, now running upon Staten Island, they are to be equally divided between the said Silvester and Mathias Garland, my second sonn, and Guyleyne Von Leijer, a son by my wife's former husband". His estate seems to have been complicated, for the executors named by him declined to serve, and his wife, Susannah, to whom was granted the office of administratrix, in response to her request, was many years effecting a settlement.

Susannah Verplanck-Leijer-Garland married a third time with a man bearing the prosaic name of Daniel Brown. With him she removed from New York City to Kent County, Delaware (then part of Pennsylvania) and with her went her sonnes, Guyleyne Von Leijer, Silvester and Mathias Garland and John Garland's "debts, by bill, bond, booke or bookes".

- iv. Silvester Garland, fourth in genealogical line from pioneer Jean de Vigne, located in New Castle, Delaware. (Records of his life and transactions are found in Colonial Records of Pennsylvania, Vol. II.)

He, like his father and mother, had a license to trade with the Indians and, in a moment of weakness, sold liquor to them. This was illegal, as a law forbidding sale of liquor to

Indians was one of the earliest acts of William Penn. For this Silvester was placed under bond not to repeat the act. He outlived the dishonor, for we find him one of three men purchasing ground for the erection of the First Presbyterian Church of New Castle. He was probably an elder of the church at this time, 1707, but if not he was soon afterwards, for in 1717 Garland's name appears on the list of elders of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, which was at that time the highest court in the Church. In 1719 the first Presbyterian Church Synod was formed in America and Silvester Garland's name appears in the Synod's minutes. He is classed in business directories as merchant, undertaker and agent; he was also the owner of more than 900 acres of farm land.

In his will a new feature in family possessions appears; namely, "to my beloved wife, Anne Garland, one third of my estate according as the law prescribes . . . together with my Negro Boy called Frank . . . to son Abraham I bequeath the silver handled sword . . . to son Silvester the dwelling house and out-buildings and . . . also one negro boy called Samm . . . to my daughter Sodd Anderson I give and bequeath the house and lot adjoining my own dwelling house . . . and one negro boy called Plim . . .".

Silvester was married twice. Nothing is known of his first wife excepting that she lived about 12 years after marriage and was the mother of the five children mentioned in Silvester's will. A supposition, become belief, is that Sodd was her family name. This name has been perpetuated under the various forms of Sodd, Suit, Suitt, Sutia, Sutiah, Satira, and appears in many branches of the descendants of the Garland-Anderson-Stewart-Rippey families.

Gathering all the records together we find Sylvester Garland to have been a prominent man in the financial, political, social and religious affairs of New Castle. Increased prestige was probably given to his position by the marriage of his young daughter, Sodd, to the Rev. James Anderson, of Edinburgh, Scotland, who became one of the most prominent

men in the Presbyterian Church in its early days in America.

- v. James Anderson was born in Scotland in 1678. After graduation from the University of Edinburgh he studied theology and after ordination as a minister of the Presbyterian Church sailed for Virginia in 1709. There he was so unfavorably received by the neighborhood to which he had been sent, which would tolerate no religious form but Episcopacy, that at the end of six months he went north, and, after joining the Presbytery of Philadelphia, became in 1710, the first regular pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of New Castle, Del. He remained there seven years, during which time his church absorbed Huguenots, Dutchmen, Scotch-Irish, Lutherans, and Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanters); and the bachelor of thirty-nine married Sordt Garland, the nineteen year old daughter of his most prominent elder.

In 1717 James Anderson received a call (which he accepted) to be the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York. A Presbyterian Association had been in existence for ten years, but it had no regular organization nor building. Under Mr. Anderson's pastorate a church building was erected on a lot 88 x 120 feet bounded by Wall (on which the building faced), Broadway and Nassau Streets. After nine years of strenuous work, increased by the heavy debt on the congregation and the difficulty of getting a charter, owing to the opposition of the Episcopalians, Mr. Anderson accepted a call to the Presbyterian Church at Donegal, Chester County, (now Lancaster County) Pennsylvania. Here the Scotch Presbyterian came unto his own, for his congregation consisted of Scotch-Irish people—firm in Calvinistic doctrine, self respecting men and women in easy circumstances, whose boast was that not one of them had been a Redeptioner,—that is a person who had paid for his passage to this country by a term of service afterwards.

The log church was beautifully situated near a magnificent spring which emptied into Little Chickies Creek; before

THE DUNNING McNAIR FAMILY

it stood a great oak tree called "The witness Tree", around which the patriotic Scotch-Irish members stood as they pledged loyalty to the cause of the Revolution. A few months before Mr. Anderson's death in 1740 two hundred acres of glebe land were confirmed by patent by William Penn's sons to the Reverend James Anderson and his elders, one of whom was John Allison. Here in Lancaster County Mr. Anderson bought a plantation of 300 acres along the Susquehanna River, adjoining the farm of George Stewart. Important events in the Presbyterian Church, in which he occupied places of honor, were instituted during his pastorate, showing that he was a leader among men. Outstanding in these events were the following: when the large Presbytery of Philadelphia was divided into three, Philadelphia, New Castle, Del. and New York, and the first Synod formed, James Anderson took prominent place in the proceedings. He was chosen three times to be Moderator of the Synod, then the highest church body. When the establishment of a Theological School was under consideration Mr. Anderson was chosen by the Committee in charge to go to Europe to study conditions. In fact, in all church affairs he was a prominent member and very often the Chairman. During his pastorate at Donegal a stone church 75 x 45 ft. replaced the original log building. This building stands today, though somewhat modernized. His grave and that of his wife "Suit" Garland are marked by thick flat stones in the graveyard of Donegal.

Mr. Anderson left a large estate, including lands on both sides of the Susquehanna, shares in the ferry, Marietta, on the Susquehanna River, personal property and slaves. The Anti-Slavery movement had not yet begun and all people of means in that part of the country owned slaves.

James and Sodt Garland Anderson had eleven children, the second child, a daughter Ann, is the one who continued the line we are tracing.

vi. Ann was born in New Castle and was a year old when her

parents removed to New York and her father assumed charge of the Presbyterian Church. In the next ten years she was in the environment and under the influence of city schools and city life. When the family removed to Donegal, she was in the midst of country life, not too far away from New Castle and the circle of relatives surrounding her wealthy uncle Silvester Garland, Jr., nor the New York friends to not have frequent visiting back and forth, but the successful wooer of this sprightly young lady was a well-to-do farmer in the person of John Stewart, a scion of the royal house of Scotch Kings, many generations removed.

John Stewart, who married the vivacious Ann Anderson, was a farmer of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, whose estate adjoined that of his pastor, the Reverend James Anderson. He was a man of very quiet tastes taking little part in outside affairs. He was of the third generation of the emigrant George Stewart, whose farm, bordering the Susquehanna, was patented by his grandfather very early in the 18th Century. John Stewart's married life was of short duration—only fifteen years. His large estate was left to his wife and three children: namely one son, George, and two daughters. There was generous appropriation made for his wife, and appreciation of her executive abilities was shown by the appointment of her and her brother, James, as executors of the estate and guardians of the minor children.

But John Stewart evidently did not approve of the repeated marriages to which his wife's relatives seemed addicted, and so there was inserted a clause in the will that should she marry again, before the son's majority, her portion should pass over to him. Nothing daunted by this restriction, Ann Anderson Stewart, in "seemly" time, married her very rich and influential neighbor, John Allison, and took her three children across the fields to grow up with the six Allison children already in possession. John and Ann Allison had three children, and the twelve children seem to have lived happily together; at least if there were occasions when a case

of "yours and mine fighting with ours" occurred, history has failed to record it.

- VII. One year after attaining his majority and large inheritance, John Stewart's son George, seventh in genealogical line, married Margaret Harris, two months younger than he. By this marriage he made connection with a large outstanding family, whose name is memorialized in Pennsylvania's capital city. A member of this family, John Harris, who barely escaped being burned at the stake by Indians, ran the ferry across the Susquehanna for many years. He had land on both sides of the river but according to his land patent, he had his "seat on the Susquehanna." John Harris prophesied that the Capitol of the colony would some day be on his land and named Harrisburg. For this purpose he deeded to the colony of Pennsylvania four acres of land on the eastern side of the river for a government building.

Captain Thomas Harris, the father of Margaret Harris Stewart, was an interesting character, who held that invincible enemy death at bay for 106 years. When 80 years old he was discovered planting an orchard of apple trees. With the officiousness of familiarity a neighbor said: "What are you doing that for, Captain? You'll never live to get any of the apples." But Captain Harris lived twenty-six years longer and enjoyed the fruit of his planting.