

Notes on the History and Migration of Mazie Lee Simpson's Ancestors: (v.3)

Mazie was born in Greensboro where her father worked for Cone Mills as a loom fixer. Mazie also worked in the cotton mill as early as 1920, according to the census records that year. Her sister Mable, who was born on June 1, 1914, had health problems in her early years. According to the oral family history, Mable's doctor recommended that the family move away from the mill community; so, T. P. moved his family out of Greensboro to farm. This move probably took place after 1920, because the census records have the family still living in Gilmer Township, Guilford County, where the family was living in the 1910 census. We have been unable to locate T. P. Simpson and his father, Josiah Hurdle Simpson, the 1900 census records; however, they are listed in 1880, farming in the Oak Ridge Township of Guilford County.

When Moses Cone bought the Salisbury Cotton Mill (the "Mill") in the Chestnut Hill area of Salisbury, T. P. Simpson was recruited by Moses Cone to move to Salisbury and help improve the efficiency and quality of the operations of the Mill. The family loaded their belongings in a boxcar and moved by train to Salisbury. After briefly living in a small house on Hill Street, they moved into a large house beside the company store on the corner of Railroad Street & Hill Street. As a condition to getting the larger house, they were required to take in boarders. T. P. and his wife Meta, along with Nelle, Henry and Mable are listed as living at this address in the 1930 census. (Alice, Mazie's sister, along with her husband Paul Misenheimer, was listed in the census living next door with their daughter Mary Frances). Henry joined Coburn Methodist Church with his father, T. P. Simpson. Meta and the girls joined Stallings Baptist Church. Mazie, Levata, Alice, and Henry worked in the Mill when they became old enough, and all moved out of the home as they got married. Nelle and Mable got jobs away from the Mill, and never got married. In the 1930 census, Nelle is listed as a stenographer at a bottling company. She was employed in the bookkeeping department at Nehi Bottling Co. for several years before starting her career at Oestreichers Department Store. She worked at Oestreichers a total of 32 years in what we would describe today as the corporate offices. She served many years as a buyer, regularly traveling to New York on buying trips for clothing and household items for the store. She was the manager of the Credit Accounts Department when she retired.

In 1951, Nelle selected house plans, and with her Father and Mable, bought a lot on Statesville Blvd. She hired Goodman Lumber Company to build the house and the three of them moved out of the house on Railroad Street and into a modern 2-bedroom ranch style home. The address was 923 Statesville Blvd.

Mazie's Mother, Meta Howerton Simpson, was from Davidson County and her ancestors were some of the earliest settlers in what is now Davidson County. Nelle particularly enjoyed talking about her mother's ancestors.

The Simpson name is generally considered Scottish; it even has a registered plaid tartan and a coat of arms. However, our records trace the family to Nottinghamshire, England, where Benjamin Simpson and Mary Caunt were married in 1708. I am suspicious of the fact that his son Samuel was born in Surry County, North Carolina or that his mother died in England. It does not make sense to me that Mary Caunt Simpson, (Samuel's mother), would move to America, and have two children and then move back to die in her homeland. The documentation of Samuel Simpson's service in the Revolutionary War was found by Carl Shumaker at the headquarters for the Sons of the American Revolution in Louisville, Kentucky, where Carl lived. More research is needed.

Additional information on the Simpson family and the following surnames are provided below:
Adams, Billingsley, Caunt, Conrad/Conrath, Cook, Crabtree/Holstead, Darr, Dixon, Dow, Eddinger/Ottinger, Frank/Walk, Grimes/Greim, Howerton/McCrary, Kellam/Purnell, Long, Lopp/Michael, Oakes, and Swain/Swayne

Adams- Not much is known about the family of Mary Adams, (wife of William Henry Simpson). There were six Adams households in Orange County, North Carolina in 1820 and Adams families in Orange County back to the first census in 1790. Our Mary Adams is likely to be part of one of these families. Hillsborough, NC, which is still the county seat of Orange County, was an important center of trade and politics.

Billingsley- Our family connection starts with Martha Jane in Guilford County. Her father was born in Onslow County, NC, and her grandfather was born in Maryland, where the family goes back many generations. There was a famous Maryland ship captain by the name of John Billingsley but I not sure if it is the same man as our ancestor. The family came from England, by way of Holland, in the mid-1660's. The Billingsley family of Maryland branched out all across America.

There is listed in the Davidson County Heritage Book (1982), under Early Churches on p.18, a paragraph about Abbott's Creek Baptist Church in which "Elder James Billingsley" was sent to Abbott's Creek by the Sandy Creek Baptist in Gilford County to conduct services. He subsequently bought land and lived in the area "for many years". More research is needed to see if this early settler is related to our family.

Caunt- Margareta Caunt married Benjamin Simpson in 1709 in Nottinghamshire, England. We have shown her as the mother of Samuel Simpson but this is probably not correct. She would have been 55 at the age of his birth. (More research needed).

Conrad/Conrath- Johann George Conrath arrived in America from Germany on September 26, 1737 and settled in Pennsylvania. His son, Hannes Adam Conrad, (born in York, PA in 1738), migrated to the "Dutch Settlement on Abbott's Creek" in what is now Davidson County and became active in the congregation of the Pilgrim Reformed Church. Early Germans were called Dutch because they came from 'Deutschland', (which is German term for their homeland). Aunt Nelle Simpson often mentioned the Conrad Hill Gold Mine as an example of her rich ancestors. Our records show that Johann Heinrich Conrad (Meta Simpson's great-great-grandfather) owned the land where the mine was and willed it to his daughter, Elizabeth Conrad Darr, who subsequently divided her interests among her 7 living children in 1845. (More research needed).

Cook- Luke Simpson married Margaret (Peggy) Cook in Orange Co., NC on May 29, 1809. Our records show that her father was Francis Cook, but where they were from is unknown. There was a Francis Cook living in eastern North Carolina in 1790. (More Research needed)

Crabtree/Holstead- William Crabtree and wife Jane Holstead emigrated to America in 1703. Both Crabtree and Holstead are English families from Yorkshire.

Darr- This is another German family, like the Conrads, who settled in Pennsylvania initially and then migrated to the Dutch Settlement and Old Pilgrim Church. Melchoir Darr was said to have served in the Revolutionary War. He was probably born in Germany, but birth location and the date that he emigrated to America are unknown.

Dixon- Basil Billingsley married Sally Dixon in Orange County, NC on August 1, 1817. No other information is known about this family. There were 61 Dixon Families in North Carolina in 1810. (More research needed)

Dow- Martha Jane Billingsley's father was Lorenzo Dow Billingsley. I'm sure of that. However, I'm not sure that Lorenzo's mother's maiden name was Dow and that his grandfather's name was Lorenzo Dow. There was a famous Lorenzo Dow born on October 16, 1777 in Coventry, Connecticut. He was a mesmerizing evangelistic preacher that traveled throughout America. Records show that he was married twice and had one daughter that died young and unmarried. There was something about the famous Lorenzo Dow that made people name their sons after him. It is estimated that more than 20,000 boys were given the name Lorenzo in his honor. I believe that is the case with Lorenzo Dow Billingsley, and some aggressive researcher assumed that Dow was the maiden name of his mother. (More research needed).

Eddinger/Ottinger- Another German family in the Dutch Settlement at Abbott's Creek.

Frank/Walk- Johann Wilhelm Frank and Barbara Walk were married in 1751, two years prior to the formation of Rowan County and 69 years before Davidson County was established. Johann, born on July 31, 1731 in Oberalben, Rheinpfalz, Germany, arrived in Philadelphia on September 9, 1749 aboard the ship *St. Andrew* from Rotterdam (Holland), briefly lived in Pennsylvania, and migrated to the Dutch Settlement along with numerous other German families including Barbara's family, which settled briefly in Virginia. The Frank family became important in the development of the congregation of Beck's Reformed Church in what is now Davidson County. Three of Johann & Barbara's daughters are our direct ancestors related through the Simpson family and the Berrier family.

Grimes/Greim- Valentin Greim was born in Unkenbach, Landsberg, Zweibruecken, Germany in 1690 and migrated to Berks County, Pennsylvania before 1722 where his son Jacob was born. Our records indicate that Jacob stayed in Berks County at least until he was married in 1750 to Cristina Cordula, then moved to York County, PA, where his son John Charles was born in 1761. Jacob and his family migrated to what is now Davidson County where they joined the congregation of the Old Pilgrim Reformed Church in the Dutch Settlement.

Howerton/McCrary- John G. Howerton & Rachel Elizabeth McCrary were both born in North Carolina (per the 1850 census) and were married in Davidson County on June 20, 1835. I suspect that Rachel was a descendant of Hugh McCrary (b. 1720) that migrated to the area from Chester County, PA around 1750. Hugh and his wife are buried at Jersey Baptist Church in Linwood. The Howerton ancestors are also a mystery. Given that John said that he was born in North Carolina around 1795, it's logical to think that his father would be listed as a NC resident in the 1790 or 1800 census. There were two Howertons listed in 1790, Thomas, shown in Edgecombe County and John, in Rockingham County. In the 1800 census, there were three Howertons, Thomas in Edgecombe, John in Rockingham, and Obah Howerton in Rockingham. Perhaps one of these men will prove to be John G.'s father.

Kellam/Purnell- Sarah Ann Kellam was T. P. Simpson's great-great-grandmother. She was from Eastern Shore, MD/VA where the Kellams had lived for several generations. She is probably a descendant of Richard Kellam, born in 1619 in England. He was a passenger on the ship "Primrose" at age 16, arriving in America on 27 Jul 1635 and settled in Accomack County, Virginia. Sarah Purnell married John Kellam. The Purnells were from Somerset County, MD, which is also on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay.

Long- Meta Howerton Simpson's grandmother was Sophronia Evaline Long. Both Nelle and Henry believed that she was a descendant of Alexander Long, the builder of the well known home on Sowers Ferry Road in Rowan County. Aunt Nelle said that she accompanied her grandmother to the Alexander Long house to visit kinfolk. Alexander Long is thought to have built this house about 1786 for his second wife, Elizabeth, on property his father, John Long, had acquired in 1759. This building date is suggested by the marriage in that year of Alexander and Elizabeth Long, whose initials "AL" and "EL", each accompanied by a heart, appear in the large brick double chimney of the house, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Alexander Long kept a public ferry on the Yadkin River near the mouth of Grant's Creek as early as 1784. It is said that George Washington used Long's ferry to cross the Yadkin River and took a brief rest at the Long House during his southern tour.

The problem is that I cannot find any documentation that connects the Simpson family to Alexander Long. Records from the Jersey Baptist Church in Davidson County indicate that Sophronia was the daughter of Jacob Long and the granddaughter of John Long, but there is no evidence that was the same John as Alexander's father. (More research needed).

Lopp/Michael - Sophronia Long's mother was Mary Barbara Lopp. She was a descendant of Johan Jacob Lopp who arrived in Philadelphia on August 7, 1751 from Germany. Records indicate that he was born in Alsace, which is on the German-Franco border. Johan migrated to the Dutch Settlement in the 1750's and joined the Pilgram Reform congregation. Johan Jacob Lopp's wife was Maria Elizabeth Michael. There were a number of Michael families in the Dutch Settlement, probably of German descent.

Oakes- Sarah Oakes, T. P. Simpson's maternal grandmother, was a descendant of William Oakes of King William County, Virginia, which is northeast of Richmond. This family probably is of English origin.

Swain/Swayne- The most famous Swain from North Carolina was David Lowery Swain, Governor from 1832-1835. He was born in Buncombe County and has a County named after him. There was also a Thomas Swain in Rowan about 1774. Neither of these seems to be connected to our family. Our records show that the family of Mary Swain (great-great-grandmother of T. P. Simpson) was from northeastern North Carolina. Stephen and Patience Parris Swain migrated from Nantucket Island, MA, to Chowan County, North Carolina. Stephen's ancestors came from England, probably between 1625 and 1650. More research needed.